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Art Criticism and the Professional Perspective

The Functions of Analogies between Music and Painting in Charles Avison's *Essay on Musical Expression* and William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*

Analogies are one of the most ancient tools for constructing and imparting knowledge. Without them, no history of knowledge and no history of judgement would seem possible. Loosely defined as a means of transferring one set of relations from one object to another, analogies as scientific tools can function in various ways.¹ The type of analogy most often used in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholarly writings is a heuristic tool which presupposes that at least one fundamental principle of character is shared by a minimum of two objects associated through the comparison to suggest further similarities. In the writings which are usually said to mark the beginnings of aesthetic thinking and art criticism² in Britain – those by Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, Francis Hutcheson and David Hume among others – such analogies involve general assumptions about correlations between the arts in general as well as correlations between their

1 Cf. e.g. Klaus Hentschel, "Die Funktion von Analogien in den Naturwissenschaften, auch in Abgrenzung zu Metaphern und Modellen", in *Analogien in Naturwissenschaften, Medizin und Technik* (Acta historica Leopoldina 56), eds. id. and Benno Parthier, Stuttgart 2010, pp. 13–66 and Paul Bartha, "Analogy and Analogical Reasoning", in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, 2013 / 2019, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/reasoning-analogy/> (last access 25 February 2020), § 1.

2 It is important to note that in this essay 'art criticism' refers to general criteria applied to all the arts. Where criteria for an individual art are addressed, the individual art will be named specifically, in this case 'painting criticism' and 'music criticism'.

sensual and moral perception. More importantly, as the example of *imitatio naturae* shows most prominently, the extent to which these ‘analogous’ principles could be argued for the different arts often played a justificatory role. Analogies between nature, art and morality were often argued to justify art’s respectability and were therefore fundamental to art criticism.

Moral philosophy by authors like Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Hume was part of and drew on the then common mixture of renaissance-humanist and empiricist learning of the educated English gentleman virtuoso or connoisseur; that is the educated gentleman with a peculiar interest in the ‘arts and sciences’.³ Their interest could even result in publishing on different aspects of these fields.⁴ Contemporary artists on the other hand rarely authored comparably extensive critical writings, for reasons such as their lack of university education and appropriate eloquence.⁵ There are individual as well as profession-related differences to bear in mind of course, writers being the obvious exception with regard to training in eloquence.⁶ Leaving them aside, this essay concentrates on ‘professional voices’ in music and painting in the first half of the eighteenth century. ‘Professional voices’ refers here to publications by artists who practised their art in order to make a living and not as a means of elegantly passing their leisure time. Due to their essential dependence on patrons and other solvent consumers of their performative, productive and teaching services, artists in general were required at the very least to perform a degree of awareness of a moral and

3 Arts and sciences in this historical context are not as firmly distinguished from each other but rather understood in conjunction, cf. Penelope Gouk, *Music, Science and Natural Magic in Seventeenth-Century England*, New Haven und London 1999, pp. 3–22.

4 While Shaftesbury in several essays of his *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 3 vols., London 1711, speaks of the ‘virtuoso’ as a commendable man of learning who was interested in and also practised the arts and sciences on an amateur level, the (likewise) Italian and to some extent synonymous term ‘connoisseur’ was established shortly afterwards with a stronger emphasis on competence in judgement of the arts. Cf. Brian Cowan, “An Open Elite. The Peculiarities of Connoisseurship in Early Modern England”, in *Modern Intellectual History* 1 / 2 (2004), pp. 151–183; id., *The Social Life of Coffee. The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse*, New Haven 2011, pp. 5–15; Walter E. Houghton, “The English Virtuoso in the Seventeenth Century. Part I / Part II”, in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 3 (1942), pp. 51–73 / pp. 190–219; Craig Ashley Hanson, *The English Virtuoso. Art, Medicine, and Antiquarianism in the Age of Empiricism*, Chicago 2009.

5 On the complexity of authoring (critical) art writings cf. from James S. Malek, *The Arts Compared. An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics*, Detroit 1974, pp. 11–14, to Michael Gavin, *The Invention of English Criticism, 1650–1760*, Cambridge 2015, pp. 1–23.

6 Cf. e.g. *ibid.*; Philip Smallwood, *Critical Occasions. Dryden, Pope, Johnson, and the History of Criticism* (AMS studies in the eighteenth century 65), New York 2011; Henrik Knif, *Gentlemen and Spectators. Studies in Journals, Opera and the Social Scene in Late Stuart London* (Bibliotheca historica 7), Helsinki 1995.

a broader understanding of subjects relevant to the arts, even though educational access to higher learning was largely unrealistic.⁷ Suitable knowledge was transferred by way of apprenticeship.⁸ Furthermore, prints and manuscripts were discussed in social clubs and academies⁹ for instance as well as through interaction with the artists' noble employers. In this sense, musicians and painters shared similar preconditions with respect to their familiarity of standards of reasoning in advanced learning and judgement, including the use of analogies to compare the arts and their perception.

Neither music nor painting had established a strict sense of specific art criticism in England until the middle of the eighteenth century. The extent to which musicians or painters then became involved in appropriate efforts to create one conspicuously favoured the latter. At this time, English music criticism as a whole can be summarised as a "sporadic and unsystematic activity".¹⁰ When composers published knowledge on music, they authored manuals such as Christopher Simpson's *Compendium of Practical Musick* (1678), Henry Purcell's contribution to Henry Playford's twelfth edition of *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (1694) and John Christopher Pepusch's *Treatise on Harmony* (1731) with little if any pretence to philosophical judgement. On the other hand, critical writings specific to painting had a longer tradition. Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters* (1550) still enjoyed iconic status and several gentlemen published writings concentrating exclusively on painting, most notably William Aglionby's *Painting Illustrated in Three Dialogues* (1685), John Savage's translation of selected writings by Roger de Piles (*The Art of Painting and the Lives of the Painters*, 1706) and Shaftesbury's *Essay on Painting* (1714).¹¹ Shortly after Shaftesbury's *Essay*, the painter Jonathan Richardson published several influential writings, *An Essay on the Theory of Painting* (1715) and *Two Discourses* (1719). With gentlemen being the obvious addressees, Richardson also adopted learned standards, including analogies to music.¹² However, no major comparable English painter's or musician's writings followed until the middle of the

7 Cf. the contribution by John Brewer in this publication.

8 Cf. the contribution by Melanie Unseld in this publication.

9 Cf. the contribution by Tim Eggington in this publication.

10 Rebecca Herissone, "Music Criticism in Britain up to Burney", in *The Cambridge History of Music Criticism*, ed. Christopher Dingle, Cambridge 2019, pp. 81–103, p. 81.

11 There were further writings on painting available. However, they were mostly translations of French treatises, cf. Iain Pears, *The Discovery of Painting. The Growth of Interest in the Arts in England, 1680–1768*, New Haven 2019, pp. 119–132, 199.

12 E.g. Jonathan Richardson, *An Essay on the Theory of Painting*, London 1715, pp. 8, 150, 155.

century when almost simultaneously the painter William Hogarth and the musician Charles Avison took up the task of adding a professional voice to their respective art criticism.¹³

Avison in his *Essay on Musical Expression* (1752) and Hogarth in his *Analysis of Beauty* (1753) chose different ways to join moral and general art criticism with their own art-specific perspectives. While Avison added to ‘gentlemanly’ writings with a specific focus on music, Hogarth tried to deprive the gentleman connoisseur of a critical voice on painting altogether.¹⁴ In the following, I argue how these two agendas are fundamentally reflected in the way both artists employed analogies between music and painting.

I. Painting criticism as a model: Avison’s *Essay on Musical Expression*

In his advertisement Avison pointed out that his *Essay* was dedicated to “those who are not particularly conversant in Music”¹⁵ and in his ensuing dispute with the musician and composer William Hayes he explained it was “[i]ntended, indeed, as a critical, but yet as a liberal, Examen of this pleasing Art [of Music]”¹⁶. With this, Avison underlined his wish to address the “liberally” interested gentleman virtuoso or connoisseur, not the pedant. His intention seems to address the ideals of a learned gentleman as put forward by Shaftesbury who, in his *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711), wrote he was “persuaded that to be a *Virtuoso* (so far as befits a Gentleman) is a higher step towards the becoming a Man of Virtue and good Sense, than the being what in this Age we call a *Scholar*. For even rude Nature it-self, in its primitive Simplicity, is a better Guide to Judgment, than

13 There are exceptions in painting but again mostly with regard to translations of foreign treatises, for example, the painter John Frederick Fritsch published Gérard de Lairese’s writings in English translation as *The Art of Painting*, London 1738; Roger de Piles’ *Cours de peinture par principes*, Paris 1708 was translated “by a painter” as *The Principles of Painting*, London 1743. John Frederick Lampe’s *The Art of Musick*, London 1740, discusses music applying a vague empirical approach at times but does not refer to other arts specifically.

14 There have been several studies stressing Hogarth’s critique of Shaftesbury’s writings in particular, cf. Ruth Mack, “Hogarth’s Practical Aesthetics”, in *Mind, Body, Motion, Matter. Eighteenth-Century British and French Literary Perspectives*, eds. Mary Helen McMurrin and Alison Conway, Toronto 2016, pp. 21–46; Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth*, vol. 2, *High Art and Low. 1732–1750*, Cambridge 1992, p. 62.

15 Charles Avison, *An Essay on Musical Expression* [?1753], in *Charles Avison’s ‘Essay on Musical Expression’. With Related Writings by William Hayes and Charles Avison*, ed. Pierre Dubois, Aldershot 2004, pp. 1–67, p. 4.

16 Charles Avison, *A Reply to the Author of Remarks on the Essay on Musical Expression* [1753], in Dubois (ed.) 2004, *Charles Avison’s ‘Essay on Musical Expression’*, pp. 131–156, p. 133.

improv'd Sophistry, and pedantick Learning."¹⁷ Accordingly, in all three parts of his *Essay* Avison only used basic musical terms, which were explained in the advertisement. Conveniently, this would not only address gentlemen but also ladies, who were denied access to higher education as is well-known. Furthermore, Avison incorporated elements of universal learning and respectability such as substantial praise of music from Ancient Greece by citing Polybius extensively, at the same time implying a noble history of music.¹⁸ Additionally, he employed several comparisons between music and other arts, not just painting, throughout the *Essay*. For example, the basic musical terms in the advertisement were largely illustrated by comparisons with linguistic terms. Furthermore, the help he most likely received from acquaintances point to easy access to knowledge on literature and religion rather than painting. As Norris L. Stephens has argued, Avison was a member of a literary club in Newcastle and his circle probably included the poets Thomas Gray, Revd William Mason and Dr John Brown, Robert Shaftoe as well as the ecclesiastical historian and literary critic John Jortin and the engraver and printer Joseph Barber.¹⁹ There are no known associations to painters.

Therefore, it seems conspicuous that the second half of its first part entirely and prominently consists of a list of eight exclusive analogies between music and painting.²⁰ Avison's rationale for this prominent placement of analogies between music and painting lies in what he claimed to be the illustrative quality of painting:

BUT as musical Composition is known to very few besides the Professors and Composers of Music themselves; and as there are several Resemblances, or Analogies between this Art and that of *Painting*, which is an Art much more obvious in its Principles, and therefore more generally known; it may not be amiss to draw

17 Shaftesbury, "Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author", in id. 1711, *Characteristicks*, vol. 1, pp. 153–364, pp. 333–334 (original emphasis). Cf. also Martin Donougho, "Shaftesbury as Virtuoso. Or, the Birth of Aesthetics out of a Spirit of Civility", in *Fictional Characters, Real Problems. The Search for Ethical Content in Literature*, ed. Garry L. Hagberg, Oxford 2016, pp. 325–339.

18 Cf. Avison [21753] 2004, *Essay*, pp. 7–10. For further elements which underscore how Avison tried to make his *Essay* suitable to a gentleman's learning cf. in the contribution by Alexander Aichele in this publication, pp. 91–93.

19 Norris L. Stephens, "Avison, Charles", in *Oxford Music Online. Grove Music Online*, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.01598> (last access 20 March 2020); cf. Pierre Dubois, "Introduction", in id. (ed.) 2004, *Charles Avison's 'Essay on Musical Expression'*, pp. iv–xlvi, p. xxi; See also Avison's notion that the *Essay* was a "Junto": Avison [1753] 2004, *A Reply to the Author of Remarks*, p. 73 Avison quotes Brown's *Essays on the Characteristics of the Earl of Shaftesbury* (1751) in Avison [21753] 2004, *Essay*, p. 18.

20 Avison [21753] 2004, *Essay*, pp. 11–13.

out some of the most striking of these Analogies; and by this Means, in some Degree at least, give the common Reader an Idea of musical Composition.²¹

Accordingly, Avison argued that knowledge on the art of painting was more widespread than knowledge on the art of music. Of course, painting as a representational art form was also descriptively more accessible. However, by using analogies between the one art as a whole with the other, he infers that painting was artistically sufficiently similar to music that analogies between painting and music could aid understanding of the latter – in line with common moral writings which address or were even written by gentlemen. Rather unusually though, as an entire subchapter organized in eight elucidated points and speaking of painting's "Principles", this would suggest not just sporadic illustration for more or less random features, but systematic correspondence in essential elements of both art forms which assist the reader to better comprehend the rest of the *Essay*. The analogies he chose in order to do so however, are indeed a curious mixture which serve this function rather unsatisfactorily (figure 6.1).

The first and third analogies reflect comparisons in line with renaissance-humanist learning. They had been called forth (from Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Aristoxenus and other ancient theorists) since the sixteenth century by various artists like Albrecht Dürer and Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, with regard to music most prominently by Gioseffo Zarlino and Athanasius Kircher, who were still considered authorities in eighteenth-century England. The first analogy employs the Pythagorean idea of a mathematical basis to all arts underlining their common origin. However, Avison did not make use of this idea in his *Essay* again. The third analogy of *chiaro-obscuro* on the other hand is particularly interesting since it was quite a widespread analogy with significantly diverse variants.²² Avison's use of it, linking light and shade of colour to chords, can be said to have roots in writing on music as well as painting. In 1558, Zarlino was the first early modern musician to compare different colours to concords. He linked the 'principal' consonances with the

21 Ibid., p. 11 (original emphasis).

22 On the differences in the use of this analogy cf. Jörg Jewanski, "Von der Farbe-Ton-Beziehung zur Farblichtmusik", in *Farbe – Licht – Musik. Synästhesie und Farblichtmusik* (Zürcher Musikstudien 5), ed. id., Bern et al. 2006, pp. 131–209, pp. 135–147. Cf. also Herbert M. Schueller, "Correspondences between Music and the Sister Arts, According to 18th Century Aesthetic Theory", in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 11 / 4 (1953, Special Issue on the Interrelations of the Arts), pp. 334–359, p. 338.

basis for analogy	painting	music
1 geometric proportion	proportions in visible objects	proportions in undulations of air
2 categories for excellence	design, colouring, expression	melody, harmony, expression
3 gradations (chiaro-oscuro)	mixture of light & shade	mixture of concords & discords
4 layers	degrees of distances (fore-ground, intermediate part, off-skip) [rel. to landscape painting]	pitch range of parts (bass, tenor, treble)
5 principal subject	principal figure [rel. to history painting]	principal melodic subject
6 minor subjects	figures dependent on principal figure	supporting melodic subjects
7 recipient's position	removed to a certain distance	removed to a certain distance
8 styles	grand, terrible, graceful, tender, passionate, joyous	[not specified here but later (1757)]

Figure 6.1: Analogies in Avison’s *Essay on Musical Expression*, part 1, section 2

‘principle’ colours white and black and further, less perfect consonances to further colours (“between” white and black).²³ Kircher adapted this model in his *Musurgia universalis* (1650) and expanded the correspondence of chords from “just” colours to colours as well as their shades.²⁴ Avison’s description, “[a]s Shades are necessary to relieve the Eye, which is soon tired and disgusted with a level Glare of Light; so Discords are necessary to relieve the Ear, which is otherwise immediately satiated with a continued, and unvaried Strain of Harmony”²⁵ echoes this meaning. However, the important analogical link in Avison’s context is the link to musical harmony. Because of this, the third analogy of chiaro-oscuro bears more of a connection with his further line of argument than most of the others. It can be interpreted as one aspect of harmony, one of the three categories for excellence Avison gave as his second analogy (corresponding to painting’s colouring). It parallels de Piles’ notion that „[i]n the distribution of Colours there ought to be an Agreement or Harmony, which has the same effect on the Eye, as Musick has on the Ear.”²⁶ The other two categories of the second analogy in their pain-

23 Gioseffo Zarlino, *Le institutioni harmoniche*, Venice 1558, facsimile New York 1965, p. 155 (III, 8).
24 Cf. Jewanski 2006, “Von der Farbe-Ton-Beziehung”, pp. 139–141.
25 Avison [21753] 2004, *Essay*, p. 12.
26 Roger de Piles, *The Art of Painting and the Lives of the Painters*, London 1706, p. 7. See also de Piles [1708] 1743, *Principles of Painting*, pp. 5–6; cf. in Gesa zur Nieden’s contribution

ting-related sense – melody / design and expression – can also be found as quality criteria voiced by both de Piles and Richardson.²⁷

This second analogy actually seems to be the most important since detailed explanations of melody, harmony and expression with regard to the composer (part two) and the performer (part three) structure the rest of Avison's *Essay*. One of these three categories – melody – may also be interpreted as the principal term for analogies five and six. However, even if one can make sense of some of the analogies this way it becomes obvious that the categories of 'music' and 'painting' are themselves inconsistent. Furthermore, Avison changed the genre of painting with which to compare music (landscape and portrait painting in analogies four and five), left different styles undefined for music (eighth analogy)²⁸ and the seventh analogy does not even refer to the arts at all but to the spatial position of their recipients. This is then compounded by the fact that these analogies do not serve the alleged explanatory function much further in the rest of his *Essay*.²⁹ When Avison treated melody, harmony and expression in the rest of his *Essay*, he drew comparisons primarily with poetry rather than returning to his analogies of painting.³⁰ Overall, this set of analogies constitutes a somewhat incoherent sum of rather unfocused information.

In consequence, it seems curious that Avison placed so much weight on analogies to painting in the first part of his *Essay*. In fact, it seems much easier to explain them not by what was 'understood' by transferring painting characteristics to music but rather by focusing on the way in which painting criticism provided structural role models for a more art-specific form of

to this publication, p. 139.

27 Piles [1708] 1743, *Principles of Painting*, identifies composition, design, and colouring as the three parts of painting; Jonathan Richardson also names all three in both his publications (design being used synonymously to drawing), cf. *An Essay on the Theory of Painting*, London 1715, p. 38 and *Two Discourses*, London 1719, pp. 27–30, 48.

28 For his later specification see Charles Avison, *Remarks on the Psalms of Marcello* [1757], in Dubois (ed.) 2004, *Charles Avison's 'Essay on Musical Expression'. With Related Writings*, pp. 189–198, pp. 193–194.

29 The only analogy he briefly resumed is the third, but in a rather unorthodox fashion. Avison links it to a twisted restatement of the sixth analogy and links the entire piano part in a song to "fainter parts" – or "figures" (cf. the sixth analogy) – of painting. Avison [1753] 2004, *Essay*, p. 52 (original emphasis): "AS Discords in Music are like Shades in Painting, so is the *Piano* like the fainter Parts or Figures in a Picture; both which do greatly assist in constituting and supporting an agreeable Variety." In the third part of his *Essay*, he introduces an analogy between history painting and fugue in general, vaguely recalling the prominence of a "*Principal*" in both history painting and fugue, cf. *ibid.*, p. 30.

30 Cf. Avison [1753] 2004, *Essay*, pp. 29–34, 45.

criticism.³¹ For example Richardson, in both his publications, had already established a set of eight quality criteria for painting.³² Accordingly, the decision to list eight analogies to painting so prominently may have more to do with structure than content.

While this explanation might initially appear somewhat far-fetched, there are further indications in the *Essay* which argue this point. For example, other basic structural elements Richardson established included three categories for painters.³³ Furthermore, like Vasari, Aglionby and de Piles before him, Richardson provides a list of who he judges to be the best painters in history.³⁴ Avison adopted both these components when, towards the end of the second section, he presents his ideas on how to improve church music specifically for services in cathedrals. Among others, he made a case for official lists of commendable church repertoire. This time, he drew the comparison explicitly to painting criticism:

AN Improvement of this Kind might be still more easily set on Foot, were there any History of the Lives and Works of the best Composers; together with an Account of their several *Schools*, and the *characteristic Taste*, and *Manner* of each: – a Subject, though yet untouched, of such extensive Use, that we may reasonably hope it will be the Employment of some future Writer. PAINTING has long had an Advantage of this kind, [...].³⁵

This passage clearly shows Avison's wish for a regulated music criticism which, in his view, painting already enjoyed. He acts accordingly. Rather than waiting for "some future Writer", he presents his own list of composers and their benefits with regard to melody and a further list with regard to harmony (though without any history of the composers' lives) even before the quoted passage. Like Richardson, he groups them into three categories.³⁶

31 With this, I would like to add to the explanation Malek offered, which reinforces the illustrative function Avison points out as cited above, albeit with a view to 'existing' painting criticism as opposed to 'non-existing' music criticism. Malek 1974, *The Arts Compared*, pp. 53–54.

32 Richardson 1715, *Essay*, p. 38 and Richardson 1719, *Two Discourses*, pp. 27–30, 48.

33 Ibid., p. 34 (mediocre, excellent, sublime).

34 Richardson 1715, *Essay*, pp. 232–239. To de Piles 1706, *Art of Painting*, was added, supposedly by Bainbrigg Buckeridge, *An Essay towards an English-School, with the Lives and Characters of above 100 Painters*, pp. 398–480. For more writings on painting which contained similar lists cf. Cowan 2004, "An Open Elite", pp. 162, 170–171.

35 Avison [1753] 2004, *Essay*, p. 37 (original emphasis).

36 Ibid., pp. 17–18, 21–22.

Overall, it seems likely that Avison incorporated structural inspiration he gathered from taking into account an uncertain number of writings from painting criticism in his “critical, yet liberal” *Essay* in order to establish similar music criticism with his initial eight analogies to painting as a starting point.³⁷ While he borrowed parts of the structure from painting criticism, he filled the contents with his own views on music and composers.

II. Difference trumps analogy: Hogarth’s *Analysis of Beauty*

Hogarth wrote in the introduction to his *Analysis* that “[t]o those, then, whose judgments are unprejudiced, this little work is submitted with most pleasure”.³⁸ While this might sound as if he was targeting the same audience as Avison, by this point Hogarth had already excluded gentlemen virtuosi and connoisseurs from his targeted audience, especially those who had already claimed a voice in painting criticism. In his preface Hogarth attacked them directly:

[...] and after many prettinesses, in very pleasing language, [those ingenious gentlemen³⁹] do fairly set you down just where they first took you up; honestly confessing that as to GRACE, the main point in question, they do not even pretend to know any thing of the matter. And indeed how should they? when it actually requires a practical knowledge of the whole art of painting (sculpture alone not being sufficient) and that too to some degree of eminence, in order to enable any one to pursue the chain of this enquiry through all its parts: which I hope will be made to appear in the following work.⁴⁰

37 At this point, it seems impossible to ascertain which pieces of painting criticism Avison (and his circle) drew into consideration, even though at least de Piles and Richardson seem very likely as argued above.

38 William Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty. Written with a View of Fixing the Fluctuating Ideas of Taste*, London 1753, p. 3. Shortly afterwards he adds “merely for the encouragement [...] of such of my readers, as are neither painters, nor connoisseurs” (p. 5).

39 Ibid., p. iii.

40 Ibid., p. iv (original emphasis). Hogarth might have been referring to Roger de Piles’ rather vague notions on grace, *Art of Painting*, pp. 47–48, cf. Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. vii. A more general attack on gentlemen doing the grand tour is on p. 5 (original emphasis): “This mistake [to disregard the substance] happens chiefly to those who go to Rome for the accomplishment of their studies, as they naturally will, without the utmost care, take the infectious turn of the connoisseur, instead of the painter: and in proportion as they turn by those means bad proficients in their own arts, they become the more considerable in that of a connoisseur. As a confirmation of this seeming paradox, it has ever been observ’d at all auctions of pictures, that the very worst painters fit as the most profound judges, and are trusted only, I suppose, on account of their *disinterestedness*.” A quality like “disinterestedness” was specifically stressed by Shaftesbury in his “The Moralists”, in id. 1711, *Characteristicks*, vol. 2, pp. 181–443.

While Avison presented himself – at least rhetorically – as an author in a line with eloquent connoisseurs, Hogarth did not hesitate to claim an authoritative voice as a professional over them. As pointed out in this excerpt, it is Hogarth's most vigorously defended premise that proper judgement be able to name precise quality criteria for beauty and grace in painting – or, as the subtitle states, to “fixing the fluctuating ideas of taste”. For Hogarth, a major problem was that connoisseurs were only “discoursing of effects instead of developing causes”⁴¹. In his view, in order to explain and thoroughly judge painting, profound practical knowledge was necessary. Moreover, it was the sole purview of professional painters and therefore worth considerably more than the unspecific *je ne sais quoi* of the connoisseurs (who might also be amateur painters).⁴²

However, Hogarth still seems to share the ideals of beauty and grace with more general art criticism and did not completely refrain from all common standards of learned writing. It is very likely that he was supported or counselled by writers of his acquaintance such as Dr Benjamin Hoadly, James Ralph, Revd Thomas Morell and Revd James Townley.⁴³ Morell's handwriting attests to his involvement in a draft of a revised version of the *Analysis* in 1754.⁴⁴ He also wrote some of the oratorio librettos for George Frideric Handel and might therefore have been competent to provide some information on music. Moreover, Hogarth was no stranger to music himself as has already been discussed at length.⁴⁵ The most famous indicator of Hogarth's interest in musical expertise is his likely involvement in meetings of the Academy of Vocal (later Ancient) Music.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, music and analogies between painting and music do not play a major role in Hogarth's *Analysis*. Most important to his line of argument is a leaning towards ‘modernist's’⁴⁷ empiricist attitudes as far as they

41 Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. iv.

42 For a summary on Hogarth's disputes with connoisseurs see Joseph Burke, “Introduction”, in William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*, ed. Joseph Burke, Oxford 1955, pp. xiii–lxii, pp. xiii–xvii.

43 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. xxxi–xxxii.

44 GB-Lbl Add MS 27992, fols. 33^r–35^v.

45 See, among others, Jeremy Barlow, *The Enraged Musician. Hogarth's Musical Imagery*, Aldershot and Burlington 2005; Robin Simon, *Hogarth, France and British Art. The Rise of the Arts in 18th-Century Britain*, [London] 2007.

46 Hogarth's name appears twice in its attendance list 1729 / 1730, GB-Lbl Add MS 11732, fols. 9^r–12^v.

47 This refers to Hogarth's clear opposition towards any (neo)classicist tendencies as well as mathematical foundations of the arts, cf. e.g. Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, pp. xii–xx. Cf. also Ilias

concern the recipient's perception, which necessarily comprises a certain attention to "effects" as well as "causes". Focusing on perception with specific regard to the art of painting, he concentrated on the eye with little attention to the other senses. However, in the few instances he used analogies to music, they refer to the organs of perception.⁴⁸ With this in mind, these analogies seem even more noteworthy.

His most intense endeavours to discuss analogies between painting and music are part of his two chapters on light, shade and colour.⁴⁹ Hogarth highlighted them as being the two chapters most specific to painting. This induced him, somewhat ironically, to employ the illustrative function of analogies. He explained at the beginning of the first of these two chapters:

ALTHOUGH both this and the next chapter may seem more particularly relative to the art of painting, than any of the foregoing; yet, as hitherto, I have endeavour'd to be understood by every reader, so here also I shall avoid, as much as the subject will permit, speaking of what would only be well-conceived by painters. There is such a subtle variety in the nature of appearances, that probably we shall not be able to gain much ground by this enquiry, unless we exert and apply the full use of every sense, that will convey to us any information concerning them.⁵⁰

To be understood "by every reader" and in line with his empiricist approach, Hogarth subsequently compared the senses of perception and the way art is perceived which – when speaking of the ear – led him to analogies between painting and music. Hogarth's aim in these two chapters is to explain two different kinds of shade a painter can use to represent different lighting on objects: first, the hue or the shade which can be generated by variances of colour which he calls "prime tints" and second, "retiring shades" which can be achieved by addition of white and black.⁵¹ To make these subtle

Chrissochoidis, "Handel, Hogarth, Goupy. Artistic Intersections in Early Georgian England", in *Early Music* 37 (2009), pp. 577–596, pp. 578, 591.

48 Barlow presents Hogarth's notions on music as rather outstanding (*The Enraged Musician*, 2005, pp. 14–17) while I suggest that this view rather overstresses the point when bearing in mind the usual amount of art analogies in critical contemporary writings as outlined in the introduction of this essay.

49 In the printed edition of 1753, this means chapters 12 and 13, pp. 93–112. However, the chapter numbers vary between the drafts to be discussed below, but the logical sequence is recognizable and substantial analogies to music / the ear can always be found in comparable semantic contexts.

50 Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. 93.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 96.

differences in shade comprehensible to the reader, he unquestioningly embraced the chiaro-oscuro analogy which Avison used as his third analogy. However, Hogarth took up a different variant. As mentioned above, many artists and scientists adapted this analogy in various ways – again bearing in mind that differences between ‘sciences’ and ‘arts’ were not as clear-cut as they might appear today. Isaac Newton, for instance, was interested in both music and painting and considered both in his writings. He too linked colour and sound in his several lectures and his writing on optics.⁵² Within a complex analogous construct of ideas, Newton exposed analogical similarity between the musical gamut and the colours of a spectrum; he likened pitches to colours (varying in number, ultimately seven analogous to the seven notes of the musical gamut). Furthermore, he compared hue with chords.⁵³ Hogarth might have embraced this perspective to a certain point since, like Newton, Hogarth compared the musical gamut to the “painter’s gamut”⁵⁴. However, he did not talk about concords or discords at all but only about a relation between hue or “prime tints” and pitch. This view corresponds to synesthetic ideas by Louis Bertrand Castel about his ocular harpsichord.⁵⁵ To help the distinction between shades of prime tints and retiring shades, he did not only link prime tints to notes but, quite innovatively, he also linked retiring shades to different volumes of sounds / notes:

There is so strict an analogy between shade and sound, that they may well serve to illustrate each other’s qualities: for as sounds gradually decreasing and increasing give the idea of progression from, or to the ear, just so do retiring shades shew progression, by figuring it to the eye. Thus, as by objects growing still fainter, we judge of distances in prospects, so by the decreasing noise of thunder, we form the idea of its moving further from us. And, with regard to their similitude in beauty, like as the gradating shade pleases the eye, so the increasing, or swelling note, delights the ear.⁵⁶

52 Isaac Newton, *The Optical Papers by Isaac Newton*, vol. 1, ed. Alan E. Shapiro, Cambridge 1984; id., *Opticks*, London 1704.

53 Jewanski 2006, “Farbe-Ton-Beziehung”, pp. 144–147.

54 Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. 97.

55 Louis-Bertrand Castel, *L’optique des couleurs*, Paris 1740. Cf. Jewanski 2006, “Farbe-Ton-Beziehung”, pp. 151–152.

56 Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. 97. Cf. also the earlier draft in GB-Lbl Egerton MS 3012, fol. 9r: “This gentle vanishing shade is like, and gives in pleasure like those of falling sounds varying by degrees to the Eye as the other doth to the Ear”

This analogy version is not only new to English art criticism and in opposition to common learned standards – Zarlino, Kircher or Avison seem to have understood light and shade differently. It is also the strongest analogy to music that Hogarth presents.⁵⁷ He carries it further in the following chapter when he discusses the use of these two different shades within the composition of a painting. When arguing for the well-known segmentation of a picture to represent spatial dimensions into foreground, intermediate part and off-skip, he transfers the analogy between colour and musical notes to an analogy between different segments in a picture and different vocal parts in music – and does so without explanation (cf. Avison’s fourth analogy):

the painters accordingly divide theirs [their composition of colours, lights and shades] into fore-ground, middle-ground, and distance or back-ground; which simple and distinct quantities mass together that variety which entertains the eye; as the different parts of base, tenor, and treble, in a composition in music, entertain the ear.⁵⁸

This rendering of analogous principles in painting and music to illustrate painting techniques which are difficult to understand seems comprehensible, given Hogarth’s aim to be ‘understood’ – even though he uses a rather uncommon version of his most prominent analogy. His aim to dive into the specific nature of his art as opposed to general art criticism might even explain why he chose to apply analogies following ideas by Castel who was not only exploring natural qualities of colour and sound but was innovative in striving for synesthetic phenomena. These imply a much closer link between the art forms, not just between their natural ‘material’. Since it was Hogarth’s aim to show that “it actually requires a practical knowledge of the

57 Nevertheless, there are lighter forms of comparisons of the senses still aiming at the ‘beauty’ of the arts, for example in Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, pp. 16 / 42: “All senses delight in it [variety], and equally are averse to sameness. The ear is as much offended with one even continued note, as the eye is with being fix’d to a point, or to the view of dead wall.” / “When you would compose an object of a great variety of parts, let several of those parts be distinguish’d by themselves, by their remarkable difference from the next adjoining, so as to make each of them, as it were, one well-shap’d quantity or part, as is marked by the dotted lines in figure ++ (these are like what they call passages in music, and in writing paragraphs) by which means, not only the whole, but even every part, will be better understood by the eye”. There are further notions on music, only some of which can be regarded as analogies to painting in earlier as well as later drafts for a revised version (see my argument below), some of which are also given in Burke’s 1955 edition, pp. 176–177, 182–183, 186–187.

58 Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. 112 (original emphasis). See also his drafts GB-Lbl Egerton MS 3012, fol. 12^r; GB-Lbl Egerton MS 3013, fols. 118^r–119^r; GB-Lbl Egerton MS 3015, fols. 173^r, 174^r.

whole art [...] and that too to some degree of eminence [...] to pursue the chain of this enquiry through all its parts”⁵⁹, it can be regarded as essential to explore art’s nature(s).

However, this might actually be the problem of Hogarth’s analogies, since his aim not only required him to explain painting “through all its parts”. To be consistent in his call for expertise, he would have to consider any other art thoroughly if analogies to painting should help his point. This is where differences between the arts prove awkward. While painting was widely believed capable of depicting nature, difficulties in judging music based on its powers to imitate nature were widely discussed at the time and – as is well known – quite problematic.⁶⁰ These problems were sure to occur to Hogarth, too. In fact, a study of his drafts reveals how Hogarth struggled to accept the analogy based on Castel. In an earlier version, he included a passage where he explicitly mocked Castel’s ocular harpsichord.⁶¹ Furthermore, he relativised this “analogy between sound and shade” or note and colour (in the sense of hue) in the further run of his *Analysis*. In the subsequent chapter, he practically took back the analogy by elaborating on how sound and shade were not comparable after all:

we will digress a little, to see how the parallel may be drawn between compositions of musick and those of light and shade and colours by which we shall find that tho they illustrate each other extremely well, there is a wide difference in their natures. For; notwithstanding the notes of a scale in musick range greatly similar to the colours as they stand in the rainbow or those dispersed by the Prism, yet we shall find they differ much in their operations and manner of acting in conjunction one with another. For example let all the keys of a harpsichord be prest [sic] down at one stroke and the Ear will be offended with a harsh and confused [sound], but if you run your fingers along them in succession it is harmony. The case is the reverse with colours for the colours of the Rainbow strike the Eye agreeably at first sight but were they to follow each other in quick succession appearing to, and vanishing from the sight the Eye would be in pain and suffer in proportion as the colours were more or less bright or mov’d quicker or slower.⁶²

59 Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, p. iv, see full quotation given above.

60 For a concise overview cf. Jin-Ah Kim, “Mimesis und Autonomie. Zur Genese der Idee der ‘autonomen Musik’”, in *Die Musikforschung* 64 / 1 (2011), pp. 24–45.

61 GB-Lbl Egerton MS 3012, fols. 15^r–17^r.

62 Ibid., fols. 21^r, 22^r.

Hogarth picked an example in which the effects of music and painting perception – i.e. the simultaneous vs. successive perception of the respective artefact – differ in correspondence to the “nature” of music and painting. By arguing the fundamental difference between music’s temporality and the simultaneity of visual objects (with painting in mind), Hogarth changes the perspective from the connoisseur’s unspecific effects to the arts’ individuality as causes of different effects. His aim in this draft seems to be to lead the reader smoothly from common analogies to “real” differences between the arts for both artist and recipient.

There are further instances in Hogarth’s *Analysis* with the same line of argument. Most fundamentally, in the same draft he distinguishes separate categories of excellence for painting and music: “Here’s one more remark[-ed?] difference between the nature of sounds and that of colours, which is that the compositions of the former may be improv’d by art whilst those of the latter will admit of no improvement at all. On the contrary the utmost lack of art doth but faintly imitate her most harmonious compositions.”⁶³ The point about music actually sounding better if it does not imitate nature as opposed to painting – a nice twist on common notions on music’s ‘weakness’ to imitate nature – might actually serve as a key argument why analogies between painting and music are counterproductive to Hogarth’s aim of presenting an art-specific insight into painting. If useful at all in Hogarth’s context, the crucial goal might be to prove how the key role that specific knowledge of the individual art plays, and spelling out how analogies do not work after all prove this very point. Following this line of argument, Hogarth’s standpoint can be pointedly summarised as follows: too much analogical thinking blurs a sober understanding of painting – an understanding which the painter is most qualified to impart due to his intricate knowledge of painting’s individuality. By way of implication and confirming his introductory remarks regarding this point, the painter should actually be the authority in painting criticism.

Even if Hogarth never printed this version, he fervently opposed common ideas ascribed to Dürer, Lomazzo and others which drew analogies between mathematical proportions in bodies and mathematical proportions in music (cf. Avison’s first analogy).⁶⁴ Moreover, a further look at his drafts con-

⁶³ Ibid., fol. 25^r.

⁶⁴ Hogarth 1753, *Analysis*, pp. xii–xx, pp. 76–77. This is further commented on in GB-Lbl Eger-ton MS 3015, fol. 156^r.

firms this tendency to question common analogies between painting and music. In his draft of a revised version of *Analysis of Beauty* in 1754, there are three attempts to rephrase a passage from one of the chapters on light, shade and colour. He obviously tried to find a suitable version of an analogy between beauty and harmony in painting and music as perceived by the eye and the ear, starting with ...

The power of distinguishing the Beauty of forms or the Harmony of sounds depend primarily on the perfection of the organs of sight or hearing.⁶⁵

... trying a second time but re-thinking the sound and hearing similarity...

The Power of distinguishing in a more than ordinary accuracy the delicacies of forms ~~or the Harmony of Sound~~, arising on the perfection of the organs of Sight ~~and hearing~~ [...].⁶⁶

... ending without any analogy or comparison ...

The Power of distinguishing with a more than ordinary accuracy the delicacies of forms engages the mind in a particular attention to them. [...] There are certain degrees of perfection in the organ of sight. Some men having a greater degree of perfection in their organ of sight as well as in mind which gives them a power of distinguishing with more than ordinary accuracy the delicacies of Forms.⁶⁷

This doubly revised passage clearly shows how Hogarth started his revision still reproducing the common empiricist conviction that the senses of perception and more particularly the senses of learning (sight and hearing) are comparable up to a certain point. Initially, he may have been aiming at another line of argument to deconstruct the similarity of perception by showing how the individuality of the arts calls for different ways of perceiving them as shown above. In this draft however, he subsequently chose to cross out analogies in perception and focused strictly on the eye, without any reference to the ear and music. This carries his ambivalent attitude towards analogies between painting and music a step further. By dismissing the illustrative function of these analogies as commonly admitted within art criticism, he more directly addressed the peculiarity of painting. Regarded in this way,

65 GB-Lbl Add MS 27992, fol. 19^v.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid., fol. 20^r.

his aim to develop an independent criticism of painting with the professional voice as the authority (painters like himself) seems even more pointed.

III. Conclusion

A closer look at Avison's and Hogarth's adaptations of common analogies between music and painting reveals two quite distinct appreciations of how these analogies could function as tools not in their then common heuristic sense but to advance the professional voice in music and painting criticism. Both Avison and Hogarth introduced analogies as common learned standard in line with their aim to address a broader audience and to make themselves comprehensible – however, this is as far as the similarities go. The difference starts with Avison and Hogarth's contrary attitude towards these analogies: Avison's affirmation of and Hogarth's defence against them.

Avison not only used analogies to advance music's respectability but employed analogies to painting specifically with the ambition of establishing a music criticism like the painting criticism well known by the beau monde. He incorporated structural aspects known from painting criticism authored by both painters and connoisseurs. He did not criticise connoisseurs directly but rather presented himself as one of them trying to further – and influence – the conversation about music.⁶⁸ However, as a musician he naturally underlined the importance of his professional voice, specifically by claiming that music was much harder to understand than painting – the justification he offered for his set of eight analogies between painting and music. Therefore, Avison used analogies between music and painting to tie in with existing aspects of painting criticism in order to establish and shape a new music criticism.

Hogarth's case is a little ambivalent and therefore more complicated. As a professional painter he argued for more precision in painting criticism with the empirical method he employed. Since analogies have always been used to compare different objects and may be drawn between objects at varying degrees of similarity or difference, they were and are liable to offer only very vague informative value. Hogarth's call for precise professional judgement congruously increased his scepticism towards the information to be gained from analogies between music and painting, a scepticism he

68 Cf. Avison [1753] 2004, *Essay*, p. 4.

encouraged also in his readers. His argument that analogies between the arts cannot provide deeper insight into one specific art due to the arts' individual natures asserts the importance of the professional painter's voice in painting criticism. Ultimately, by correcting or dismissing analogies, he at least indirectly confirmed his already confident view that contemporary analogy-loving connoisseurship was insufficient.