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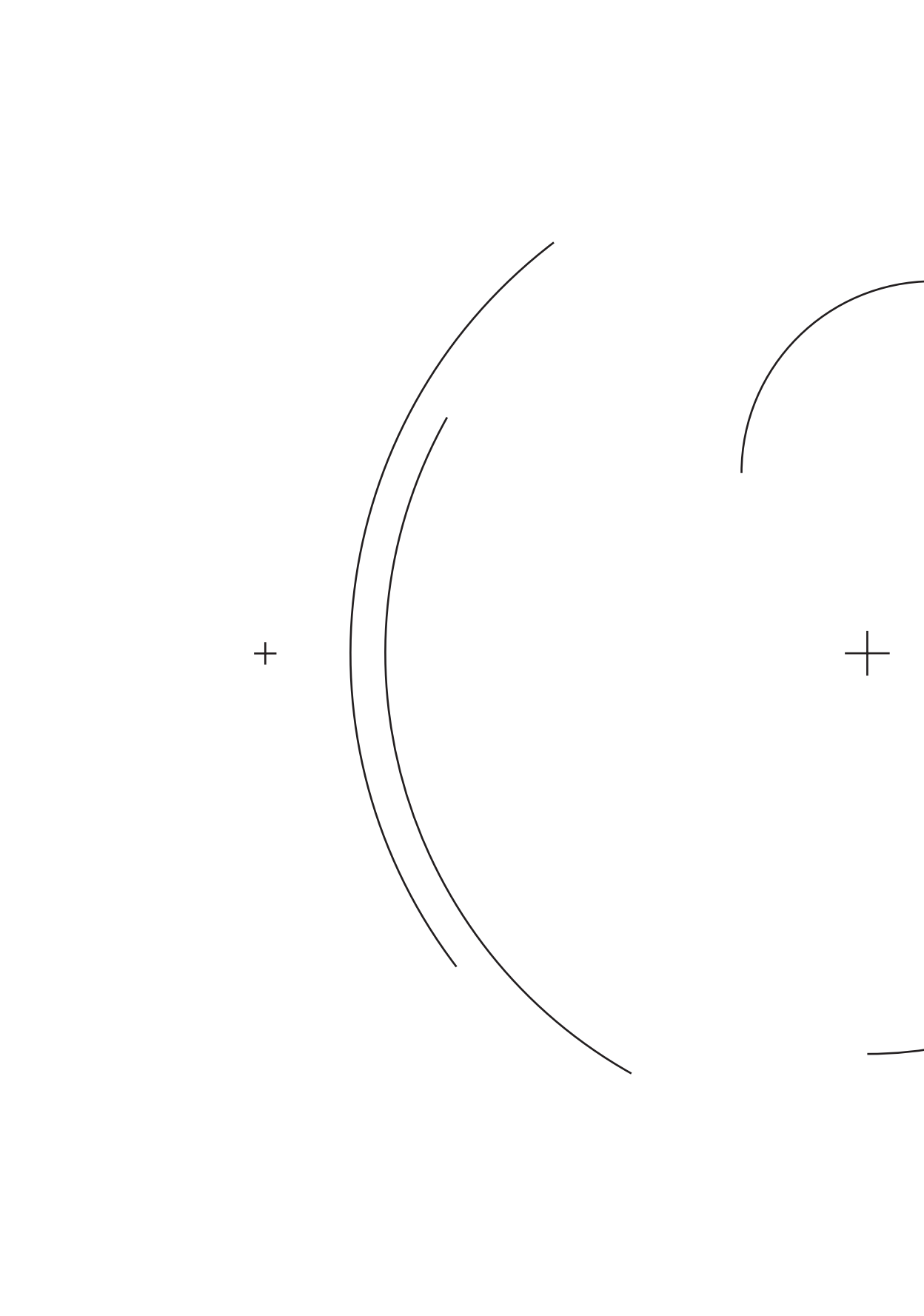

Disegno

Journal of Design Culture
Double-blind peer-reviewed, open access scholarly journal

Aims and Scope

Disegno publishes original research papers, essays, and reviews on all aspects of design cultures. We understand the notion of design culture as resolutely broad: our aim is to freely discuss the designed environment as mutually intertwined strands of sociocultural products, practices, and discourses. This attitude traverses the disciplinary boundaries between art, design, and visual culture and is therefore open to all themes related to sociocultural creativity and innovation. Our post-disciplinary endeavour welcomes intellectual contributions from all members of different design cultures. Besides providing a lively platform for debating issues of design culture, our specific aim is to consolidate and enhance the emerging field of design culture studies in the Central European academia by providing criticism of fundamental biases and misleading cultural imprinting with respect to the field of design.

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Contents

"AN HABITUAL DISPOSITION OF MIND":

ON THE ROOTS OF EVERYDAY AESTHETICS IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Endre Szécsényi

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses some essays from London daily journals at the time of the emergence of modern aesthetics and attempts to demonstrate that what we nowadays call "everyday aesthetics" was not simply present in the relevant texts of the early eighteenth century, but, in a sense, it was the mainstream of the rising modern aesthetic. The aesthetic basically meant paying closer attention to our everyday reality including our natural and human made environments and also various quotidian activities. Contemporary everyday aesthetics should therefore be seen not so much as an extension of the mostly "art-centred" post-Kantian philosophical aesthetics, but rather as one of the original, pre-Kantian, sources of modern aesthetics to be restored or regained.

#early modern aesthetics, #Joseph Addison, # Richard Steele, #George Berkeley, #disposition of mind

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In my paper I would like to discuss the earliest stage—as it were, the birth—of modern aesthetics, and to argue that what we nowadays call "everyday aesthetics" was not simply present in the relevant texts of the early eighteenth century, but, in a sense, it was the mainstream of the emerging modern aesthetic in the period already before the appearance of systematic theories. The aesthetic basically meant paying closer attention to our everyday reality including our natural and human made environments and also various quotidian activities. Thus, contemporary everyday aesthetics should therefore be seen not so much as an extension of the mostly "art-centred" post-Kantian philosophical aesthetics, but rather as one of the original, pre-Kantian, sources of modern aesthetics to be restored or regained.

In the scholarship of the history of modern aesthetics, there are alternative narratives of the genealogy of the discipline. Here I offer an interpretation according to which the modern sense of the word aesthetic was first invented and elaborated in texts which fell outside the scope of academic philosophy. The earliest modern philosophical aesthetics was the first part of F. Hutcheson's *Inquiry* published in 1725 (Hutcheson 2004), however, this was primarily a moral philosophical treatise, and although Hutcheson's insights concerning the sense of beauty in the first part were interesting and had far-reaching influence, they nevertheless reduced the potential of aesthetics compared to examples from the previous decade such the essays of London daily journals and Lord Shaftesbury's conversational philosophical writings. I will here concentrate on two authors of the journal essays: Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steele, who were famous for their articles in the early-eighteenth century journals *The Tatler* (1709–1711) and *The Spectator* (1711–1712, 1714), and later Steele continued with the short-lived *The Guardian* (1713). Addison and Steele authored the majority of the essays for these journals, with occasional contributions from others, for example, Henry Grove, the nonconformist minister (who belonged to dissenting circles embracing Isaac Watts or Elisabeth Singer Rowe) who wrote four essays in the last issues of *The Spectator*; and George Berkeley, who was one of the most intriguing philosophers of the century, and who was already a well-known figure by 1713 when he joined the London circle of Addison, Steele, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift and others, and wrote some essays for *The Guardian* a few years after publishing his controversial and ground-breaking

Essay towards a New Theory of Vision (1709) and his *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710). So, these four are the protagonists of the present paper, and I shall comment on some of their essays which came to light in these three journals.

The Tatler, The Spectator and *The Guardian* were aimed at a broad readership, mostly to city-dwellers who lived everyday lives, and who had spare time to read at least a few pages every day, that is, who had some idle time. Addison clearly formulates his Ciceronian project (or *ars poetica*) in *The Spectator* 10: "I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and in Coffee-Houses." (Addison et al. 1965, 1:44) Let us take "philosophy" here in a very broad sense: Addison probably meant any kind of meditation, reflection, and their enjoyment, and, with this, he claimed new cultural spaces for them, actually everyday places at tea-tables and in coffee-houses. And he also wanted to foster and to entertain his readers, to help them become spectators of the modern world, as it were, aesthetic beholders of the ordinary. For our purposes, suffice it to say these London journals and their essays were popular, and testament to their cultural significance and profound impact is the fact that they were published and re-published many times throughout the century, with the French translations being widely read across in Europe. Moreover, these journal enterprises were themselves imitated in several European countries, to mention only a few examples: Marivaux's *Le Cabinet du philosophe*, Wieland's *Teutscher Merkur*, or the Hungarian József Kármán's *Urania* at the end of the eighteenth century.

The didactic and pedagogic (and also the political) aims of these essays were *to reform manners and morals*, to elaborate, to exemplify and to propagate a new ideal of the citizen who should be self-conscious, self-reflective, and critical yet moderate in political, religious, moral, and cultural issues—including, of course, aesthetic ones. As Steele writes in *The Spectator*: "He that is moderate in his Wishes from Reason and Choice, and not resigned from Sowerness, Distaste, or Disappointment, doubles all the Pleasures of his Life. The Air, the Season, a Sun-shine Day, or a fair Prospect, are Instances of Happiness; and that which he enjoys in common with all the World […] are to him uncommon Benefits and new Acquisitions" (Addison et al. 1965, 2:308–9) This moderate state of the human mind is intensely sensitive to the potential happiness in every quotidian thing. Although we are only concerned with the aesthetic here, it is worth keeping in mind that the mentioned further aspects were considered inseparable. So when we discern some new features of an aesthetic experience, the same experience always has or can simultaneously give rise to religious-devotional, moral, social-political, and even medical significances. It should however be noted that in these essays, the eminent occasions for the modern aesthetician to use or exercise their fine taste or polite imagination were mostly everyday and/or non-artistic

situations or objects in nature or in urban environment. Certainly, the encounters with classical or esteemed modern artworks in theatres and opera houses, or in libraries and private book-collections were part of this portfolio since they too were recommended to the readers of these journals, however, they were by no means paradigmatic examples for "innocent diversions" (Addison et al. 1965, 1:397) Put simply, the emerging aesthetic project was not at all art-centred.

In *The Tatler,* Steele published a "Pastoral Letter" under the name of a "country correspondent." This letter praises the capability of "enjoying the World in the Simplicity of its natural Beauties." Sir Richard calls it a continuous "strong and serious Delight which flows from a well taught and liberal Mind." (Addison et al. 1987, 2:59–60) There is nothing new in this classical commonplace. However, he then adds:

What we take for Diversion, which is a kind of forgetting our selves, is but a mean Way of Entertainment, in Comparison of that which is considering, knowing and enjoying our selves. The Pleasures of ordinary People are in their Passions; but the Seat of this Delight is in the Reason and Understanding. Such a Frame of Mind raises that sweet Enthusiasm which warms the Imagination at the Sight of every Work of Nature, and turns all around you into Picture and Landskip.[1] (Addison et al. 1987, 2:60)

Beside the Stoic overtones and the distinction between vulgar passions and fine delights, the special active, self-reflective "frame of mind" and the excited "imagination" are worth our attention. Even a little earlier, in the seventeenth century and without any direct mention of "imagination" or a special "frame of mind," we can find textual examples in which the natural prospect or landscape inspired by the classical tradition of the pastoral and the georgic was considered an enjoyable experience beneficial to our health in general, or as a good occasion for spiritual meditation.[2] By contrast, for Steele, the very transformative power of the beholder is the point. With this power we are able to transform a neutral natural prospect into an enjoyable landscape. And this "frame of mind," which we can retrospectively call a *proto-aesthetic disposition of mind*, can work in other fields, too, not only in that of the natural prospect but within our human-made, urban environments. And it can make us capable of seeing and enjoying differently—that is, aesthetically—in our everyday lives. I shall briefly discuss Steele's essay on *flânerie* from *The Spectator* at the end this paper. For now, it is also worth noting that when we speak about the everyday reality of the people who lived at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, walks in nature or the experience of fair natural prospects still belonged to their everyday lives: nature, so to speak, was still nearby. Of course, the distinction between "city" and "country," as we have seen above, was alive and oft-discussed, still a morning walk in the countryside was not considered a rare or

[1] *Although it is in the context of vulgar passions vs. the fine delight of understanding, the imagination with the help of "sweet enthusiasm" plays a role in the transformation of the sight all around into picture and landscape, that is, into a kind of artwork; Addison will change the function of this faculty in "The Pleasures of the Imagination" series (*The Spectator *411–21): the "aesthetic" imagination will not be connected or subordinated to the intellect. Here, in Steele's essay, though the vocabulary may seem proto-aesthetic, no new realm opens for enjoying the pleasures of the imagination; Steele's observations belong instead to the discourse of "country" and "city" which will disappear in Addison's Imagination series; on the other hand, with the claim of "considering, knowing and enjoying our selves" as the right way of diversion, it belongs to the tradition of the spiritual exercises in their Socratic-Stoic form.*

[2] *For example, in his essay "Of Regiment of Health"—to which Addison will also refer to in his Imagination papers in* The Spectator*—Sir Francis Bacon recommends a variety of delights to preserve our mental balance and well-being, amongst them the "studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature." (1908, 148) He claims: "As for the passions, and studies of the mind; avoid envy, anxious fears; anger fretting inwards; subtle and knotty inquisitions; joys and exhilarations in excess; sadness not communicated. Entertain hopes; mirth rather than joy; variety of delights, rather*

than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration, and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature." (Bacon 1908, 147–48) Or in the fundamental work of Protestant devotional literature, Joseph Hall's Occasional Meditations *(1630) a "Fair Prospect" is suggested as an excellent occasions for meditation: "What a pleasing variety is here of towns, rivers, hills, dales, woods, meadows; each of them striving to set forth the other, and all of them to delight the eye! So as this is no other, than a natural and real landscape, drawn by that almighty and skilful hand, in this table of the earth, for the pleasure of our view. No other creature, besides man, is capable to apprehend this beauty: I shall do wrong to him, that brought me hither; if I do not feed my eyes, and praise my Maker. It is the intermixture, and change, of these objects, that yields this contentment both to the sense and mind." (Hall 1851, 10) However, neither Bacon's, nor Hall's vocabularies contain "imagination" or any hint at the necessity of a special "frame of mind."*

extraordinary activity. Addison, for example, was an enthusiastic walker, a nature-goer, and his favourite path (posthumously named after him) starts right from the building of Magdalen College in Oxford where he studied and subsequently held a fellowship for many years.

As for this aesthetic frame of mind, it is important to highlight that it is not a natural gift in us, at least in its full-fledged form, rather it is to be acquired as a kind of "habitual" frame of mind. Addison writes an essay -series on cheerfulness in *The Spectator*: he calls cheerfulness "an Habit of Mind" which is, unlike the always transient mirth, "fixt and permanent," and "keeps up a kind of Day-light in the Mind, and fills it with a steady and perpetual Serenity." (Addison et al. 1965, 3:429) In the closing passage of the last piece of this three-essay series on cheerfulness, Addison recommends we especially take walks in nature in spring, because the "Beauties of the Creation" stimulates our "pleasing Instinct," and we can feel "secret Satisfaction and Complacency." (Addison et al. 1965, 3:475–76). These "entertainments of Sense" must be associated with a reflection upon the benevolent divine Hand that "fills the World with Good." Addison explicitly relates this quasi-aesthetic activity to "religious Exercise" (like prayer and psalm singing): the "Chearfulness of Heart […] in us [which comes] from the Survey of Nature's Works" is a preparation for something more: this "secret Gladness" and the "grateful reflection on the Supreme Cause who produces it" together, after a sufficient amount of exercise, constitute an active and productive inner state of mind that we would call aesthetic: "Such an habitual Disposition of Mind consecrates every Field and Wood, turns an ordinary Walk into a Morning or Evening Sacrifice, and will improve those transient Gleams of Joy […] into an inviolable and perpetual State of Bliss and Happiness." (Addison et al. 1965, 3:476) Not only the transition from the sensual joy to the eternal heavenly bliss is interesting here, but the claim that an "habitual disposition of mind" is to be developed, because only through the transformative, self-reflective and everyday activity of the cheerful mind we can feel the fullness of the experience of natural beauties, only through this activity we can find the tight links between the terrestrial and the celestial. Moreover, it is not simply a transformation of a natural view into a landscape (into an artwork), rather, it is the augmentation of an enjoyable everyday activity in order to reach a higher level: in spiritual and in temporal sense—due to these features we can call this state of mind aesthetic. I will return to this point soon.

Earlier, in *The Tatler,* Addison published a pastoral essay on the occasion of a summertime morning "walk into the country," in which he described the vivid beauties of nature, and it was actually not simply a fair prospect but a multisensory experience: "Things about me, with the cool Breath of the Morning, which inspired the Birds with so many delightful Instincts, created in me the same Kind of animal Pleasure, and made my Heart overflow with such secret Emotions of Joy and Satisfaction as are not to be described or accounted for." (Addison et al 1987, 2:140)

This inexplicable, *je-ne-says-quoi*-like pleasure seems identical with—or at least a close relative of—"the secret satisfaction" of the cheerful mind. In the concluding passage of the same essay, Addison writes: "I look upon the whole country in spring-time as a spacious garden, and make as many visits to a spot of daisies, or a bank of violets, as a florist does to his borders or parterres. There is not a bush of blossoms within a mile of me which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce of daffodil or cowslip that withers away in my neighbourhood without my missing it." He felt "unspeakable Pleasure" when he walked home in "this temper of mind through several fields and meadows," while he reflected simultaneously "on the Bounty of Providence, which has made the most pleasing and most beautiful Objects the most ordinary and most common." (Addison et al. 1987, 2:143) So the benevolent God rendered the most enjoyable the most ordinary—that is, he made the highest pleasures the most quotidian and generally available to anybody. By means of our "habitual disposition of mind" or our cheerful mind we can eventually take this path back to the transcendent source of every beauty in creation without having eliminate the sensual elements of the experience.

I claim that the "unspeakable Pleasure" of a morning walk does not lead us to the discovery of the extraordinary in the ordinary, even less to the discovery of the aesthetic in the everydayness (in the attentive turn to quotidian activities or even to household chores),[3] rather it demonstrates a potential in the everyday for feeling a fuller reality, for regaining an aboriginal (innocent) attention to the world, or, in other words, for living in an extended life which embraces a broader timescale. As for the aesthetic quality of *this* everyday experience, amongst the three Addisonian ones, that is, the great, the beautiful and the uncommon or novel (as it was elaborated in the Imagination papers), the third one, *novelty* as aesthetic category seems the most relevant to us here: what is novel and attracts our attention "fills the Soul with an agreeable Surprise, gratifies its Curiosity" (Addison et al. 1965, 3:541). Nevertheless it is not necessarily extraordinary: a monster must be uncommon *and* extraordinary at the same time, but natural objects "in the opening of the Spring" (Addison et al. 1965, 3:542) are very familiar to us, we have already seen them several times, still they can strike us with their new and fresh look again and again—with their ever-renewing novelty. We never cease enjoying the wake of spring or summer in full bloom, etc. As Addison observes in the same essay, we are rarely tired of looking at natural objects or views which are in permanent motion, especially in comparison with the static prospects be they great and beautiful.

So far, I have tried very briefly to show some characteristics of the everyday aesthetics of the early eighteenth century focusing mostly on the experience of natural environment. In what follows, I shall highlight two features of it: the temporal character of the experience and its spiritual-devotional or existential dimension, and I will also widen the scope of the aesthetic.

[3] *As Yuriko Saito formulates it (2017, 2–3): "The narrative currently dominating the discourse on everyday aesthetics requires defamiliarisation of the familiar to render the ordinary in our life extraordinary. […] I offer another possibility. I argue that we can capture the aesthetic texture of ordinariness experienced as such, as long as we pay attention to what we are experiencing rather than acting on autopilot. Being attentive is a prerequisite for any kind of aesthetic experience and it does not necessarily compromise the ordinariness of ordinary life."*

In his *Spectator* essay on the pleasures of the wise man, Addison already discusses time. Via Seneca, he reminds us of an inconsistency in our attitude to time: we usually complain of the shortness of our lifetime, still we "have much more [time] than we know what to do with […]; we are wishing every Period of [our life] at an end" in order to reach a certain state or achieve a desired result as soon as possible (Addison et al. 1965, 1:394). Addison recommends some methods of how to *wisely design* our life, or at least those periods of time "which are neither filled with Pleasure nor Business." Many of us have plenty of idle time, because we "are not always engaged in Scenes of Action" (Addison et al. 1965, 1:395). The first method is the "Exercise of Virtue," the third—with which the next essay (no. 94) will deal—the pursuit of knowledge. The second method "to fill up our time" is a series of "useful and innocent Diversions"; which means that the "amusements of Life" for a *homo aestheticus* are amongst the wise man's pleasures. These activities of the everyday vary from playing cards, going to the theatre to conversing with a virtuous friend or with some eminent person. Moreover: "A Man that has a Taste of Musick, Painting, or Architecture, is like one that has another Sense, when compared with such as have no Relish of those Arts. The [skill, the knowledge, or the industry of the] Florist, the Planter, the Gard'ner, the Husbandman, when they are only as Accomplishments to the Man of Fortune, are great Reliefs to a Country Life, and many ways useful to those who are possessed of them." (Addison et al. 1965, 1:397) So there are many "useful Amusements of Life" to be multiplied, with this one can avoid being idle, that is, having empty time, and their mind can resist to (dangerous, harmful) passions in everyday life. This cheerful time spending is not empty, but free—in many senses, for example, it is free from reigning passions. Later, in the Imagination papers, Addison puts the modern aesthetic experience (as "the pleasures of the Imagination") into the same context when he writes that there are "very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a Relish of any Pleasures that are not Criminal […]. A Man should endeavour […] to make the Sphere of his innocent Pleasures as wide as possible […], and find in them such a Satisfaction a wise Man would not blush to take." (Addison et al. 1965, 3:538–9) The comparison of the aesthetic spectator to the "wise Man" is an allusion to essay 93.

Time is crucial to these journal essays in another sense, too, as Youngren (1982, 274) writes in his seminal paper: "Right from the first of the *Spectator* papers it is clear that time, and especially the ways in which the mind works through time, are primary concerns of the persona Addison and Steele are creating. Mr. Spectator is, in fact, as much a spectator of mental activity (his own and other people's) as of the external world of London and the Club. 'The working of my own Mind,' Steele has him say (No. 4), 'is the general Entertainment of my Life'." As Steele writes in *The Spectator*:

There is no real Life, but chearful Life… […] Whatever we do we should keep up the Chearfulness of our Spirits, and never let them sink below an Inclination at least to be well pleased: The Way to this is to keep our Bodies in Exercise, our Minds at Ease. That insipid State, wherein neither are in Vigour, is not to be accounted any part of our Portion of Being. When we are in the Satisfaction of some Innocent Pleasure, or pursuit of some laudable Design, we are in the Possession of Life, of Human Life. (Addison et al 1965, 2:65)

This ease and innocent satisfaction, being the outcome of the mind's working through time, do not mean, however, tranquillity in the sense of some kind of suspension of our mental activities.

In his historical survey on the consciousness of time from medieval times onwards, Georges Poulet, although relying mainly on French authors—he cites J-P. de Crousaz's *Traité du beau* (1715) and one of Marquis de Vauvenargues' letters (1740)—claims that even in the eighteenth century, "human existence appears […] as a kind of continuous creation, insofar as it is the perpetual recovery of existence by a being who is slipping every moment into nothingness." This nothingness is "pure insensibility" ("insipid State," as Steele would call it), to escape it "means to be aware of one's own sensations. The more intense they are the more one will feel [their] present existence; and the more numerous [the sensations] are the more one will sense a duration in [their] existence." So "intensity of sensation" maintains the existence and significance of the moment, while "the multiplicity of sensation ensures duration." To Poulet, it marks a new historical epoch (which, we might add, is interwoven with the emergence of modern aesthetic experience, to which the citation from Crousaz's treatise on beauty may implicitly refer) because European "man suddenly feels for the first time in the Christian era that the instant of [their] existence is an instant free of all dependence, liberated from all duration, equal to all its own potentialities, the very *causa sui* […] moment in which the soul suffices itself, since it finds itself in the fullness it experiences. It loves itself. It knows itself to be faultless. The lived sensation *is* the consciousness of being." (Poulet 1956, 20–21) The London essays of the early eighteenth century on the topic of "everyday aesthetic" also contribute to discovering this intensity and multiplicity of sensations and feelings as the fundamental experience of human—as "cheerful Life."

Specifically, the aesthetic experience, in the form of "innocent diversions" or "innocent pleasures of the imagination," is always a temporally evolving experience, it is associated with or conceived in the framework of some movement or motion in time, as we have already seen in Addison's walks through fields and meadows, in the recommended bodily and mental or spiritual exercises of everyday life, and, as we shall see, in Steele's walks in the streets of London. It is never *only* a static and/or timeless contemplation. The aesthetic category of novelty in itself

represents the dynamism in time, the incessant interplay between the accustomed and the new. And, finally, we can discern a further temporal aspect of the emerging aesthetic of the everyday: we encounter something with a larger time-scale. Our particular aesthetic emotions, sentiments and thoughts open up a broader perspective: either we can remember and regain the prelapsarian innocence and its joy, or we can fore-taste the heavenly bliss of the afterlife.

In his "Essay on the Pleasures Natural and Fantastical" published in *The Guardian* 49, Berkeley, who was conspicuously inspired by some of Addison's aesthetic essays of *The Spectator*, especially the Imagination papers and their prefiguration by Steele's essay 206 in *The Spectator* (Ketcham 1985, 65–8), wants to show his readership the right way of human life in which the greatest pleasures can be gained. Instead of the "fantastical pleasures" of property, money, luxury, social rank, curiosity and the like, he warmly recommends "natural pleasures," which are somehow instinctive, and do not depend on taste or fashion: "we are prompted to natural pleasures by an instinct impressed on our minds by the Author of our nature." (Berkeley 1948–57, 7:194) These pleasures are "suited as well to the rational as the sensual part of our nature," but the sensual ones are to be under the control of "the rules of reason" (Berkeley 1948–57, 7:194) so that the "natural" seems a beautiful harmony between the sensuous and the rational. If we succeed in keeping alive our inclination to these natural pleasures, it will result in "tranquillity and cheerfulness". According to Berkeley, this advice must be taken as a fundamental principle which should shape both our everyday life and our afterlife.[4] While in his Imagination series, Addison mostly took examples from the fields of natural scenes and prospects, architecture and belles-lettres, Berkeley extends the scope of the aesthetic to urban scenes (like streets with gilt chariots and well-dressed people inside, beautiful ladies, elegant galleries and libraries, etc.), to home interiors, and to fair weather: "I regard [all of these] as amusement designed to delight my eyes…"—it seems a pure everyday aesthetic position, especially given he adds:

Every day, numberless innocent and natural gratifications occur to me, while I behold my fellow creatures labouring in a toilsome and absurd pursuit of trifles […]. Fair weather is the joy of my soul; about noon I behold a blue sky with rapture, and receive great consolation from the rosie dashes of light which adorn the clouds of the morning and evening. When I am lost among green trees, I do not envy a great man with a great crowd at his levée. And I often lay aside thoughts of going to an opera that I may enjoy the silent pleasure of walking by moonlight, or viewing the stars sparkle in their azure ground; which I look upon as part of my possession, not without a secret indignation at the tastelessness of mortal men who, in their race thro' life, overlook the real enjoyments of it. (Berkeley 1948–57, 7:196)

[4] *It was already a characteristic feature of Addison's aesthetic essays and his* Spectator *enterprise in general that he treated afterlife as an extension, or "as a continuation of a trajectory begun on earth, an extension to its logical conclusion of a regimen of habits created in daily life." (Jost 2011, 606).*

The series of "innocent and natural gratifications" over quotidian objects and situations can be without doubt considered an everyday aesthetic experience.

Berkeley also suggests that the series of these natural pleasures inevitably ends in the experience of the presence of the divine being as their utmost perfection, when we eventually realise and feel that pleasure "which naturally affects a human mind with the most lively and transporting touches": "we act in the eye of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, that will crown our virtuous endeavours here with a happiness hereafter, large as our desires, and lasting as our immortal souls. This is a perpetual spring of gladness in the mind. This lessens our calamities, and doubles our joys. Without this the highest state of life is insipid, and with it the lowest is a paradise." (Berkeley 1948–57, 7:196) The actual aesthetic experience of the presence of deity, without which everything would be tasteless or joyless, can be reached in the form of the everyday natural pleasures. Contemplation and action, natural pleasures and Christian morality (with the direct references to the mysteries of afterlife and immortal soul) seem to be inseparable in the type of aesthetic exercise Berkeley recommends. In Addison's essay 93 of *The Spectator* about the treatment of time, this type of experience still belonged to the "Exercise of Virtue" which may be either the practice of social virtues or a solitary communion with "the great Author of Being": "The Man who lives under an habitual Sense of the Divine Presence keeps up a perpetual Cheerfulness of Temper, and enjoys every Moment the Satisfaction of thinking himself in Company with his dearest and best of Friends. The Time never lies heavy upon him: It is impossible for him to be alone." (Addison et al. 1965, 1:396) It seems that in Berkeley's essay this Addisonian "habitual Sense of the Divine Presence" is already the utmost form or consummation of the other ordinary useful amusements of life, and not a separated method.

In one of the last and most beautiful essays of *The Spectator,* Henry Grove, inspired by Addison's Imagination papers, writes about the "Force of Novelty," saying that this love in human beings has been adapted to our present (metaphysical) state as a kind of insatiable appetite (Addison et al. 1965, 5:139). Its prefiguration, however, is that perpetual employment with which "the Blessed" search into nature, and they "to Eternity advance into the fathomless Depths of the Divine Perfections. […] After an Acquaintance of many thousand Years with the Works of God, the Beauty and Magnificence of the Creation fills them with the same pleasing Wonder and profound Awe, which *Adam* felt himself seized with as he first opened his Eyes upon this glorious Scene…" (Addison et al 1965, 5:140) Grove seems to suggest that only from this spiritual-devotional level can we understand and rightly evaluate the "force of novelty"; only from this angle can we comprehend the mysterious charm of its wonder and the metaphysical

embeddedness of its everyday aesthetic quality. In other words, the ancient, prelapsarian time of paradise and the future state of the blessed represent the temporal dimension which opens wide in the aesthetic experience of the everyday. Similarly, Addison writes earlier:

It is very reasonable to believe, that part of the Pleasure which happy Minds shall enjoy in a future State, will arise from an enlarged Contemplation of the Divine Wisdom in the Government of the World, and a Discovery of the secret and amazing Steps of Providence, from the Beginning to the End of Time. Nothing seems to be an Entertainment more adapted to the Nature of Man, if we consider that Curiosity is one of the strongest and most lasting Appetites implanted in us, and that Admiration is one of our most pleasing Passions; and what a perpetual Succession of Enjoyments will be afforded to both these, in a Scene so large and various as shall then be laid open to our View in the Society of superior Spirits, who perhaps will joyn with us in so delightful a Prospect. (Addison et al. 1965, 2:420)

Tuveson rightly remarks that this essay contains "the germ" of the Imagination papers (Tuveson 1972, 128): curiosity as the fundamental human appetite and admiration as one of the most pleasing passions can be easily associated with the aesthetic experiences of the novelty and the sublime (great)—as the most appropriate entertainments to human nature. These insights may also suggest that the everyday aesthetic experience of things and events can always open up a larger timescale and, simultaneously, make a more intense and sensual-spiritual profundity available to us.

Finally, I turn to Steele's remarkable essay on *flânerie* in *The Spectator*. Mr. Spectator decides to take a twenty-four-hour tour from Richmond to the city of London by boat, coach, and on foot "till the many different Objects I must needs meet with should tire my Imagination" (Addison et al. 1965, 4:98). We can read this detailed report as if it was a screenplay for a video clip: we are, with Mr Spectator, moving through different urban spaces, encountering with several people of different social classes, entering various social acts in urban environments, seeing other people's amusements—and *enjoying ourselves throughout*. At the end of the busy day, Mr. Spectator is reflecting upon the meaning of his aesthetic enterprise:

When I came to my Chamber I writ down these Minutes; but was at a Loss what Instruction I should propose to my Reader from the Enumeration of so many insignificant Matters and Occurrences; and I thought it of great Use, if they could learn with me to keep their Minds open to Gratification, and ready to receive it from any thing it meets with. This one Circumstance will make every Face you see give you the Satisfaction you now take in beholding that of a Friend; will make every Object a pleasing one; will make all the Good which arrives to any Man, an Encrease of Happiness to your self. (Addison et al. 1965, 4:103)

Steele does not emphasise the religious-devotional dimension of the aesthetic experience of the everyday, as Addison, Berkeley, and Grove do, instead he propagates an "existentialist" version. In one of his insightful papers, Brian Michael Norton (2015, 129–130) correctly formulates it: for Steele the "value of the aesthetic attitude […] lies in its potential to intensify ordinary experience, attaching us to the living present and awakening us to life. Through this 'Disposition' to 'Delight in all we hear and see,' Steele argues, we can live in such a way that 'there are no Moments lost' and the 'heaviest of Loads (when it is a Load) that of Time, is never felt by us'." Norton quotes here from the essay 100 of *The Spectator*, in which Steele adds that "when a well corrected lively Imagination and good Breeding are added to a sweet Disposition [i.e. the innate Goodness of Temper], they qualify it to be one of the greatest Blessings, as well as Pleasures of Life." (Addison et al. 1965, 1:421) Thus, in Steele's everyday aesthetics time is not extended to transcendental dimensions, instead, the idle or indolent periods of life-time were meant to transform into lived life, into a life worth living.

This early eighteenth century project of the aesthetic in London daily journals was primarily interested neither in criticism, nor generally in the philosophy of sensory perception (aesthesis); instead, it could be connected to the "way of life" tradition of philosophy and to meditational exercises. Our authors discussed the manners or ways of human life, even including transcendental perspectives from Adamic origins to afterlife, and happiness in general. This project was not about composing human life as a work of art, rather, it was about enriching or augmenting it: opening new realms of delightful activities—pleasures which can make links between the terrestrial and the celestial, between the temporal and the eternal. They were convinced, in harmony with the contemporary design argument, that the benevolent and wise Creator designed these amusements to delight us in everyday life, at the same time, they also taught their readership to design their own lives: there is not a given pathway to choose in the case of the aesthetic, it is an individual route that has to be designed, paved, and then walked; the designing activity of *homo aestheticus* had nothing to do with some material object or product, but with "an active environment of design," as Highmore (2008, 18) formulates it. It was:

the active sense of design as patterning and shaping the world in complex ways. […] Here design can rather be considered] as a series of negotiations, as an orchestration (of sense, of perception, and so on), as an orientation (something that encourages and generates propensities), as an assemblage (and as an assembling activity, where it is always possible that combinations themselves combine), as an arrangement (a temporary coming together), and so on. (2008, 18)

It is also important to note that these recommended and achievable diversions were introduced as "innocent" ones, they were neither identical

with hedonistic or sensual delights, nor with the joys of the intellect. In Steele's essays these everyday aesthetic activities were rather involvements or participations in the everyday life while Addison offered instead a kind of spectatorship in which the aesthetic beholders always kept a certain distance from their objects or spectacles. So, from the outset, there were different ways and strategies to transform everyday realities into an enjoyable and profounder realm of human life.

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