Adam Ferguson: Philosophy, Politics and Society

Edited by Eugene Heath and Vincenzo Merolle

Number 8

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EDITED BY

Eugene Heath
and
Vincenzo Merolle

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CONTENTS

Contributors vi
Acknowledgements vii

Introduction – *Eugene Heath and Vincenzo Merolle* 1

I. Life and Works
1 Ferguson the Highlander – *Michael Fry* 9
2 Adam Ferguson, the 43rd, and the Fictions of Fontenoy – *Bruce Buchan* 25

II. Philosophy
3 Why Did David Hume Dislike Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society*? – *David Raynor* 45
4 Hume as Critic of Ferguson's *Essay* – *Vincenzo Merolle* 73
5 The Two Adams: Ferguson and Smith on Sympathy and Sentiment – *Jack Russell Weinstein* 89

III. Politics
6 A Complicated Vision: The Good Polity in Adam Ferguson's Thought – *Lisa Hill* 107
7 Adam Ferguson and Enlightened Provincial Ideology in Scotland – *Michael Kugler* 125

IV. Society
8 'But Art Itself is Natural to Man': Ferguson and the Principle of Simultaneity – *Christopher J. Berry* 143
9 Ferguson and the Unintended Emergence of Social Order – *Eugene Heath* 155

Notes 169
Works Cited 223
Index 241

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INTRODUCTION

Eugene Heath and Vincenzo Merolle

As a citizen Adam Ferguson (1723–1816) was an active participant in the political contests of the eighteenth century; as a philosopher he was engaged in debate with the greatest minds of his age; as a moralist, he sought to rekindle the fading flame of an ethos more ancient than modern; and as a scholar he forged new pathways in the study of society. These themes and others are the subject of this second volume devoted to scholarly reassessments of his life and thought. In the first volume (*Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature*) contributors focused on Ferguson's life as scholar, teacher and citizen, assessed his contributions to history and historiography and reconsidered his conceptions of action and of providential progress. The essays in this volume address the background, nature and context of Ferguson's social and political thought. The first two papers gauge how Ferguson's comprehension of contemporary society reflects his Highland background. Subsequent essays turn to his relations with David Hume and Adam Smith, revisit the contours of Ferguson's political thought and plumb new understandings of his account of social development and his notion of unintended social order. Historians, philosophers and political scientists engage these topics with an eye to the breadth of Ferguson's work. Although the spotlight shines brightest on his most renowned book, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), other works are illuminated, including his *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (1792), *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (1769) and manuscript essays and correspondence. As with the first volume, the papers included in this second collection will be of interest to historians of ideas, scholars of the eighteenth century, philosophers and social and political theorists.

Ferguson's works display breadth, intelligence and seriousness of moral purpose. As a theorist of society, politics and morals, he begins with the fact that human beings are born in society. We are sociable creatures, blessed with a complex nature of sometimes countervailing motives. Affected by circumstance and history, individuals and societies undergo progress and improvement. The development of society is often an unintended process in which far-sighted calculative

reason plays a relatively limited role compared to that of sentiment, instinct or experience. Yet quiescence is not Ferguson's prescription, at least not for a life lived freely or a society governed happily. Drawing from Stoic themes, he sets forth a description of human nature in which active engagement is both natural and essential. Vigour, integrity and command are often identified by Ferguson with virtue itself. Yet it remains clear that he understands virtue to refer as well to other qualities of character. For the chief end of life is a happiness constituted not by pleasure but by wisdom, courage, benevolence and self-control. Without vigour, there is moral lassitude and the risk of national decline and the loss of liberty; without the qualities of virtue, a narrowness of outlook, a loss of any spirit of society and the risk of corruption. Even though the human being has an impulse to improvement, Ferguson recognizes that a society may regress rather than progress. Despite the possibility of progress, the human being remains as imperfect as his creations and achievements.

Ferguson's critical perspective emerges from his theory of society and his experience of the changes brought to Scotland by the advent of political and economic modernity. Political standards and institutions must be justified in relation to the nature of the human being. However, the human being cannot be understood apart from a comprehension of society and the circumstances of the particular society in which one lives. It follows that Ferguson's political considerations are neither simple nor unambiguous. In some cases (as in his discussion of the merits of the division of labour) the best judgment requires a balancing of advantages and disadvantages, weighing divergent goods against a consideration of varied contingencies. Ferguson's thought reminds us, therefore, that experience has significance, as do the particularities of time and place. Bearing these twin truths in mind, how might Ferguson's own Highland background have affected his work? The first two essays in this volume take up this topic in sympathetic and unique ways.

Life and Works

Reared along the frontier of the Scottish Highlands and a speaker of Gaelic, Ferguson lived most of his life among Lowlanders. In the opening essay, 'Ferguson the Highlander', Michael Fry explores Ferguson's Highland roots, the circumstances of his youth, and his service as chaplain to the Black Watch, the 43rd Highland Regiment. Fry details how Ferguson's entrance into modern culture did not entail the loss of his Highland identity. In fact, Fry contends, his Highland roots drew Ferguson to the poetry of James Macpherson's Ossian. In these poems, Ferguson found an appealing depiction of heroic virtue that supported his own outlook. Even if fictive, the verses of Ossian could convey, as Ferguson himself suggests, a spirit and identity to a people or nation. As Fry explains,

Ferguson acknowledges the progress of modernity, but also admits its shortcomings, thereby serving as sympathetic 'witness' to the qualities and gifts of a noble Highland society long eclipsed.

It was in 1745, while still a student of divinity at Edinburgh, that Ferguson was appointed chaplain to the 43rd Highland Regiment, joining it in September, a few months after the British defeat at the Battle of Fontenoy. A legend emerged that, in fact, Ferguson was not only present at that battle but had sought, in the heat of the fighting, to forsake his chaplaincy to join the fray! As Bruce Buchan points out in 'Adam Ferguson, the 43rd, and the Fictions of Fontenoy', the doubtful tale of Ferguson's battlefield actions incorporates mythical elements that nonetheless manifest truths about his Highland background. And the facts of the battle reveal another fiction as well – that warfare can be, in any real sense, 'civilized'. It remains true, however, that Ferguson admired the modern rules of war, just as he maintained that a citizen army would be the best means for preserving the virtues essential for a genuine civilization. Committed to the idea of civilization, with its commerce, arts and law, Ferguson worried that its benefits might themselves become fictional if they served to conceal the loss of virtue, in particular, the hardy sort exhibited by the Highlander.

Ferguson and Philosophy

Ferguson's thought bears the influence of classical authors (the Roman Stoics in particular), his own Christian outlook, and a number of modern thinkers. The influence of Cicero may be discerned in Ferguson's observation that human nature includes an innate quality of sociability – a desire to be part of a group, clan or social whole. The inclination to society is a thesis found in the works of Lord Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson, as well as in the texts of earlier theorists of natural law such as Hugo Grotius and Samuel Pufendorf, not to mention the Baron de Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws*. In setting forth his claim of sociability, Ferguson seeks to rebut Thomas Hobbes's contention that society is but an instrument to satisfy our selfish motives. In Ferguson's estimation, self-interest should not be construed in a narrow manner: One's genuine interests include benevolence to others.

Ferguson's account of human nature aims also at Jean-Jacques Rousseau's portrayal of the primitive human as more animal than person. It is not simply the substance of Rousseau's description but its suppositional nature that rankles the Scot. For Ferguson, the qualities of the human being (or the practices of some remote society) are not a matter of conjecture but of fact. From the texts of classical authors, reports from travellers and from his own introspection, Ferguson elicits an account of human nature that he employs as the basis of a natural history of humanity. Even if Ferguson does not fully forswear supposi-

tional elements in his own theory, he aspires to an account grounded in the real and complex nature of the human being. It is in this sense that *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* relies on empiricist assumptions.

Thus, a set of epistemic postulates underlies Ferguson's natural history of society. In his *Institutes* (a reformulation of his lectures, published just two years after the *Essay*), Ferguson outlines an epistemic program that not only affirms the possibility of knowledge but suggests its wide scope. Knowledge, he maintains, may be about either facts or rules. Knowledge of fact may include perceptual knowledge, though Ferguson does not construe perception to involve – as René Descartes, John Locke and Hume had each suggested – some idea or image mediating between self and world. Rather, to perceive is to perceive objects in the world, a conclusion similar to that found in the full-throated realism of Thomas Reid. As for our knowledge of rules, this is derived, in Baconian fashion, from an inductive examination of facts. Such rules, or laws of nature, may be either physical or moral. True moral judgments have a clear, almost common-sensical objectivity not reducible either to a moral sense or, as Adam Smith argued, a psychological process of sympathy. Moving beyond the project of the *Essay,* the scope of knowledge expands further. All rational perceivers may recognize in creation a purpose and design sufficient to establish that God exists. As this suggests, Ferguson accepts the very sort of teleological argument that David Hume attacks in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. In Ferguson's estimation, the system of the universe, its very order of being, reflects the intelligence of God who has constructed the world *for* human beings.

Less a pure philosopher than a social theorist and moralist, Ferguson is nonetheless a friend of the two greatest philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment, Hume and Smith. If Ferguson's philosophical engagement does not approach the systematic heights or analytic depths achieved by his friends, it may be affirmed nonetheless that he 'met them on equal terms, quarreled with and supported them and sometimes helped to shape not only their ideas, but those of equally impressive, later figures'.[1] Each of the three philosophers rejects social contract theory and each refuses to deflate human motivation to the currency of egoism. Ferguson also exhibits some of the eighteenth-century fascination with the status of sentiment and morals. However, he does not accept Hume's claim (in *A Treatise of Human Nature*) that moral judgment rests on sentiment or feeling (even if he does allow, albeit vaguely, an association of sentiment with the recognition of moral good or evil). And, as noted below, he objects to how Smith utilizes, in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the idea of sympathy to establish an impartial standard of morals.

Hume proved to be a great benefactor to the younger Ferguson. In 1757 Hume vacated his post as Keeper of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, creating thereby a vacancy to which Ferguson was appointed immediately. And it

was Hume whose subsequent efforts to situate Ferguson in a university position finally succeeded on the third attempt, securing for him the chair in Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh.[2] In 1767, some eight years after Ferguson attained a professorial post, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society,* was published. Despite their friendship, however, Hume did not react favorably to the *Essay*. The reasons for Hume's negative evaluation provide the subject of two distinct but complementary essays.

In a thorough and original study, 'Why Did David Hume Dislike Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society*?', David Raynor canvasses numerous points of disagreement – stylistic and substantive – that might have led Hume to regard the *Essay* unfavourably. Raynor notes how Hume must have been disappointed by Ferguson's omission of the function of religion and religious belief in the development of society. Moreover, Hume would have disapproved of Ferguson's praise of Sparta, disliked his affection for Stoicism, and rejected his claim that imaginative conjecture has no place in social theory. In laying out these and other reasons for Hume's dislike of Ferguson's greatest work, Raynor calls our attention to a neglected review of the *Essay*. Appearing in 1767, in the short-lived journal *Mémoires littéraires* (edited by Edward Gibbon and Georges Deyverdun), this anonymous but thoughtful review expresses numerous opinions compatible with Hume's positions. In highlighting this compelling article, Raynor also offers a new and plausible suggestion: that Hume himself may have contributed to the review.

In 'Hume as Critic of Ferguson's *Essay*', Vincenzo Merolle offers a complementary but distinct assessment. Hume's reaction to Ferguson's *Essay* probably stemmed, Merolle maintains, from a significant difference in outlook between the two men. A philosopher of the Enlightenment, Hume failed to grasp that Ferguson's project was an anthropological and historicist enterprise. Apart from this difference in perspective, and Hume's preference for philosophical analyses, Ferguson's embrace of straightforward, if not moralistic, judgments would rest uneasily with Hume's sceptical conclusions about knowledge, metaphysics and morals. These differences may have fuelled Hume's disappointment at the first great product of the friend whose professorial post had been attained in large part thanks to Hume's persistence.

Hume and Ferguson remained friends, but Ferguson and Smith did not enjoy consistently happy relations. Philosophically, Ferguson rejected Smith's appeal to sympathy and the impartial spectator, contending that these phenomena could not explain moral standards without presupposing them. In 'The Two Adams: Ferguson and Smith on Sympathy and Sentiment', Jack Russell Weinstein examines this philosophical disagreement but also points out the several ways in which their moral outlooks were in agreement. Weinstein recalls how in one of Ferguson's unpublished dialogues one of the characters, General Clerk, offers an abusive

dismissal of Smith's moral theory and its reliance on sympathy. Weinstein suggests that Clerk – whose criticisms of sympathy appear contradictory – may not, in fact, be a voice for Ferguson's own views. Even if Ferguson did not welcome Smith's concept of sympathy or the impartial spectator, sections of the *Essay* reveal, Weinstein argues, that he and Smith share common theses regarding the behavioural and institutional consequences of the interaction of reason and sentiment.

Political Thought

Ferguson's political thought has been variously described, but two of the most important, and seemingly contrary, interpretations are the 'civic humanist' and the liberal. Some scholars have sought to ally his political thought with one mode of what is called the republican interpretation of eighteenth-century thought.[3] Since Ferguson employs the language of virtue and worries over the perils of the polished age of commerce, the civic humanist appellation is not without some justification. Such an interpretation does not, of course, require that Ferguson have read the works of specific thinkers (Niccolò Machiavelli, for example). Rather, the civic humanist account concentrates, sometimes quite generally, on Ferguson's language. However, a vocabulary of 'virtue' need not entail civic humanist *conceptions*, and it is not obvious that Ferguson employed a discourse of virtue with 'civic humanist' ideals in mind. Ferguson's discourse may rely as much on Highland aspirations and Christian education as it does humanist ideals. For example, it is not readily apparent that Ferguson's thought agrees, in any clear and unambiguous way, with the civic humanist specification that 'the human personality ... [i]s fully expressed only in the practice of citizenship'.[4]

No doubt Ferguson is committed to the idea of virtue and to active engagement in society, just as he is concerned with how specialization may risk a blinkered perspective (not to mention the separation of citizenship from national defence, as witnessed in the rise of professional armies). These considerations are consistent, however, with another characterization of Ferguson's political thought – as classical liberal. His is a liberalism that reflects the contingencies of history and circumstance, not a theoretical liberalism drawing sustenance from a doctrine of rights or purporting some appeal to utility. Developing out of history, amidst the competing interests and oppositions of individuals and parties, liberty is established by law and preserved by the integrity and vigour of free citizens. Even if nations have distinct ends, liberty remains a condition for living well and for realizing the qualities of humanity, including classical liberal virtues such as industry and liberality.

With these two interpretations in mind, it seems promising to recast Ferguson's political thought as embedded in or derivative of his social theory. This strategy is consistent with Ferguson's explicit assertion, in his *Principles*, that all

subjects have a descriptive and a normative component. The institutions and norms that should demand our allegiance must be understood and advocated in light of a general understanding of society and with an eye to particular circumstances. In her essay, 'A Complicated Vision: The Good Polity in Adam Ferguson's Thought', Lisa Hill draws upon Ferguson's social theory in order to situate his political vision between the civic humanist and liberal conceptions. Ferguson offers us a liberalism that draws from Stoic influences, takes root in the forces of spontaneous growth, and does not recoil from the recognition of the good and ill effects of modernity. Progressive and conservative, idealist and realist, the tensions and apparent inconsistencies in his political thought reflect his theory that society is a result of unintended or spontaneous ordering forces whose outcomes may not be unequivocally good. So even if the institutions of the state emerge spontaneously, Hill explains, the maintenance of a good polity requires vigilance. However, since Ferguson does not specify fully the form of active citizenship, Hill wonders whether his appeal is less to political than to social and cultural engagement. Nonetheless, his overall vision incorporates a cautious approach to political reform, with an appeal to gradual progress rather than radical innovation.

Ferguson's ambivalence about modernity is also featured in Michael Kugler's account, 'Adam Ferguson and Enlightened Provincial Ideology in Scotland'. Ferguson's political thought, he contends, must be understood in its moral and historical context. Modern commercial culture, increasing specialization, expanding state bureaucracies and colonial empires create opportunities but threaten the independence of individuals and societies. Individual and communal good require the more rudimentary virtues of courage and strong affection. Drawing from his Highland background, knowledge of Stoicism, and awareness of the geographic and cultural distance of Scotland from the cities of Europe, Ferguson sought to defend a robust conception of moral character (filtered through Christian learning) and to preserve a sense of regional independence, exemplified in the federative union of Great Britain. If an infusion of martial vigor seemed essential to the preservation of a good society, it is also true that towards the end of his life, in witness to the French Revolution, Ferguson came to wonder whether vigour and zeal could ensure the good polity that he still desired.

Social Theory

Ferguson's *Essay* is his foremost contribution to the emergence of social science and the study of society. A society is a grouping of individuals who desire to interact together in generally beneficial ways and whose actions incorporate common assumptions and reliable expectations about one another. Of course, since actual societies differ in norms, practices and modes of interaction, these variations,

Ferguson realizes, require explanation. Some of this diversity is explored in his characterizations of societies as rude (savage, barbarian) or civilized (polished or commercial). Although Ferguson is often associated with stadial theorists, his articulation of social change and diversity does not include any exact account of specific stages of social development or any specification of the mode of transition from one stage to another. Even so, the characteristics of a savage state are distinct from those of barbaric and polished societies.

In his essay, '"But art itself is natural to man": Ferguson and the Principle of Simultaneity', Christopher J. Berry reminds us how Ferguson sometimes employs language redolent of elements of stadial theory. However, as Berry keenly discerns, there is something unique in Ferguson's theory of societal development. In his *Principles* he states explicitly that among three types of human activity – commerce, politics and fine arts – there is no temporal priority. Rather, these types of activity emerge and develop simultaneously, a manifestation of our human nature and our tendency to seek improvements. Ferguson differs, then, from a stadial theorist such as John Millar[5] who takes the subsistence arts to antedate the political and the fine arts. Commerce is not unique to polished societies and political activity is but a reflection that human beings are found in groups with varying forms of stratification. In Ferguson's view, the fine arts do not emerge only at some late stage of society but are practiced throughout. As Berry explains, although some activities may distract from or inhibit others, none is to be suppressed and all possess equal value. In this sense, Ferguson does not privilege the political over the commercial or the fine arts.

As has been noted above, Ferguson often refers to how complex social states – institutions, norms and complex patterns of conduct – may emerge slowly and in a spontaneous or unintended fashion. That social phenomena might emerge without being a product of design or explicit contract is a matter of some interest among eighteenth-century thinkers (including Hume and Smith). Yet Ferguson's remarks on these phenomena are often brief and undeveloped. In the last essay of the collection, 'Ferguson and the Unintended Emergence of Social Order', Eugene Heath reconstructs the framework of Ferguson's theory of the unintended emergence of social order. He shows that although Ferguson does not postulate some mechanism of unintended coordination, there is a coherent set of explanatory principles that illuminates how Ferguson could assume that complex social patterns may have come about without being designed by human agents. Heath suggests that Ferguson includes moral standards among the unintended patterns that emerge within society. In delineating this account, he appeals to Ferguson's pluralistic view of human nature, including the pivotal role of ambition. The framework described, Heath argues, provides some grounding for Ferguson's progressivist view of the development of society.

1 FERGUSON THE HIGHLANDER

Michael Fry

Enlightened Edinburgh was in some degree alien territory to Adam Ferguson. He stood to the fore in its intellectual life but he was a Highlander while the rest of the enlightened literati were Lowlanders. The gap between the Highlands and the Lowlands yawned wider in the eighteenth century than it has since or does now. This essay seeks to trace its significance in Ferguson's work.

Like all Highlanders, Ferguson had to come to terms with the huge changes wrought on his native region by the two failed Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1745. The ancestral system of clans and chieftains had been decaying before, but with this evidence of its continuing disruptive potential the British state decided to eradicate it. Here historical change, always a matter of interest to the enlightened literati, went into fast-forward. By the time of Ferguson's maturity, the old Highland institutions were dead or dying yet nothing of equal strength and utility had replaced them. The fact that these changes were induced, and had not so far produced an outcome recognizable to stadial theory, may explain his reluctance to make use of them in his work: it was just too early to assess what had been going on. All the same, he offers enough allusion to indicate how he might have interrogated the evidence had it been more amenable to the theory. In retrospect, we may be able to fill in some of the gaps.

Three Frontiers

The place where Ferguson was born in 1723, Logierait in Perthshire, lay just north of what later became known as the Highland line, marking the division from the Lowlands. It was in fact a multiple line. It was in the first place topographical, joining the points where the ground rose from gentler terrain to over 1,000 feet. The Highland massif is dissected by long, narrow glens and Logierait stands near the lower end of two of them. It is not far either from the Pass of Killiecrankie where a road across the mountains debouches into the low country, scene of the great Jacobite victory in 1689. Beside offering the clans a route for

raids to the south, the road also carried traffic the other way and brought Lowland influences to the north.

At the time of Ferguson's birth, the Highland line coincided along much of its length with the linguistic frontier between Gaelic and English. In the Gaelic language there is no word for the Highlands as such: the term is 'Gàidhealtachd', simply meaning Gaelic-speaking area. Today the term is inaccurate, for English has become the everyday vernacular of the great majority of Highlanders too. But in the eighteenth century it was just as good a name for the region.

Within the Gàidhealtachd, the Fergusons were native to the district of Atholl, where Logierait stands. Adam's father, also Adam (but spelling his name Fergusson), had been born in 1682 at Moulin, five miles up the road into the mountains. The further it ascended the more completely Gaelic-speaking the population alongside became. Gaelic was the elder Fergusson's mother tongue; he tells us he spoke no English till aged twelve, when he began to learn it from a schoolmate, a son of the ducal house of Atholl.[1] Later he belonged to the minority of Gaelic-speaking ministers valuable to the Church of Scotland because it was so hard to find men able, let alone willing, to serve in Highland parishes. He married Mary Gordon, daughter of a family of bonnet lairds, that is, feudal superiors of a modest patrimony, in western Aberdeenshire, not far away but over a trackless wilderness. This was also a borderland of the Gàidhealtachd, though it is unclear if she knew Gaelic. It seems likely from her name and connections that she knew only English, or rather Scots.

To this day, in Scottish households where one parent is a Gael and the other not, the language of the home is normally English. Adam younger had an oral command of Gaelic, but says his knowledge of the written language remained limited.[2] This is no surprise. Gaelic writings available in the eighteenth century were for the most part still couched in a conservative dialect of the language, the so-called Common Classical Gaelic: common because it was used in both Ireland and Scotland and classical because it had reached its standard form by the late middle ages. The orthography was complex, if logical in its own terms – more logical than English orthography, though neither language has an invariable equivalence between written letters and spoken sounds. Most Gaels never learned to write their language properly, or indeed at all, and Ferguson was in that respect typical.

Still, even if the family normally spoke English to one another, Adam junior could readily pick up vernacular Gaelic from the everyday life of Logierait (the parish still counted a Gaelic-speaking majority at the turn of the twentieth century). It was quite enough for a boy destined to go out into the world. He first left home aged nine to attend Perth Grammar School whence he proceeded, five years later, to the University of St Andrews.

In following this course Ferguson crossed a third frontier on which his birthplace lay, the cultural frontier between Highlands and Lowlands. It might be characterized in more than one way, but to most contemporaries it was a frontier between barbarism and civility; Ferguson would have much to say about such matters in his own writings. Yet today we are more inclined to see what his fellows preferred not to see, that Gaeldom had for time out of mind had an intricate culture of its own.

Logierait was one place displaying memorials of that culture. It remains today what it was in Ferguson's time, and what all Highland communities then were, little more than a scattering of houses. But its appearance belied its importance. The church was ancient, founded about 650 by St Cedd, a missionary from Iona. Probably its site, near the confluence of the Rivers Tay and Tummel, had even earlier been a ceremonial one in some way, to judge from the Pictish monuments abounding there. This importance survived the occupation of Atholl by invading Gaels, who formed here one of the seven sub-kingdoms which preceded the union of Scotland under Kenneth MacAlpine in 843. Along with some other sub-kingdoms, Atholl evolved into a medieval earldom. Title to it passed through several noble houses and finally to the Murrays, Dukes of Atholl in Ferguson's time.

Atholl also survived as a regality. That is to say, it was a territory where the feudal superior, the duke, had the judicial powers of a king. One power was that of 'pit and gallows', of imprisoning and executing criminals. The institution of the regality persisted in Scotland even beyond the Treaty of Union in 1707, which indeed explicitly preserved it. It had arisen and remained in use because the medieval monarchy was too weak to administer justice in remote areas. Instead it devolved the judicial function to a local magnate. In Atholl it is possible this function had yet more remote origins, in the Gaelic sub-kingdom, which the monarchy had merely confirmed.

By an immemorial tradition the rulers of Atholl exercised the judicial function not at Blair, their huge castle further up the road into the mountains, but at Logierait. This otherwise humble hamlet boasted a courthouse, a jail and, on the nearby knoll of the gallows, Tom-na-croiche, a dool tree, where criminals were hanged and their cadavers left dangling for the crows to eat. The condemned men needed the consolations of religion beforehand and it formed part of the duty of the minister of Logierait to offer them: his was a position above that of other ministers in Atholl. When the duke presented Fergusson to the parish in 1714 it had been a signal mark of favour. And at length it allowed Fergusson's son to carry away with him to the Lowlands vivid memories of Highland life, its base brutalities as well as its intricate culture.

Two Cultures

Ferguson's native culture was then overlain by an altogether different one, that of the Scottish Enlightenment. While the first had decayed, the second was blossoming. When in 1743 Fergusson became a student of divinity at the University of Edinburgh, he joined a circle of contemporaries destined, like him, for great things: William Robertson, who rose to principal of the university and historiographer royal of Scotland; John Home, later playwright and then private secretary to Lord Bute, the first Scottish Prime Minister of Great Britain; Hugh Blair, eventually professor of rhetoric and belles-letters at Edinburgh; John Jardine, who provided a useful political connection as son-in-law to George Drummond, the evergreen lord provost of the city; and Alexander 'Jupiter' Carlyle, famous for his verve, wit and good looks, who left us his reminiscences of them all.

By Carlyle's account, Ferguson displayed qualities striking his Lowland companions as typically Highland: 'He had the pride and high spirit of his countrymen'. Sober enough to make a convincing clergyman, he had yet also acquired 'the manners of a gentleman'. But there was a less complaisant side to him, which came out in haughtiness, together with a tendency 'to be jealous of his rivals, and indignant against assumed superiority'. Carlyle says Robertson even felt just a bit scared of the Celtic passion seething below their friend's calm and cultivated surface. We can conclude that Ferguson's bosom companions sensed something a little alien about him.[3]

The closest contact they had otherwise with the Highlands came in the autumn of 1745 when the rebel army of Prince Charles Edward Stewart, he the same age as themselves, occupied Edinburgh during the final Jacobite rising. These Presbyterian students joined the volunteers raised to defend the capital, but their unit was disbanded without a fight once the Highlanders arrived at the end of the long march from the North. If that had not happened, the bosom companions might have been ordered out to fight at the Battle of Prestonpans, and to be slaughtered alongside the regular troops of King George II.

But Ferguson himself missed all this. He had that spring been the first of his friends to be whisked away from Edinburgh, to become deputy chaplain to the Black Watch, the 43rd regiment of foot in the British army, which promptly left for Flanders to fight in the War of the Austrian Succession. It was a Highland regiment, formed in 1739 out of some older independent companies embodied by the noble house of Atholl to police the passes over the mountains. The regiment had a Gaelic name, Am Freiceadan Dubh, after its tartan of the government's standard issue, a sombre pattern of blue, black and green, in contrast to the red coats of the Saighdearan Dearg, the regular infantry.

At the time of his military appointment, Ferguson was just halfway through his theological studies but the system of patronage in Scotland could ignore such

trifles, often for good rather than ill. The patron of the regiment was the Duke of Atholl. Its colonel was his brother, Lord John Murray, who wanted a better chaplain for it; the incumbent did not speak Gaelic and could pay a deputy £60 a year. The dowager Duchess of Atholl did the Fergussons another favour and recommended their clever son. Though a `kindly relation' had long existed between their family and the ducal house, the duchess was more intent on finding a chaplain to act as a 'kind of tutor or guardian' for her own son who needed help to 'keep in peace with his officers'.[4]

Instead Murray had to look out for Ferguson. Am Freiceadan Dubh played a heroic part in the Battle of Fontenoy in May 1745, Britain's worst defeat during the war. It is said that as the regiment advanced into the fray, Murray was astonished to see Ferguson leading the men, claymore in hand. When his colonel urged him to return to the rear with the surgeons where he belonged, Ferguson ignored him. Murray then gave the chaplain an explicit order, saying his commission did not entitle him to fight in the front rank. 'Damn my commission!' roared the hot-tempered Ferguson, throwing his papers at the colonel as he charged on. Unfortunately this story appears to be apocryphal.[5]

The Black Watch returned from the continent as British forces concentrated to meet the threat from the North once Prince Charles occupied Edinburgh. It arrived in November, not to be sent to Scotland but to be kept south of the River Thames on guard against any diversionary invasion from France. The government in London still had doubts about the loyalty of a Highland regiment, and its chaplain felt a duty to reinforce that loyalty as best he could. On 18 December to the troops in cantonment at Camberwell, Ferguson preached a Gaelic sermon on 2 Samuel X:12, 'Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God'.

It seems the duchess felt impressed at Ferguson's eloquence. She ordered the sermon to be translated into English and published. In this form it remains a slightly odd performance, mixing an abstract, even bloodless argument with a ferocious rant against the Jacobites and the French. Finally Ferguson arrives a little closer to the personal interests of the men he is addressing: 'That part of the country from which we come is peculiarly indebted to the government'. Yet, after mentioning the construction of Highland churches and schools, his list of benefits runs thin. Much of it must have anyway gone over the heads of the illiterate Gaels before him, though he is sensitive enough to note that many had family or friends on the other side (Atholl regiments formed fierce and effective units of the Jacobite army). 'If you oppose your acquaintance, it is to prevent their ruin', Ferguson concludes; and 'If you oppose your relations, it is to save them and their posterity from slavery for ever'.[6] He had hoped to show that loyalty to Britain, where the law secures persons and property, religion and welfare, was more important than traditional allegiance to the clan and to its territory.[7]

The title page of the published sermon says it has been translated by Ferguson into English, but it is unclear from what other document precisely. This version comprises twenty-two pages of a not sophisticated but still extensive argument, originally elaborated in a language the author elsewhere says he cannot properly read (or, presumably, write). Six months of contact with his troops, many of them monoglot Gaels and perhaps few entirely comfortable in English, might have worked wonders in reviving his own fluency: Carlyle tells us he was 'adored by his countrymen, the common soldiers'.[8] But a military camp is not the best place to master an obscure orthography, let alone invent for a language that does not know them new terms of art in social science ('public corruption ... a general reformation of manners').[9] Perhaps in fact the sermon was not written down for its first delivery. More likely Ferguson preached impromptu in Gaelic but later produced a polished version only in English, to send to the duchess as a compliment and piece of self-advertisement.

Ferguson did not come back to Scotland till 1751. Then, on furlough from his regiment, he divided his time between Edinburgh and Logierait. But he never returned permanently to his Highland home. He would now have preferred to leave the army and find a regular parish, yet could not. It was hard for him because he sought to avoid being pigeonholed as a Highlander at a time when the Kirk followed a policy that Gaelic-speaking ministers, always in short supply, had to serve in Gaelic-speaking parishes. Instead he applied for parishes in the Lowlands.

Robert Adam hoped this could make a man of Ferguson: 'God knows, whilst he ... continues a poor damned droning Presbyterian bagpiper of the gospel according to Logierait, he might as well have made him a Highland cow'. With luck he ought to 'be of use to himself and his country'; otherwise he had to settle for tutorships, for grand tours with the young scions of noble houses, to 'have £400 from one, £500 from another settled on him for life so that he may bid old presbytery kiss his arse'.[10] Indeed, after three fruitless years of trying for a Lowland parish, Ferguson gave up and went on the grand tour with a young man named Gordon, probably Cosmo Gordon of Cluny.

Only at the end of a further period of drift did Ferguson successfully apply to become keeper of the Advocates' Library – and with that, after a decade of absence, resume his place in enlightened Edinburgh. His progress there was now rapid. In 1757 he won the election to the chair of natural philosophy at the university, and in 1764 to that of moral philosophy. In 1767 he published *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, making his name as, among other things, the founder of the modern discipline of sociology. He applied theories of the Scottish Enlightenment not just to the individual, his perceptions and his morality, as other philosophers had done, but to man in society. In consequence, it was his views that largely defined the Enlightenment's historical outlook: how man-

kind had progressed through stages marked by different social and economic organization, varying levels of culture and divergences in morality. A large part of the empirical evidence he offers is drawn from classical literature, presumably as being most familiar to potential readers. This may seem to exclude current controversies, in order to maintain a cool tone of scientific authority. But it is not otherworldly.

'Our Epic'

Meanwhile Gaelic culture had arrived in the capital in a different guise, thanks to another Highlander eager to get on in the Lowlands. What James Macpherson brought with him gave rise to the greatest literary controversy of the age. From 1760, he published a number of volumes purporting to be translations into English of poems composed in Gaelic by the ancient poet Ossian. These caused a sensation because they burst on a literary scene used to mannered fiction, decorous poetry and high-minded history, with heavy admixtures of moral philosophy. Beneath the polished surface of convention there stood, suddenly revealed, abysses of raw instinct and emotion, of lust and bloodlust, and the reading public loved it. From Lisbon to Riga young men (young women less often) went into fits of gloom and contemplated lovelorn suicide and so on. It marked the start of the Romantic Movement. Yet a question remained as to whether Ossian was authentic.

Ferguson took a part in the controversy. He early on made the acquaintance of Macpherson and entertained him at Logierait. They discussed Gaelic poetry and Ferguson gave Macpherson a letter of introduction to his old companion, John Home, now a professor at Edinburgh. Home and Macpherson then met in 1759 at Moffat, a spa in Dumfriesshire. They found they shared a romantic sensibility and a penchant for heroism and patriotism: the blend that gave rise to Ossian. Learning that Macpherson happened to have some Gaelic poems about him, Home talked him into producing English translations and took them to literary friends in Edinburgh and London. They felt impressed as well. Blair, in the middle of preparing his first public lectures on rhetoric, showed a particular interest. He promised to get an anthology of the translations published, if Macpherson could do enough of them to make a small book.

The result, containing fifteen poems, came out to rave reviews as *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* (1760). In an introduction Blair surmised these pieces were just a fraction of a vast fund of Ossianic literature awaiting discovery in the Highlands. He was right: the medieval lays of the Fianna (where Ossian appears) figured prominently in the folklore of the region, as a living tradition even yet in the crofts and clachans. They recounted how the semi-regular militia of Finn MacCool performed fearless feats in athletic defence

of the underdog, when not too busy with erotic entanglements or with discussions in elegant and complex poetry on the relative merits of the active and the contemplative life. Or at least, that is how this then mainly oral verse has come down to us today after generations of scholarly work to reconstruct the original corpus, which had declined and fragmented.

To collect further specimens of the corpus, Blair raised the money to send Macpherson round the Highlands in search of them. A crucial aspect of this enterprise lay in the fact that it was aimed not at Gaels but at English-speakers, in particular the literati of Edinburgh. They had to be given what they wanted if it was to succeed. Early in 1761, Macpherson got back to the capital to show the materials he had obtained to Ferguson who thought, from his imperfect knowledge of Gaelic orthography, that they looked authentic. They were then edited into a seamless whole, *Fingal*, which came out later in the year to a yet more rapturous reception.

Critics vied in praise or blame of the book though since few knew Gaelic, and Macpherson treated with contempt any questioning of his sources, a definite conclusion on their authenticity proved impossible. The poem was no mere forgery, as his fiercest foes claimed. But if he could not exactly produce his originals, this was because they did not exactly exist. He was by training a student of classical not Gaelic literature and had no special philological skills. He had found some manuscripts in Old Irish (hard to read even for trained scholars today) and aged bards declaiming a Classical Common Gaelic different from his own vernacular of Strathspey. A youth eager to get into print could make little of that.

What Macpherson could do was concoct an epic out of materials and ideas he had gathered, if couched in another language, so as to tickle current literary taste. And why not? In Gaeldom plagiarism had little meaning. The bards never claimed copyright or worried whether others thought them original. Since Gaels were the ones that produced the epic, they surely had some right to fix its character. Macpherson did imitate, as best he could, a genuine tradition, if overlain by a polite veneer for the new audience. Yet it remains true that no poem like *Fingal* ever existed in the Highlands. While Ferguson and other literati acted as cheerleaders for Ossian, Macpherson remained diffident. Blair recalled that 'the whole publication, you know, was in its first rise accidental. Macpherson was entreated and dragged into it'.[11]

However that may have been, the appearance of the Ossianic poetry required a meeting of minds, a conjunction of Macpherson and the literati, with Ferguson as go-between. They needed Macpherson's texts; he needed their interest and support, social and intellectual contacts, publishing and marketing skills. Blair was unwise enough to call it 'our epic'. In the foreword to *Fingal*, Macpherson

thanked Home for his 'uncommon zeal' and those others who had been 'earnest in exhorting him to bring more [Gaelic poetry] to light'.[12]

What were the motives behind the zeal and earnestness? In a word, patriotic. In another context, the philosopher David Hume had boasted how modern Scots were 'really the people most distinguished for literature in Europe'.[13] But Scots often deal with insecurity by boasting. While Hume was right at the time, it had yet to be proved that the recent burst of national genius was more than a flash in the pan. A country's culture will have more staying power if it has roots too. If it was to outdo a neighbouring country that could vaunt itself on William Shakespeare, those roots had to go deep. Yet they could not go deeper than Homer, because he was where European literature had begun: so a poet comparable to Homer would do nicely. Hence Ossian – bard of a Celtic community lost in the mists of time, whose power and passion transcended, yet somehow conformed to, the human sensibility and poetic discipline of a later, more rational, more polished age. Ossian would give Scotland her proper place in the history of western culture.[14]

This tortuous train of thought entailed a further twist. The values of Ossianic verse – heroism, honour, valour and virtue – were conducive to a martial spirit. The poem tells of proud, brave Scots defending their country against brutal Scandinavian aggressors. The medium is not as gruesome as in Homer, but the message is the same, how war has about it a terrible necessity that can make it worth the cost. The dauntless Fingal does his duty as warlord in a world of never-ending adversity, one thing after another. Yet he and his followers fight only for good causes consoling them for their sacrifices. So Ossian was an example also of the sort of heroism marking out the Scots in their perpetual battle to secure a nationhood in fact incapable of ever being secured.[15]

Ossian trumpets, then, both the poetic genius and the national nobility of Scotland. It brings together, too, her past and her present. It clothes the values of a barbaric era in the elegance and decorum of a civilized one. It looks back to a golden age, as the poetry of Greece and Rome often did – though the Ossianic golden age is not free of strife, rather peopled by a race seeking in it the highest virtue. These men know nothing of contemporary corruptions. Unlike Homeric heroes, Ossianic heroes have no personal flaws or moral conflicts of any kind. To readers now this makes them boring; but readers then apparently preferred inspiring myths and ethical lessons to complex characters and dramatic tensions. At least the literati of Edinburgh preferred those things. It was their answer to modern malaise, because they saw in it a healthy dose of elemental vitality.

That was what made the Scottish Enlightenment, compared to the syphilitic salons of France or the arid academies of Prussia, an affair of good talk, good humour and good drink, still on a par intellectually with anywhere else. As this rough vigour coursed through the closes and wynds of old Edinburgh, it carried

a heathery reek of the wild winds over the Firth of Forth that sweep down on the capital from the Highlands. The Scottish Enlightenment turned out to have brawn as well as brains because it was in part a Highland Enlightenment too. It turned out so because of Ferguson.

'National Spirit'

There is in Ferguson's *Essay* a passage which, by way of backhanded compliment to early Greek poetry, makes an unmistakable allusion to Ossian too:

> When traditionary fables are rehearsed by the vulgar, they bear the marks of a national character; and though mixed with absurdities, often raise the imagination, and move the heart; when made the materials of poetry, and adorned by the skill and the eloquence of an ardent and superior mind, they instruct the understanding, as well as engage the passions. It is only in the management of mere antiquaries, or stript of the ornaments which the laws of history forbid them to wear, that they become even unfit to amuse the fancy, or to serve any purpose whatever.[16]

Ferguson is setting out two valid points here: first, that the revered Homeric epics originated as popular not learned poetry; and then, that when scholars and literati later made learned poetry out of them (as they had done in transmitting them to modern Europe) they sacrificed the original cultural purpose.

Together with any intrinsic merits, popular poetry could be – and among ancient peoples actually had been – the springboard to higher cultural accomplishment:

> It was no doubt of great advantage to those nations, that their system of fable was original, and being already received in popular traditions, served to diffuse those improvements of reason, imagination and sentiment which were afterwards, by men of the finest talents, made on the fable itself, or conveyed in its moral.[17]

By contrast, modern western study of the classics as a basis for general education (which it commonly was in England, less so in Scotland) has its cultural drawbacks:

> A mythology, borrowed from abroad, a literature founded on references to a strange country, and fraught with foreign allusions, are more confined in their use: they speak to the learned alone; and though intended to inform the understanding, and to mend the heart, may, by being confined to a few, have an opposite effect: they may foster conceit on the ruins of common sense.[18]

Any contemporary reader of this sentence might well have been reminded of Dr Samuel Johnson and his pedantic classicism, the basis also of his vituperation against Ossian.

Ferguson reckons that, as a result of the confinement of the ancient epics within a learned ghetto, it is harder for critics to conceive of the wider social functions poetry might have, beyond the delectation of intellectuals:

> The trial of what those ages contained, is not even fairly made, when men of genius and distinguished abilities, with the accomplishments of a learned and polished age, collect the materials they have found, and, with the greatest success, connect the story of illiterate ages with the transactions of a later date.[19]

Earlier in the eighteenth century there had been, especially in France but also in other countries, a controversy between *les Anciens* and *les Modernes*, between those who insisted on the enduring validity of classical norms and those who claimed cultural autonomy for modern civilization. Ferguson's attitude seems clear:

> Our very learning, perhaps, where its influence extends, serves, in some measure, to depress our national spirit. Our literature [viz., the classics] being derived from nations of a different race, who flourished at a time when our ancestors were in a state of barbarity, and consequently when they were despised by those who had attained to the literary arts, has given rise to a humbling opinion, that we ourselves are the offspring of mean and contemptible nations . . . till the genius was in a manner inspired by examples, and directed by lessons that were brought from abroad.[20]

In other words Ferguson believed that genius, appearing at different times and places, is not to be legitimately assessed according to previous examples of it now arbitrarily labelled classical. On the contrary, the validity of autonomous cultures is what ought to be assumed by modern criticism, not only on aesthetic grounds but also because otherwise we may `depress our national spirit'.

Is this not an argument about Scotland, Gaeldom and Ossian? None of these is ever mentioned by name in the passages quoted. But the line of reasoning shows a remarkable fit with a particular modern interrogation of the Scottish Enlightenment, concerning its relationship with its own country.

One answer to the interrogation is that the Enlightenment was scarcely Scottish, but owed rather to England or France; in the former case, only the Union could have opened Scotland to the enabling influences. The opposite answer to the interrogation is that the origins of the Enlightenment can be traced far back in Scottish intellectual history; this spring may have been sullied by ceaseless political and social upheaval, but that is not the same as saying it never existed. The dispute is bedevilled by the fact that the enlightened literati remained in their writings reluctant to refer to Scotland and Scottish conditions in so many words. This has given rise to further debate about how Scottish they felt, or whether they felt Scottish at all.

In Ferguson, certainly, explicit Scottish reference is minimal. Though Highland clans and their fate during the eighteenth century might have found some

place in the history of civil society, his whole *Essay* mentions them once, in a discussion of lawlessness among rude nations.[21] He shows greater enthusiasm for whisky: 'While spirituous liquors are, among Southern nations, from a sense of their ruinous effects, prohibited ... they carry in the North a peculiar charm, while they awaken the mind, and give a taste of that lively fancy and ardour of passion, which the climate is found to deny'.[22] Scotland is not mentioned here either, yet who can doubt that Scotland is meant?

Even from such passing anecdotal evidence it appears at the least facile for critics, such as John Brewer,[23] to conclude that the absence of Scotland by name from enlightened discourse signifies indifference to the nation and its culture. An analogy might be drawn with the fact that Ferguson never said, anywhere at all, that he was the author of *Sister Peg* (1760), the polemic on militias published at a crucial stage of the debate whether Scotland should have one, which in turn was a debate about the nature of the nation. While most modern scholars assume from internal evidence that Ferguson was the author, on Brewer's line of argument we would have to rule him out. Yet Highlanders had learned the hard way that sometimes it was just better to keep their heads down and their mouths shut.

The matter goes deeper than mere anecdote, however. For the literati in general, the whole question of the expression of national identity is bedevilled by what the late George Davie called the internalization of Scotticism.[24] All Scottish writers of the eighteenth century felt conscious of their country's relative obscurity, of their own appearance as interlopers on a wider cultural scene in London or Paris and of the danger of putting an international audience off by harping on about Scotland.[25] The problem, it may be added, has not wholly disappeared even today.

The solution, as perceived by Davie, had been for the literati to write on matters arising in Scottish intellectual discourse with the most sparing reference to the national experience that brought them to light, sometimes with no reference at all. Naturally, in such a diverse cultural phenomenon as the Scottish Enlightenment, there was a spectrum of practice. David Hume did write up Scottish history, if only in a context of English history. Though Adam Smith made occasional references to Scotland, it cannot be said his own country stood anywhere near the centre of his work as published. Yet we know for a fact that he gathered much evidence for what he wanted to say about the mercantilist system from conversations with the commercial community of Glasgow. Smith himself never mentions this.[26]

Remote yet discernible allusion to Scotland is not hard to find in Ferguson either, on the anecdotal level already mentioned but also in passages of greater import. Take his views on the evolution of a professional soldiery, which follow on from a basic argument about two sorts of primitive society – the savage,

merely hunting and fishing, and the barbarous, reliant on a pastoral economy with some idea of property. Both societies remain warlike, the people going round in bands and fighting one another all the time. Then, with progress, the warrior separates out from the citizen. Once war is devalued, 'the ambitious will naturally devolve the military service on those who are contented with a subordinate station'. And at last '[a] discipline is invented to inure the soldiers to perform, from habit, and from the fear of punishment, those hazardous duties, which the love of the public, or a national spirit, no longer inspire'.[27]

It is hard to believe that Scottish experience, and Ferguson's Scottish experience in particular, is wholly absent from his mind when he writes those words. Can we not hear in them the authentic voice of the chaplain to the Black Watch? The passage is admittedly just the first stage of a more general, indeed universal, argument about the 'separation of arts and professions' as a key to progress; like Smith, Ferguson believed the division of labour makes a people more productive and wealthy, yet charges a moral price. That does not in itself, however, invalidate the idea that the argument had its origin, or one of its origins, in Scottish experience.

Recent Scottish history could after all be taken to represent progress from the particular to the general, from the characteristic to the universal, from a situation where Scotland 'lived for herself', in Henry Cockburn's words,[28] to one where it habitually contemplated the destiny of mankind. In tandem, it had ceased to be an independent country and joined an empire. Of this the benefits, invisible in the first decades of the eighteenth century, were clear by the final decades – along with some disadvantages, such as public corruption. Here, in a nutshell, is a whole dilemma of modernity.

Ferguson alludes to what has been lost in and by Scotland. He calls to mind how powerful, advanced societies can overcome weak, backward ones,

> but the happiness of men ... consists in the blessings of a candid, an active, and strenuous mind ... [and] we need not enlarge our communities in order to enjoy these advantages. We frequently obtain them in the most remarkable degree, where nations remain independent, and are of a small extent.[29]

The *Essay* alludes to what has been gained too. An international system of states exerts an effect on its independent members perhaps not unlike the effect which a society founded on individual autonomy exerts on its members – in other words, bringing out the best in them. 'The emulation of nations proceeds from their division', Ferguson says, '... if the cities of Greece had been united under one head, we should never have heard of Epaminondas or Thrasybulus, of Lycurgus or Solon'.[30] Yet, so far from being an unqualified admirer of large states or systems of states, Ferguson thinks 'the admiration of boundless dominion is a

ruinous error; and in no instance, perhaps, is the real interest of mankind more entirely mistaken'.[31]

Whether there is, among the range of possibilities, an ideal size of state is harder to say. It all depends on context: 'The measure of enlargement to be wished for by any particular state is often to be taken from the condition of its neighbours. Where a number of states are contiguous, they should be near an equality, in order that they may possess that independence in which the life of a political nation consists'. Ferguson's main example here is, exceptionally in his work, not ancient but modern: 'When the kingdoms of Spain were united, when the great fiefs in France were annexed to the crown, it was no longer expedient for the nations of Great Britain to continue disjoined'.[32] According to him, then, the main motive behind the English desire for Union with Scotland in 1707 had been the need to keep up with rivals in an environment of growing imperial competition. This can be counted today, even from the Scottish point of view, as quite a balanced historical judgment.

But if the original rationale of 1707 had its own validity, Ferguson feared (as Hume did) that the process then set on foot was going too far and turning self-destructive: 'Hence the ruinous progress of empire; and hence free nations, under the shew of acquiring dominion, suffer themselves, in the end, to be yoked with the slaves they conquered'.[33] Ferguson develops the point: 'Our desire to augment the force of a nation is the only pretext for enlarging its territory; but this measure, when pursued to extremes, seldom fails to frustrate itself'. In other words, one basic imperialist argument is wrong: 'Notwithstanding the advantage of numbers, and superior resources in war, the strength of a nation is derived from the character, not from the wealth, nor from the multitude of its people'.[34] And let us never forget the virtues that might flourish against the odds in lesser states: '"When nations were divided into small territories, and petty commonwealths, where each man had his house and his field to himself, and each country had its capital free and independent" ... says Mr Hume, "how favourable to industry and agriculture, to marriage and to population!" '[35]

Beneath Ferguson's philosophy lies Macpherson's poetry: the message is that, for all its progress, the modern world has flaws. Among them might be mentioned, not least, the loss of virtues known at earlier stages of development, as among Highlanders. Ferguson and Macpherson thus had an attitude to modern civilization differing somewhat from that of other literati.

They all felt excited at their historical insights. They thought they saw history happening before their eyes. '[T]his is the historical Age and this the historical Nation', Hume declared.[36] In a generation, Scotland had gone from burning witches to building a machine for rational living in the New Town of Edinburgh. But Ferguson and Macpherson also found matter for mourning here. In particular, the passing of Ossian's world symbolized to them the end of a Gaelic way of

life. They had crossed not only thresholds of time, like their brother Scots, but also the Highland line. They saw the historical development underlying the contemporary contrast of Lowlands and Highlands. Descrying the drawbacks of it too, they spoke up for the Highlands as no Lowlander would, yet they couched the contrast in terms that Lowlanders might understand. 'We are apt to exaggerate the misery of barbarous times', insists Ferguson, 'by an imagination of what we ourselves should suffer in a situation to which we are not accustomed. But every age hath its consolations, as well as its sufferings. In the interval of occasional outrages, the friendly intercourse of men, even in their rudest conditions, is affectionate and happy'.[37]

Highland Irony

One way for those defeated by history to come to terms with their predicament is through irony. While it is not a prominent feature of his writings, Ferguson the Highlander does not lack irony. In an essay apparently left incomplete and in any event never published in his lifetime, he gives a fictional account of how he once took Hume and other literati from Edinburgh on a hike through Atholl. This must strike the modern reader as an improbable idea, to say the least – the merest glance at any portrait of Hume will show a man little given to climbing mountains, and probably not capable of it.

The account of the excursion is actually a peg for philosophical discussion, but before they all settle down to that they make an attempt at hunting game so feeble as to amaze the Highland gillie who guides them across the hills:

> Our friend the stalker indeed was very much puzzled what to make of us for though he put up two or three coveys in different places the birds were allowed to go unmolested. His own gun was loaded with ball and he did not deign to fire at a bird, and my friends continued the disputes which they got into while the game sprang from their feet.

Their behaviour becomes still more inexplicable to him as a stag draws near: 'We have the wind of him said the stalker and if I but get a shot you will not want venison here this eight days'. A member of the party insists, however, that they ought not to shoot the poor beast and before long their commotion scares it away. 'The stalker was silent and without saying a word to any of us took his departure'.[38]

It was a judgment, surely, by the representative of an older, more vigorous way of life on a newer, more effete one. The Highlands were being integrated into the rest of Britain, their culture falling victim to modern values. Ferguson, along with Macpherson, wanted to bear witness to a social order that had beforehand been uncorrupted for 2,000 years. It had had its drawbacks, certainly, but also

its achievements. Its poetry was wonderful, keeping alive the spirit of Homer. It bound men in comradeship on the battlefield in a way modern military discipline could scarcely rival. In civilian life, too, it created loyalties between superiors and inferiors where in modern life there were only antagonisms. Something of all this might be saved if Ferguson could at least give the Sassenach an inkling of it. While the age of Fingal had vanished, the memory of a nobler community might be carried down into the decadent eighteenth century. Just possibly the stalker, too, had that in mind as he went his disgruntled way.

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2 ADAM FERGUSON, THE 43RD, AND THE FICTIONS OF FONTENOY

Bruce Buchan

> ...fiction may be admitted to vouch for the genius of nations, while history has nothing to offer that is intitled to credit. The Greek fable accordingly conveying a character of its authors, throws light on an age of which no other record remains. The superiority of this people is indeed in no circumstance more evident than in the strain of their fictions...[1]

On 11 May 1745, a British, Hanoverian and Dutch army under the command of King George II's second son, the Duke of Cumberland, was defeated by a French army under the command of Marshal de Saxe at the battle of Fontenoy. Today the battle is remembered as a striking example of European Enlightenment warfare, characterized by disciplined close-order fighting according to 'civilized' rules of engagement.[2] As I will show however, much of this legacy rests on tales of battlefield civility that may never have taken place. Curiously, among the fictions of that day are some that relate to the purported presence at and participation in the battle by one of the Scottish Enlightenment's most prescient social and political theorists, Adam Ferguson.

Ferguson's thought was characterized by a distinctive awareness of the relationship between 'fiction' and 'civilization'. Despite his obvious enthusiasm for civilization, he remained concerned that its further progress would render its obvious benefits, such as politeness, polished manners and discipline, entirely fictional. Civilization, he felt, may prove to be an all too shaky facade of politeness masking the corruption of virtue by luxury or indolence. I will explore this distinctive feature of Ferguson's thought by examining the two fictions of Fontenoy. Those fictions are first, that which relates to the legend of battlefield civility and second, that which centres on Ferguson's supposed presence at the battle. Both of these stories point us to a reconsideration of the role of fiction in Ferguson's complex appraisal of civilization. When Ferguson spoke of the 'genius of nations' being measured by their 'fictions', he meant that a nation's legends and fables can be considered to supply insights into that nation's abili-

ties and accomplishments where the more reliable works of history are lacking. In arguing so, Ferguson admitted a larger point, that national tales and myths, despite the obvious errors of exaggeration, nonetheless reveal something tangible. Indeed, I will argue that he was concerned that without the practice of virtue, even when invoked in ancient fable and myth, civilization may itself be shown to be fictional.

Although Ferguson was an early critic of the comfortable self-assurance of progress and 'civilization' inherent in Scottish Enlightenment political economy, he was only ever an ambivalent critic. The process of civilization was not to be opposed so much as measured and monitored so that its ill effects could be minimized and its truly beneficial effects maximized. Some have attributed Ferguson's concerns about civilization to his upbringing in the foothills of the Highlands. This background, it is argued, gave him both a steady attachment to the modernizing and prosperous society of the Lowlands, but also a profound appreciation of the archaic communities of Gaelic Scotland.[3] Most recently however, John Brewer has cast doubt on this view correctly contending that Ferguson made no autobiographical references to any self-identification as a 'Highlander'.[4] In this sense, Ferguson's 'Highland' background appears a fictional, or better still notional, identity.

Ferguson's career, however, was marked by his near ten years of military service (1745–54) as regimental chaplain to the 43rd Highland Regiment, 'The Black Watch' (redesignated the 42nd in 1749). Ferguson's military experience underscores a major theme in his work, that the practice of modern war exemplifies civilization. In the myth of his presence on the field of Fontenoy however, we glimpse another of Ferguson's themes, that civilization required the invocation of older virtues. Although fictional, this story incorporates a basically plausible account of his activities as regimental chaplain invoking Highland warrior virtue by reciting ancient fables on the field of modern, civilized warfare. In this way, the fictions of Fontenoy – both those relating to battlefield civility as well as those relating to Ferguson's presence – illustrate the tension in his thought between the commitment to civilization, and his fear that civility was a thin veneer over an all too corruptible human nature. In exploring this tension we can appreciate the distinctiveness of Ferguson's conception of civilization.

Scottish Enlightenment Conceptions of Civilization

The term 'civilization' was first coined by the French *philosophe* the Marquis de Mirabeau in 1756 to denote a range of personal, social and political qualities that Europeans in the late eighteenth century were coming to associate with their own historical development from ancient 'savagery' and 'barbarism' to an ever more refined condition of civility, or politeness, literally a 'polished' or 'civi-

lized' condition.[5] 'Civilization' served, Jean Starobinski suggests, as a 'unifying concept' or shorthand way of referring to both a process of individual and collective refinement and the end result of that process, namely, the condition of civilization.[6] By means of this term, some Europeans could portray themselves as different from other peoples both inside Europe and beyond.[7] While this difference could be seen in terms of the accomplishments of urbanized societies, commercial economies, systems of written law, arts, sciences and letters, it also denoted life under sovereign states, with regular government. As various observers have noted, civilization came to be seen as the process by which a people acquired 'polished' manners, largely due to the salutary effects of 'police', that is good laws and effective public order.[8]

Some of the leading Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, among them David Hume, Adam Smith, William Robertson and Adam Ferguson, were animated by the problem of how to explain the process of civilization as a historical force.[9] They understood 'civilization' as an end point of historical development produced and supported by a set of interrelated historical processes encompassing social, economic, political, cultural and military developments. In doing so, the Scots showed their indebtedness to the French *philosophes* who, as Felix Gilbert pointed out long ago, anticipated that civilization would usher in a new age characterized by 'the rule of reason'.[10] The Scots however, aimed to provide historically grounded narratives of the dynamics of civilization which sought to trace the emergence in Europe of the refinement and sophistication of civil societies matched by the development of militarily powerful sovereign states.[11]

David Hume's multi-volume *History of England* for example, recounts the development of British liberty premised on the virtues of 'civility'.[12] These virtues, such as politeness, propriety, sociability and respect for law and personal property were driven by the growth of commerce, and led to the emergence of religious tolerance.[13] These developments were entwined with and secured by the emergence of a new international order of sovereign states in Europe guaranteed by the invention of the 'furious engine' of artillery:

> Though it seemed contrived for the destruction of mankind, and the overthrow of empires, [artillery] has in the issue rendered battles less bloody, and has given greater stability to civil societies. Nations by its means have been brought more to a level: Conquests have become less frequent and rapid: Success in war has been reduced nearly to be a matter of calculation: And any nation overmatched by its enemies, either yields to their demands, or secures itself by alliances against their violence and invasion.[14]

Hume's enthusiasm for ordnance played its part in a broader story of the rise and consolidation of the English state within a 'Europe' of similarly sovereign states. The cannon was a machine of civilization embodying both intensified state

power and an international order of states based on a rough balance of power (in Europe). In this 'order', each 'civilized' state is roughly matched in military might and thereby forced to calculate the certain costs of war alongside its increasingly doubtful benefits.

Baron de Montesquieu also spoke of the civilization of war in Europe, pointing to the softening influence of Christianity behind the emergent European 'right of nations in war' which 'leaves to the vanquished ... life, liberty, laws, goods'.[15] Not all Enlightenment thinkers were as convinced that war and civilization were well matched. Immanuel Kant notably argued later in the century that war was an obstacle to further 'enlightenment' and had to be prevented by the creation of a global 'pacific federation'.[16] Characteristically, however, Scottish Enlightenment thinkers emphasized the essentially unintentional effects of civilization.[17] Accordingly, even the destructiveness of war could produce benefits. This can be seen clearly in William Robertson's *History of the Reign of Charles the Fifth*.[18] Robertson identified the rise of religious tolerance (and the political decline of Roman Catholicism) following decades of religious war in the sixteenth century as vital to the development of a rough balance of power in Europe:

> ... when nations are in a state similar to each other, and keep equal pace in their advances towards refinement, they are not exposed to the calamity of sudden conquests ... Other states interpose, and balance any temporary advantage which either party may have acquired ... [and after war] ... peace ... restores to each almost the same power and the same territories of which they were formerly in possession.[19]

Significantly, both Hume and Robertson attributed this balance of power to a process of civilization culminating in *Europe*, but with implications for Europe's relations with peoples in other parts of the world.[20] 'The nations of Europe in that age [the sixteenth century], as in the present', Robertson ominously claimed, 'were like one great family', and were not separated by those marks of 'genius' which, 'in almost every period of history, has exalted the Europeans above the inhabitants of the other quarters of the globe, and seems to have destined the one to rule, and the other to obey'.[21]

Robertson's *History* thus culminated, as had Hume's, in the creation of independent, militarily powerful sovereign states in Europe, each based on largely pacified civil societies, capable of regulating their international relations on the basis of a rough military balance of power.[22] This view informed Hume's contention that Britain's national interest invited a prudent participation in continental warfare against France in order to maintain a balance of power in Europe.[23] Britain's advantage in this quest lay not only in its position on the fringe of continental Europe, but in the advanced stage of civilization that provided not only wealth, military technology and numbers of troops, but also the discipline and order that is the hallmark of civilized armies.[24] Above all, Hume's

and Robertson's historical narratives echoed Montesquieu's insight that the formalized structure of interaction between sovereign states in Europe was above all a secular model of political interaction, in which considerations of interest rather than those of conscience or religious confession were paramount.[25]

Ferguson's Ambivalent Civilization

Adam Ferguson was an anomalous Enlightenment thinker. His commitment to classical virtues (especially the courage, fortitude and hardiness of the warrior) sat awkwardly alongside his awareness of the need for the polished manners of commercial society (especially those based on the primacy of 'economic self-interest').[26] In accord with contemporaries such as Smith and Robertson, Ferguson was convinced that Western European history revealed a progression of the human species from a state of 'rudeness' to that of 'civilization' or from 'barbarism to refinement'.[27] Civilized social life required individuals to cultivate productive to offset destructive passions.[28] Productive passions Ferguson argued, were those which inclined individuals toward friendship and affection, the pursuit of private wealth as the surest means to the public good, and the advance of civilization.[29] Nevertheless, this development was pregnant with both promise and peril for civilized states and societies. If civilization gave rise to largely peaceful civil societies, civilization also created the military strength that may become a menace to civil society and to peaceful coexistence between sovereign states.

According to Ferguson, civilization gave rise to new property 'relations' of 'patron and client … servant and master', necessitating thereby a system of law for 'defining possession'.[30] In rude or barbarous societies equality of possession prevailed, and consequently 'the titles of *magistrate* and *subject*, of *noble* and *mean*' were 'as little known as those of *rich* and *poor*'.[31] Just as civilized and uncivilized societies could be distinguished, so too could civilized from uncivilized selves. The former were motivated by 'considerations of interest' and 'a view to futurity', the latter by 'great passions', 'the prospects of ruin or conquest'. The uncivilized were inclined to 'sloth' but 'bold, impetuous, artful and rapacious' in the hunt.[32] Control of the passions by self-interest was vital to the advance from barbarity to civilization, but it was always counter-balanced by 'other habits and other pursuits'.[33] As Ferguson expressed it in private correspondence, 'Men are like Planets' that must have 'two forces to make them go in their Orbits', a 'Projectile' force to motivate action 'Directed to some personal Advantage', but the other a 'Central' pressure perpetually acting that 'keeps them from flying off'.[34] One way of guiding interest towards more productive ends was by law, the 'treaty to which members of the same community have agreed …' setting 'limits … to the powers of the magistrate'.[35] Another means was provided by commerce and the disci-

plines of a market economy, which not only resulted in material advances, but provided a mechanism for creating (voluntarily) self-disciplined individuals.[36]

Characteristically though, Ferguson worried that such changes, although delivering the benefits of polished manners, greater prosperity and social order, also led to the weakening of virtue. Above all, civilized commercial societies enabled prestige and power to flow to those with the money to purchase it. This effectively sundered the connection made in pre-civil societies between the possession of power and prestige and the display of virtue.[37] Indeed, Ferguson lamented that the politeness of civilized society may itself be a kind of fiction, a mask hiding entrenched vice.[38] His response was to suggest that ways be found to reintegrate the practice of virtue in civilized commercial societies. Above all, he argued that militia service would reinforce public discipline, courage, and the warrior's skill in individual combat.[39]

Ferguson recognized however, that the practice of virtue in war had been rendered less likely because of broader processes affecting international order. Commerce and the division of labour on which it rested made possible the raising and equipping of large professional armies. Ferguson also saw that commerce itself had altered the very nature of warfare making it subservient to financial rather than dynastic interests:

> ... what mighty armies may be put in motion from behind the counter; how often human blood is, without any national animosity, bought and sold for bills of exchange; and how often the prince, the nobles, and the statesmen, in many a polished nation, might ... be considered as merchants.[40]

Ferguson's point was not simply that commerce had provided the financial means for raising and requisitioning larger armies, but that commerce itself had become a kind of warfare between nations competing for access to resources and markets in the scramble for imperial expansion. The state's increased capacity to make war was attributed to the division of labour, enabling 'the practitioner in every profession ...' including that of warfare, to specialize their skills and practice them at an ever higher level of sophistication.[41] Although vital in the development of commerce, Ferguson suspected the division of labour also had deleterious effects on the military, in particular doing nothing to improve the character of soldiers or the wisdom of commanders, and he lamented the loss in modern armies of old martial virtues.[42]

Ferguson and the 43rd

Ferguson's interest in military affairs was not merely academic: He served between 1745 and 1754 in the capacity of regimental chaplain to the 43rd Highland Regiment, during which time the regiment saw active service in

France (briefly) and Flanders.[43] Ferguson's attachment to the regiment presaged his later theory of civilization, for the regiment was raised specifically to guard and keep watch on one of the least 'civilized' parts of the British Isles. Subduing the Highlands meant confronting the more powerful clans (such as the Gordons and MacDonalds) whose chiefs retained a private monopoly of violence and, for some, a more or less public adherence to the Church of Rome, alongside a devotion to the last heirs of the deposed Stuart dynasty. In 1715 and again in 1745 these motivations – coupled with an altogether tenuous subjection (much less loyalty) to the Hanoverian monarch and his decidedly English parliament at Westminster – flared into Jacobite rebellions.

Jacobitism in the eighteenth century was less a clearly defined political doctrine than a loosely defined political sentiment that, in its hardest form crystallized as open loyalty to Roman Catholicism and the Stuart 'Pretender' – 'the Old Pretender' James Francis Edward Stuart (1688–1766) and his son 'the Young Pretender' Charles Edward Stuart (1720–88).[44] A less overt Jacobitism shaded into more respectable if recalcitrant Toryism or even High Church Anglican disdain for nonconformist radicalism. As P. K. Monod suggests, Jacobitism incorporated a fair degree of ideological incoherence, exacerbated by the obvious difficulty of publicly expressing a position that was by definition either seditious or treasonous.[45] Nonetheless, Jacobitism proved itself to be a flexible and diverse political orientation sustained by a rhetoric of avowedly nostalgic, allusive and even mystical expressions, all of which made it conducive to elements of Highland clan society.[46]

Throughout the eighteenth century, the Highland clan system was subject to a range of pressures originating in the rapid agricultural and industrial development of England and lowland Scotland. Many clan chiefs actively engaged with these pressures and looked favourably on closer economic, political and cultural integration with lowland Scotland and England. This aim was sponsored by organizations such as the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge which sought to 'improve' Highland society by spreading Protestantism and instructing Gaelic speakers in the use of English.[47] In this environment, the acceptance by a range of loyalist clans of Presbyterianism, the Act of Union of England and Scotland (1707) under Queen Anne and the Hanoverian succession after her death (1714), were symbols of more than political loyalty. They also symbolized an eagerness to integrate Highland society, based on archaic relations of the chief with his clansmen, with the economically prosperous lowlands whose vibrant commercial economy was fuelled by colonial trade.[48] Among the English and many Lowlanders, however, the perception was widely shared that most Highlanders were no better than savages, largely illiterate, more or less openly Catholic and, after 1715 and 1745, politically suspect.[49]

Many clansmen rallied to the Jacobite cause readily enough, but many others were forced by their chieftains.[50] The militancy of Highland troops, whether Jacobite or Hanoverian, was embodied in a complex and evolving Gaelic oral tradition centred on the public recitation of fable, poetry and song that has been described as the 'Panegyric Code'.[51] This Code consisted in a relatively stable set of mythological, political, social and moral categories that gave structure to Highland Gaelic verse and song, and which in turn served as the vehicle for the recitation, elaboration and mobilization of the social and moral verities of clan society.[52] One important part of the Panegyric Code concerned the appropriate standards of warrior virtue and the rights of leadership. Above all, the 'Code' called for the exertion of traditional virtues of loyalty to one's chief, courage in the face of danger, and the unstinting defence of one's kin.

Richard Sher suggests that the effort to reconstitute the ancient and unruly martial traditions of Scotland as a valuable store of courage and loyalty to the British Crown, prompted moderate Presbyterian intellectuals such as Ferguson to throw their weight behind the apparent 'discovery' of the poems of the supposedly ancient Gaelic bard, Ossian.[53] Of course, Ossian and his poetry were the fictional creations of James Macpherson. Although Ferguson's role in the Ossian controversy is difficult to establish, he did have some involvement, a fact that lends further support to the claim that Ferguson was convinced that fictional myths and fables could provide the real foundation for necessary virtues in civilized society. Ferguson was accused by Dr Thomas Percy of passing off a document written in his own hand of fragments of Gaelic poetry, supposedly attributed to Ossian. Ferguson claimed he obtained the fragment either from Macpherson or 'James Maclaggan'.[54] Whatever the extent of his personal involvement, Ferguson reflects in a letter of 1798 that his knowledge of Gaelic verse was limited because his 'nativity in Athole' was barely within the Gaelic speaking areas of the Highlands. In that same letter, nonetheless, he describes his own acquaintance with a Gaelic tale:

> ... about the year 1740, I heard John Fleming, a taylor, who in the manner of the country, worked with his journeymen at my father's house, repeat, in a kind of chiming measure, heroic strains relating to an arrival or landing of an host and a subsequent battle, with a single combat of two chiefs. This I took down in writing, and kept for some time ... [55]

Although Ferguson then claimed to recognize this fragment in Macpherson's Ossianic verses, he considered it possible that these verses were authentic, albeit heavily embellished by Macpherson. Ferguson seems to have given Macpherson a generous benefit of doubt, slighting his own 'bastard Gaelic' compared to Macpherson's 'genius'.[56] Though this account highlights Ferguson's incomplete

knowledge of the breadth of Gaelic verse, it also shows that he was quite familiar enough with its martial qualities.

These martial qualities enabled the Jacobites to make ready use of traditional poetry and song to galvanize their Highland supporters. As the Ossian controversy also suggests, the martial traditions of Gaelic verse remained a matter of interest for loyalist Gaelic speakers.[57] For Ferguson, this formed part of his commitment to what has been called 'moral revitalization' in Scottish society, spurred in part by the Lowland's supine surrender to the Jacobites in 1745.[58] In the wake of this open show of rebellion and surrender, Ferguson and many other Scots evidently saw conspicuous military service as one way of demonstrating Scots loyalty to the British state.[59]

The structure and scope of archaic Gaelic martial verse was, in the wake of the Jacobite risings, actively employed in the Highland regiments to sustain the loyalty and morale of the troops. There is some evidence to suggest that regimental chaplains (as well as bards and musicians) played a key role in this.[60] Under the King's Articles of War, all officers and soldiers in British regiments were enjoined, under penalty, to attend to divine worship.[61] As contemporary critics noted, this stipulation was often more honoured in the breach than in the observance.[62] Nonetheless, contemporaries strongly recommended prayer and the appointment of chaplains with specific duties to lead regular prayer, maintain the moral character of the army (and navy), and to tend in battle to the needs of the wounded and dying.[63] In the Scottish Highland regiments in particular, however, chaplains appear to have performed an additional function of administering Protestant rites to soldiers who mostly spoke only Gaelic, and to use those linguistic skills to articulate and sustain the oral traditions of battlefield courage in Gaelic poetry and song.[64] It was perhaps partly due to their success that Highland soldiers were to forge a reputation as loyal and reliable soldiers throughout Britain's involvement in the War of the Austrian Succession (1743–8), the Seven Year's War (1756–63) and the American War of Independence (1776–83).[65] Generations of soldiers who followed them in the nineteenth century consolidated the reputation of Scots troops as the all too willing armed servants of British imperialism.

However, in 1745, for the officers and men of the 43rd regiment, courage, loyalty and discipline seemed very much in question. The 43rd was originally consolidated from the independent armed companies raised from several loyalist clans as far back as 1667.[66] These companies were formalized by a royal warrant in 1725, and their membership drawn largely from those clans (such as the Campbells, Frasers and Grants) whose leaders looked favourably on the (Protestant) Hanoverian succession and the Union of Scotland and England. These units were initially stationed across the Highlands close to their own clan localities to keep watch against Jacobite clans.[67] They were formed into the 43rd

regiment in 1739 when they were issued with their uniform of scarlet jackets, belted plaid tartan and blue bonnets. In March 1743 the regiment was ordered south to London where just over 100 soldiers deserted in May 1743.[68] The desertion was quickly suppressed and three ringleaders were executed before the regiment was deployed to Flanders. In 1745 Lord John Murray specifically asked to command this troublesome regiment (whose acting Colonel, Lord Sempill, was more than happy to transfer), and he took the first opportunity to appoint a Gaelic-speaking chaplain.[69]

Ferguson was connected to Murray and the 43rd by ties of patronage. It was Murray who in 1745 recommended Ferguson, then a student of divinity, for the post of deputy chaplain. Murray was the younger son of the Duke of Atholl, Ferguson's father's patron. His recommendation was thus an important step on the ladder of preferment through patronage. Importantly, Murray made special mention not only of Ferguson's moral suitability for the post, but also his command of the 'Irish language'.[70] Ferguson was duly excused from his studies in order to take up the post, and was commissioned on 30 April 1746. So far as we know, however, his active service preceded his commission, and began in September 1745 (almost five months after Fontenoy). He may subsequently have participated in the abortive attack in September 1746 on Port l'Orient in France, the command centre of the French East India Company. In April 1747 the regiment was redeployed back to Flanders where it remained until the cessation of hostilities in March 1748.[71] In those two years the regiment fought in none of the major battles of the war, but did see action when used to cover the retreat of defeated allied forces.

Ferguson and the Fictions of Fontenoy

If Ferguson was not actually present at the battle of Fontenoy, and all the credible evidence indicates that he was not, then perhaps it could nonetheless be claimed that he *should* have been. Fontenoy stands out in military history as an example of the tenuous nature of 'civilized' war.[72] The battle of Fontenoy was so named for the small Flanders village that served as the hinge on which the French army under Maurice, Comte de Saxe (1696–1750), Marshal of France, deployed its forces against a combined British, Dutch and Hanoverian army under William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland (1721–65). British involvement in the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–8) began in 1743 as an intervention to aid the beleaguered Austrians against a Franco-Prussian alliance. Britain's involvement began well with a victory over larger French forces at Dettingen (17 June 1743). Throughout the remainder of that and the next year the British and French forces conducted an indecisive series of complicated manoeuvres for which eighteenth-century warfare has become renowned. The aim of these

manoeuvres was to preserve one's forces while trying to gain the decisive strategic advantage over one's opponent in order to launch a crushing tactical strike. Saxe's opportunity came at the village of Fontenoy on 11 May 1745 where Cumberland committed his combined forces to a series of frontal assaults on French positions in and around the town throughout the day.

The British and allied attacks on Fontenoy began at about 5:30 a.m. and were consistently repulsed by fierce French defence. The newly raised 43rd regiment, so far untested in battle, was thrown into a number of assaults on French positions, but its main role seems to have been to support the main infantry attack that Cumberland himself led at mid-morning.[73] Courageous though it was, Cumberland's grave mistake was to commit the bulk of his British and Hanoverian troops to a massed advance upon the French lines without providing for sufficient cavalry support. In line of battle the British regiments advanced steadily toward the French lines up a gradually inclining shallow ravine subject almost its whole length to a steady enfilading fire from French troops. Once at the top of the incline the French and British-Hanoverian forces faced one another ready for the decisive show of strength. In anticipation of the importance of the encounter, Saxe had called up his elite troops of the *Garde Française* to lead the defence.

The *Gardes Française* and the British First Grenadier Guards faced one another ready for the other to open fire. It is at this point that the standard accounts of the battle lean heavily on the legend of battlefield civilities. According to this legend, Captain Lord Charles Hay is reputed to have stepped out in front of his men, doffed his hat to the French and pulling out a flask is said to have toasted them: 'We hope you will stand till we come up to you, and not swim the river as you did at Dettingen'.[74] At this point, Hay is supposed to have led his men in three cheers to the French and to have invited them to fire first. For their part, the French returned the cheers, declined the offer to fire first, and thus invited the British to open fire. We cannot be sure that any such encounter took place. What we do know is that when the British actually fired, they are supposed to have 'struck fifty officers and 760 men of three leading French regiments'.[75] The British and Hanoverians succeeded in breaking the first French line and throwing the French out of their entrenchments. However, as the afternoon progressed, the British and Hanoverians were forced to make a steady but bloody withdrawal down the ravine.

So ended the battle of Fontenoy, a resounding victory for France and for the Marshal de Saxe. The war itself dragged on for another three years as de Saxe won further victories against the allied army in Flanders at Rocoux (1746) and Lawfeldt (1747), before capturing Maastricht (1748). These victories ensured that France emerged triumphant in the treaty signed at Aix-la-Chapelle later that year. Significantly, no mention was made in primary accounts of the battle

of the exchange of battlefield civilities between the British and French officers. A British report published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, referred only to the advance of the British and allied infantry, which, under heavy fire 'bore down all before it', driving the French back 300 paces beyond their entrenchments around the village.[76] The primary French account largely concurs, making special note of the murderous British fire,

> ... [The British] made an Attempt to penetrate through our Line of Infantry, in which they succeeded; for their Infantry, who had form'd themselves in a very strong Line of Battle, charg'd; and at the second Charge, penetrated through the Brigade of Guards ... Our Cavalry, which advanced before them immediately, could not sustain the terrible Fire made by that Line of Infantry; insomuch, that for more than an Hour, they had a very remarkable and considerable Advantage. Several of our Squadrons rallied, but were again repuls'd, by the prodigious Fire of the Enemy's Infantry.[77]

The allied army's Adjutant-General, the Earl of Craufurd (a Lowland Scot), made no mention of the exchange of civilities except to describe the regularity of the British advance toward the French as 'THE NOBLEST SIGHT I EVER BEHELD!'[78]

It would seem that the origin of the legend of battlefield civility lies in the work of the French *philosophe* Voltaire, whose national sentiment had been so stirred by news of the victory that he penned a poetic elegy to the sacrifice of the fallen. His later *History of the War of 1741* makes a centre-piece of the supposed encounter but contains some pretty compelling incidental detail of the subsequent engagement. Voltaire recounts the following exchange that occurred at the climactic moment, when the opposing forces were no more than 'fifty paces' apart:

> The English officers saluted the French by taking off their hats. The Count de Chabannes and the Duke de Biron advanced forward, and returned the compliment. My Lord Charles Hay, captain of the English guards, cried out, 'Gentlemen of the French guards, give fire'. The Count d'Antroche, then lieutenant and since captain of grenadiers, made answer with a loud voice, 'Gentlemen, we never fire first; fire you first'. Then the captain said to his men, in English, *Fire*. The English made a running fire; that is, they fired in divisions ... when the front of a battalion, four deep, had fired, another battalion made its discharge, and then a third, while the first were loading again.[79]

In his biography of the Marshal de Saxe, W. H. Dilworth made much of the chivalrous encounter at Fontenoy, but his account follows Voltaire's very closely.[80]

Doubts about the details of this legendary encounter notwithstanding, it is possible to surmise that something like it might just have taken place, if for no other reason than Voltaire's seemingly accurate account of the tactics of the engagement suggests it. What the legend of Fontenoy conveys is the fine dis-

tinction between the delicate niceties of eighteenth-century warfare, and the dreadful realities that lay behind them.[81] By the time the French and Allied forces faced one another at Fontenoy, the optimal killing range of eighteenth-century muskets placed them well within shouting distance (approximately sixty paces). At that point, much would have hinged on the tactical question of who would fire first. British infantry tactics were premised on the presentation of a continual and advancing fire in which a series of ranks would present themselves in turn, one line advancing at a time, standing to give fire and then reloading, whereupon the next rank would advance, fire and reload and so on in succession. The point was to bring maximum lethal power to bear in such a way that the sustained volleys would deliver a decisive blow, so weakening the opponents that if they still occupied the field, then bayonets could finish what the musket left undone.

As the defenders, the French held the enormous tactical advantage of forcing the Allies to make the decisive move. For the French however, infantry tactics were premised on the presentation of a massed firing of all troops at once. By firing first then, the French would actually have thrown their advantage away by emptying their muskets, thereby having to reload *en masse* while the Allies continued to present their advancing fire and charged the French before they were able to muster a second volley. By allowing the Allies to fire first, the French *Gardes Française* made the frightful, but tactically rational decision to take an enormous hit from the allied volley, so that they would then oblige the Allied infantry to charge with unloaded muskets into the face of their own dreadful barrage of shot. In the event it was a very close gamble indeed and almost came unstuck. Nonetheless, thanks to Cumberland's poor planning, and to the unimaginable courage of scores of unnamed soldiers, it was just enough. Thus, if there was a quaint exchange of battlefield pleasantries at Fontenoy, it would have had less to do with battlefield civilities, than with the tactical question of how best to kill the enemy.[82]

Ferguson's own part in the battle has been in dispute for some time.[83] The tale of his presence on the field and active participation in the battle comes to us from two sources. The first is the unbelievable story derived from one of Ferguson's most celebrated former pupils at the University of Edinburgh, Sir Walter Scott. Scott's frankly incredible story has Ferguson, sword in hand and standing at the head of the 43rd regiment in its advance on Fontenoy. When Lieutenant Colonel Munro bade him remember that his chaplain's commission did not entitle him to take such a position, Scott has him fling his commission at his commanding officer declaiming 'Damn my commission!'[84] The other more plausible, but still erroneous account comes from David Stewart's *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland, with details of the Military services of the Highland Regiments*, published in two volumes in

1822. Stewart errs with Scott in placing Ferguson on the field of Fontenoy, but unlike Scott, Stewart adds some more interesting detail. Stewart's story has Colonel Munro see Ferguson 'in the ranks', and utter 'a friendly caution' that,

> ... there was no necessity to expose himself to unnecessary danger ... Mr Ferguson thanked Sir Robert for his friendly advice, but added ... he had a duty which he was imperiously called upon to perform. Accordingly, he continued with the regiment during the whole of the action, in the hottest of the fire, praying with the dying, attending to the wounded, and directing them to be carried to a place of safety. By his fearless zeal, his intrepidity, and his friendship towards the soldiers (several of whom had been his school-fellows at Dunkeld), his amiable and cheerful manners, checking with severity where necessary, mixing among them with ease and familiarity, and being as ready as any of them with a poem or heroic tale, he acquired an unbounded ascendancy over them.[85]

What makes Stewart's account so interesting is that despite the obvious error of placing the incident at Fontenoy, the rest of the account remains plausible. Not only does he have Ferguson carrying out his duties on the field (tending the wounded), but also making use of his *Erse* linguistic skills to bolster the morale of the troops through recitation of traditional Gaelic martial fictions.

Stewart's work is far from reliable, and it seems that rather than relying solely on regimental records (many of which he wrongly supposed had been destroyed), he drew his information from Scots veterans.[86] Stewart was himself a serving officer of a Highland regiment and had given plenty of active military service in the Napoleonic wars. His regimental history however, was based on the testimony of veterans of the much earlier Seven Years War (1754–63), in which the Black Watch had given much service in America just a few years after Ferguson had left the regiment. It is therefore possible that Stewart's tale is based on actual events embellished or blurred by the hazy memories of aging veterans who had indeed served with Ferguson in the last years of the Flanders campaign (1746–8).

Though we can be sure that Ferguson did not participate in the battle of Fontenoy, it is hard to read his work without thinking of the connection between the fiction of battlefield civility and Ferguson's own troubled appreciation of the knife-edge distinction between civility and barbarity in modern war.[87] Ferguson's barely disguised admiration for the 'modern' laws of war was premised upon the highly disciplined manner with which the nations of Western Europe were then attempting to 'carry the civilities of peace into the practice of war ...' enabling them to 'mingle ... politeness with the use of the sword ...'[88] Elsewhere he argued that warfare was now waged 'with little national animosity' and combatants were 'almost in the very heat of a contest, ready to listen to the dictates of humanity or reason ...'[89] Echoing Montesquieu's desire to see this mode of disci-

pline and conduct extended to the rest of society, Ferguson argued that ordered and rule-bound warfare was the hallmark of civilization:

> Glory is more successfully obtained by saving and protecting, than by destroying the vanquished ... This is, perhaps, the principal characteristic, on which, among modern nations, we bestow the epithets of *civilised* or *polished*.[90]

This style of warfare, however, pertained to conflicts between opponents who chose to abide by the rules of battle between civilized belligerents, and while it may have been seen on the fields of Dettingen or Fontenoy, it most certainly was not at Culloden (16 April 1746).[91] Here, a British government army under Cumberland's command defeated the Jacobite army under Prince Charles Edward Stuart. In the hours and days following the battle the Duke earned the epithet 'Butcher' Cumberland by ordering the killing of an unknown number of wounded Jacobites, and capturing over 3,000 sympathizers, of whom 120 were executed by drawing lots, 88 died in appalling prison conditions, and over 900 were transported to the colonies.

Though he never addressed himself to the Jacobite rising, or to the brutal manner of its suppression, Ferguson seems to have taken a hard line on the question of civil war. For him, 'civilized' war consisted in warfare limited by powerful conventions designed to mollify its terrible effects (such as not targeting non-combatants and sparing prisoners of war). These conventions, however, simply did not apply in cases of civil war. The issue was not one of simple hypocrisy or inconsistency. Rather, Ferguson's position was shaped by the importance he attached to the development of modern military practices. For an increasing number of Enlightenment writers, including Ferguson, the development of modern military discipline and tactics was an index of civilization.[92] The process of civilization culminated in, and its polished accomplishments were secured by, the creation of sovereign states. The sovereignty of these states rested on their control and use of supreme military force. Civil war or rebellion was thus seen as an assault on the process of civilization, as threatening the very disciplines and forms of self-control that made life in civil society possible.[93] Consequently, the rules of engagement for a civil as opposed to a foreign war could be construed differently.

Much later in his career, Ferguson showed just how far he was willing to take this theory. In 1776 Ferguson produced a pamphlet highly critical of one by Richard Price sympathizing with the cause of the American rebels. Ferguson's pamphlet appears to have pleased the government in London, who agreed to circulate it.[94] His argument was that the legitimacy of the American colonies was premised on the extension of British law and the sovereignty of the British parliament throughout its Empire. As British subjects, the American colonists had no right to contest that sovereignty, or to 'withdraw their allegiance because

their settlements were made in America, any more than if they had been on Hounslow-Heath or on Finchley-Common'. What is more, their armed rebellion not only threatened the stability of Britain's Empire, but also incurred the likelihood of a violent armed response from Britain. For Ferguson, the rebellion of an as yet undeveloped colonial America against the highly developed and civilized imperial Britain endangered the very process of civilization. Defeat in America he suggested, would herald the collapse of Britain's Empire and its commercial civilization (just as surely as barbarian invasion heralded Rome's fall), while American victory would sow the seeds for the development of a corrupt and corrupting military government there.[95]

In 1777 Ferguson was selected to accompany and was subsequently employed as secretary to the Carlisle Commission, sent to Philadelphia to negotiate a return of the colonies to the imperial fold. The Commission ended in farce as the Americans refused to recognize the Commission because the Commissioners refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Continental Congress. What was worse, a manifesto produced by the Commission and bearing Ferguson's signature seemed to threaten the imposition of severe military penalties on the Americans.[96] The manifesto sparked parliamentary debate in Britain, and the House of Lords censured it for declaring that the 'extremes of war' would be unleashed on fellow British subjects in the colonies in direct contravention of 'the maxims which have been established among Christian and civilized communities ...'[97] Whatever the exact nature of the public threats emanating from the Commission, it would seem that Ferguson was himself singled out as the author. This was later denied by one of the Commissioners, William Eden, but Ferguson did make the tenor of his own views clearer in some private comments on the rules of war later solicited by Eden.[98] In these comments, Ferguson observed that,

> It is not easily conceived how Subjects in Arms against Their Sovereign & in Alliance with his enemys, should be entitled to more favour than the Subjects of a Forreign Prince at War upon some problematical Questions of State. The Subjects of a Forreign Prince involved in a War by their Sovereign may not have incurred any personal Guilt by that Circumstance And it is not Lawfull to Distress them except so far as that is allowed in order to Distress the State to which they belong. But Subjects in Rebellion incurr a Personal Guilt & may be disstressed not only in order to disstress their Community but likewise in order to Punish Their Crime.[99]

Such 'Rules of War' were designed to protect 'Innocent Subjects' and to limit warfare to the 'just measure of Hostilitys' needed to 'force an Ennemy to Justice', and thus not to cause harm 'wantonly'.[100] As he made clear in his *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* however, the 'laws of war' limiting the use of indiscriminate violence pertained to conflicts between sovereign nations.[101]

Conclusion: Civilization, War and Empire

Ferguson's admiration for modern, 'civilized' war was balanced with his awareness that the division of labour, separating the function of warfare from that of ordinary life, created at the heart of every civilized society a military structure which threatened 'usurpation' and 'military power'.[102] Indeed, these concerns motivated his participation in the public controversy over the desirability of a Scots militia prompted by Prime Minister Pitt's Militia Bill (enacted in 1757), which called for the raising of a militia to defend England, but excluded any in Scotland due to fears that it would become an instrument of future Jacobite rebellion.[103] Echoing earlier controversies over William III's standing army, Ferguson appealed to the 'Valour of Freemen Armed in defence of their Country'.[104] His position, however, was shaped by more than the exigencies of national defence, and derived in large measure from his concern that self-interested commerce and the division of labour – despite their advantages – tended to undermine 'public spirit'.[105] For Adam Smith however, the division of labour had simply made professional, standing armies necessary because workers at war meant lost revenue, and because war had now become an 'intricate ... science' requiring full-time armies.[106]

Though Ferguson admired Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, he declared to its author that on the question of the militia 'I must be against you'.[107] For Ferguson, a citizen's militia was the best means of ensuring the practice of vigorous, martial virtues and introducing the citizen to the disciplines, salutary hardships, obedience, fortitude and courage of military life.[108] For Smith, however, the invention of firearms meant that the individual skill of the warrior was no longer as necessary to modern warfare as the discipline of large bodies of troops, and such discipline was better accomplished in standing armies than in militias. With more than a backward glance at the Highlands, Smith argued that standing armies were necessary to civilization itself. Without them a civilized nation would lie open to 'the invasion of a poor and barbarous neighbour', while it was only by means of standing armies that 'a barbarous country' could be 'suddenly and tolerably civilized'.[109]

For Ferguson however, the lack of a citizen's militia facilitated the sudden eruption of Highland armies in 1715 and 1745:

> ... whilst the Body of our People is disarmed, and pacific to a Degree which tempts Invasion, we have Reason to apprehend Danger even from a few, whom the Spirit of Faction continues to stimulate. A few Banditti from the Mountains, trained by their Situation to a warlike Disposition, might over-run the Country, and, in a critical Time, give Law to this Nation ... When the Lovers of Freedom and their Country have an equal use of Arms, the Cause of a Pretender to the Dominion and Property of this Island, is from that Moment desperate.[110]

The problem, as he saw it, was that the advance of civilization (of commerce, manners, law and government) also weakened the archaic virtues that less civilized peoples were constantly called on to display due to the harshness of their situation. For Ferguson, civilization was characterized by a complex mix of advantages and disadvantages nowhere more dangerously opposed than in military affairs.[111]

Ferguson could not deny that civilized militaries exhibited superior discipline and control, but these were accomplished by subordinating the individual soldier's warrior virtues to the commands of drill:

> The best Lesson of the parade is a habit of Submission to absolute Command: there every Battalion learns to unite and obey; it becomes like the Bundle of Rods, strong when in Order and united, even tho' Individuals have no great personal Confidence, or Fondness for the Business.[112]

What's more, professional militaries often relied on drafting the 'Dregs of the People' least equipped to show any virtue.[113] These shortcomings were, he thought, exposed by imperial conflicts in which 'civilized' soldiers fighting for empire across the globe had to 'contend with the savage' and thereby to 'imitate' the savage warrior's skills.[114] Even worse, the techniques of modern warfare were perilously easy to learn, and in 'the use of modern arms, the novice is made to learn, and to practice with ease, all that the veteran knows'.[115] This was one of the fears animating his concern over the prospect of military rule, manifested in striking warnings of the dangers of corruption and military government.[116]

According to J. G. A. Pocock, Ferguson's fear of military government subduing civil society was not necessarily a 'prophecy' of 'immediate peril', but a 'moralistic' exposition of 'the dangers inherent' in the process of civilization.[117] That process could indeed be positive, for, while it had intensified the capacity for civilized states to wage war, it had also created 'domestic peace and regular policy' and 'disarmed the animosities of civil contention'.[118] Ferguson was concerned, however, that civilization may degenerate, that polished manners and good government may be corrupted.[119] The danger of corruption was that the loss of national spirit in the face of rampant self-interest and greed, would create the conditions for tyranny. The task, as Ferguson saw it, was how to engraft the archaic virtues of savage tribes and barbarous nations onto a civilized society, thus averting the terrible fate that corruption would bestow.[120]

The plausible but certainly fictional tale of Ferguson's presence at Fontenoy illustrates the salience of his Highland background, while also highlighting the tension between his devotion to archaic warrior virtue and his admiration of the modern practice of war. The most plausible story we have of Ferguson's active military service has him speaking Gaelic verse, invoking the ancient traditions of warrior virtue on the field of battle that has come to exemplify the organization,

discipline and structure of warfare that he considered an index of civilization. While it could not have taken place at Fontenoy, the tale is a plausible account of Ferguson's personal application of his devotion to both archaic virtue and modern military methods. Underlying this commitment was an abiding fear that without the living appeal to archaic virtue, the discipline, strength and order he so admired in modern armies would, under the enervating influence of civilization, imbibe a fictional quality all of their own.

3 WHY DID DAVID HUME DISLIKE ADAM FERGUSON'S *AN ESSAY ON THE HISTORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY*?

David Raynor

In a delightfully teasing letter to Adam Smith, Hume postponed informing him about the reception his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) was enjoying in London and predicting what its overall success would be by relaying gossip about various Scottish and French men of letters. Among other items, Hume told him that 'Ferguson has very much polished and improved his *Treatise on Refinement*; and with some amendments it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and a singular genius'.[1]

Whatever became of Ferguson's *Treatise on Refinement*? The editor of the most recent edition of Ferguson's *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* suggests that it is 'lost'.[2] But perhaps it is more probable that the part of the early draft manuscript that Hume read, however slight it may have been, was incorporated into the published *Essay*, rather than being 'lost'. When Hume came to read several sections of the penultimate or final manuscript of the *Essay* about eight years later, and more than a year before it was published, he told his intimate friend Dr Hugh Blair that he had high expectations for it, but they had been dashed by reading Ferguson's papers 'more than once'.[3] As he explained to Blair, his high expectations had been 'founded on my good Opinion of [Ferguson], on a Small Specimen I had seen of them some years ago, and on yours & Dr Robertson's Esteem of them: But I am sorry to say it, they have no-wise answer'd my Expectation. I do not think them fit to be given to the Public, neither on account of the Style or Reasoning; the Form nor the Matter'. Hume here writes as if what he read in 1759 was part of what he tried to like later on in 1766 and 1767. It may even be that the 'small specimen' that he read and liked back in 1759 was, or included, the section 'Of Luxury' in Part VI of the *Essay*, which seems to echo Hume's own 1752 essay 'Of Luxury', which had been re-titled 'Of Refinement in

the Arts' in 1760. I shall later present another reason in support of this speculation.

But the primary purpose of the present essay is to answer the question: why did Hume dislike the *Essay*? This question should not be difficult to answer. He naturally assumed that the two 'specimens' that he had read on two widely-separated occasions were the best bits of the manuscript. As he explained to Blair: 'It is not natural to imagine, that these Sections, which [Ferguson] has sent as a Specimen, are the worst parts of the Performance: Yet surely, what I saw was much better. It is needless to enter into a Detail, where almost every thing appears to me exceptionable'. For this reason alone most speculations as to what Hume disliked in the *Essay* will inevitably have some truth in them. I suspect that when Hume read a 'small specimen' of the *Essay* in 1759 he fully expected that both the content and the style of the finished product would be much more in line with that of his own publications than they turned out to be. At all events, the 'small specimen' that he read and liked in 1759 evidently was not the larger and later 'specimen' that he read in early 1766, and which made him wish to do all in his power to prevent the publication of Ferguson's first major work.

Style and Form

Hume certainly took exception to Ferguson's style, so let us briefly focus on that aspect of the *Essay*. Prior to 1767 Ferguson had composed in English two textbooks intended for his students, but acknowledged only two small pamphlets intended for a wider public: *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia* (1756), which consisted of fifty-three pages, and *The Morality of Stage-plays Seriously Considered* (1757), which was merely thirty pages long. Of the first Ferguson himself acknowledged that it was 'a tedious Performance'.[4] Of the second a contemporary judged that 'the stile and manner of it is very poor and dull, so that I am positive that the author cannot be a man of genius'.[5] These were very short ephemeral tracts, quickly composed for particular occasions, and never reprinted in Ferguson's lifetime. The *Essay*, by contrast, had a long gestation of eight or more years, so it might have been expected to have exhibited a polished style. After all, by 1767 its author had been a professor at a prestigious Scottish university for eight years. Everybody in Edinburgh who knew him well would have most likely been prejudiced in his favour. Certainly Hume acknowledged that he was; and so, no doubt, were some of his closest friends, notably Dr Hugh Blair, Professor of Rhetoric at Edinburgh University, and Dr William Robertson, the celebrated historian of Scotland, as well as the energetic and successful Principal of the university. It appears to have been Ferguson's friends, General Robert Clerk and William Petty, the third Earl of Shelburne, who put the sections of the manuscript of the *Essay* into Hume's hands, and were entrusted with

negotiating with potential publishers. They probably expected Hume to recommend the work to his own publishers. But, if so, how wrong they were. Hume told Blair that he would gladly join any scheme that aimed 'to prevent or retard the Publication' of Ferguson's papers; 'but they are now put into General Clerk & Lord Shelburne's hands, who are not the most proper Judges in the World'; so he insisted that it was up to Blair alone to prevent the publication of the *Essay*, which Blair would not do. He and Robertson had praised the work and would not retreat.

In his letter to Blair, Hume was careful not to be thought to be alone in finding fault with the style of the *Essay*, so he mentioned the negative judgements of two close friends: Sir Gilbert Elliot, MP for Roxburgh, and Dr Robert Lowth, whom he described as being 'a very candid & ingenious Critic'. Lowth had been Professor of Poetry at Oxford during most of the 1740s, had been recently elected a fellow of the Royal Society of London, and in 1753 had published a highly successful book entitled *Praelections de sacra poesi Hebraeorum.* Blair would have known all this, and been open to Lowth's censure of Ferguson's manuscript. After the *Essay* was published, and was well received, Hume reported to Ferguson and Blair that a fellow Scotsman, Lord Mansfield, 'was extremely pleas'd with it; said it was very agreeable and perfectly well wrote; assur'd me, that he wou'd not stop a Moment till he had finishd it ....'[6] But Hume also reported that he had asked Mrs Edward Montagu (*née* Elizabeth Robinson) 'whether she was satisfied with the style? Whether it did not savour somewhat of the country? Oh yes, said she, a great deal: it seems almost impossible that anyone could write such a style except a Scotsman'.[7]

Ferguson's *Essay* displayed considerable 'warmth in the cause of virtue', something that Hume's own first publication lacked. As is well known, this was one of Francis Hutcheson's complaints about Book 3 of Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature.* As Hume told him: 'What affected me most in your Remarks is your observing, that there wants a certain Warmth in the Cause of Virtue, which, you think, all good Men wou'd relish, & cou'd not displease amidst abstract Enquirys'. But Hume explained in no uncertain terms that this lack of 'warmth' was the result of a deliberate decision:

> One may consider [the mind] either as an Anatomist or as a Painter ... I imagine it impossible to conjoin these two Views ... I am perswaded, that a Metaphysician may be very helpful to a Moralist; tho' I cannot easily conceive these two Characters united in the same Work. Any warm Sentiment of Morals, I am afraid, wou'd have the Air of Declamation amidst abstract Reasonings, & wou'd be esteem'd contrary to good Taste.[8]

Ferguson's *Essay*, by contrast, is redolent with a 'warm sentiment of morals'; but there is little anatomy of human nature, metaphysics, or even 'abstract Rea-

sonings' in it. Therefore it is tempting to regard Ferguson as more a moralist than a philosopher, more a declaimer than an analyst, and, as we shall see, there is some evidence that this was how he was regarded by some of his contemporaries.

The London-based *Critical Review* seems to have been first off the mark to review the *Essay,* with a laudatory seven-page article in its February number. The reviewer judged the *Essay* to be 'one of the few modern compositions which unites preciseness of reasoning and depth of judgment, to an uncommon elegance of diction'. This was diametrically opposed to Hume's opinion. The practical aim of the *Essay* was also emphasized, with the reviewer noting that it 'exhibits a plan of national policy upon solid, that is virtuous, principles; and we hope will be considered as such by the rulers and ministers of a people who, having reached the summit of glory, have nothing now so much to apprehend as that very attainment, because, in the course of earthly things, it leads to decadence'. Ferguson would have been pleased that the reviewer felt that nobody could read his book without becoming 'a better man and citizen'.[9] This favourable review was reprinted in the *Scots Magazine* the following month.[10] But not all the reviews were so entirely laudatory, and there was in fact an undercurrent of criticism of the book, both public and private.

Religion and Civil Society

A long review of the *Essay* in the *Monthly Review* appeared in the numbers for March, April and May of 1767, and the standard work on that London periodical attributes it to Hume's friend Dr William Rose.[11] It was probably this review that Hume sent, from London, to Ferguson at Edinburgh.[12] While most of its thirty-one pages consist of extracts from Ferguson's book, one striking criticism occurs in its first paragraph. The reviewer notes 'a considerable omission' in the book, namely, that it contains absolutely no discussion of the role of religion in civil society. He evidently thought that potential readers of the book should be warned about this omission:

'In a work of this kind, the discerning reader, we apprehend, will expect to meet with something upon the subject of religion, which, in almost every age, has had a considerable influence on civil society: this point, however, our Author has omitted; what his reasons were, we pretend not to know. The subject is indeed of a very delicate nature ...'[13]

This is a hint that Ferguson was overly prudent and lacked the courage to take on this 'very delicate' subject.

A similar criticism was made about a year later, in a thirty-page review of the *Essay* in *Mémoires littéraires de la Grande Bretagne,* a short-lived French-language periodical edited by Edward Gibbon and his Swiss friend Georges Deyverdun.

In the considerations to follow, I shall draw on this uncommonly detailed and interesting review of Ferguson's *Essay,* to which Hume himself may have had some input. The longest article in the first volume of this periodical, this review has been attributed to Gibbon, but cogent reasons for thinking that it is *not* his production alone have been put forward.[14] I shall have more to say about the authorship of this review later. Meanwhile, let us simply note that the reviewer (or reviewers) found it surprising that religion, which always occupies such a prominent place in civil society, occupied none at all in Ferguson's *Essay,* and ironically professed to admire Ferguson's prudence in avoiding any discussion of such a delicate subject.[15] Can there be any doubt that Hume also would have thought that Ferguson should have paid considerable attention to the impact of religion on civil society?

One of Hume's abiding interests was how religion affected civil society. In his *History of England under the House of Tudor* (1759), for example, he had made much of the impact of John Knox and the Reformers on Scottish civil society. Robertson's *History of Scotland* (1759), by contrast, had downplayed this impact, much to his advantage. From London Hume wrote to Adam Smith that 'Robertson's Book has great Merit; but it was visible that he profited here by the Animosity against me'.[16] Hume believed that the greater popularity of Robertson's book over his own was 'forwarded by its prudence, and by the deference paid to established opinions'.[17] To Hume's mind Robertson's overly sympathetic account of Knox and the Reformation was a weakness in an otherwise accurate and impartial history of the period, and he believed that Robertson's *History* was 'most expos'd to criticism' on account of its 'godly Strain'.[18] By contrast, Hume welcomed the fact that readers of his history of the Tudors would have 'the pleasure of seeing John Knox and the Reformers made very ridiculous'.[19] And he jokingly requested Adam Smith 'to flatter my Vanity, by telling me, that all the Godly in Scotland abuse me for my Account of John Knox & the Reformation &c'.[20]

Robertson and Blair, like Ferguson, were Scottish Presbyterian clergymen who had received much the same college education. No doubt Hume believed that on this account alone Robertson and Blair might be prejudiced in favour of a work by a member of their own class, especially when it omitted any discussion of the role of religion in civil society. How indeed could they impartially judge Ferguson's work, given their similar backgrounds and close personal ties to him? In this connection it is worth recalling a very gently stated, yet important, criticism of Robertson's *History of Scotland* in the *Critical Review.* After noting that Robertson himself is a Scottish Presbyterian, though without 'that bigotry and sourness which have oft been charged on that sect', the reviewer remarked that:

> As it is almost impossible, however, for the most impartial writer, to divest himself entirely of all prejudices of country, education, or profession, some of our readers may perhaps imagine, that a certain degree of these prejudices can be found in the character which he gives of Knox, the great apostle of the Scotch church; where, though his failings be acknowledged, yet an apology for them is, at the same time, artfully interwoven.[21]

In light of considerations such as these, it may seem that Hume was somewhat naive in asking Blair and Robertson to re-examine Ferguson's manuscript 'with more Severity and less Prepossession', in the hope that a more impartial examination of it would lead them to retract their high opinion of it, and consequently 'prevent or retard the Publication'.

Sparta and Athens

The arbiters of literary taste in Edinburgh at this time were a triumvirate consisting of Hume, Lord Kames and Lord Elibank. These men were often asked for their opinions on works-in-progress by members of the literati, but there seems to be no evidence that any of them were consulted by Ferguson until he put a few of his papers into Hume's hands. However, once the *Essay* was published, Kames happily recommended it to Mrs Montagu, emphasizing its two aims:

> Besides tracing minutely the history of society from its dawn in the savage state to its meridian lustre of civilization, sciences and arts, it has a further aim, which is, to wean us from selfishness and luxury, the reigning characteristics at present of all commercial nations, and to restore the manly passions of heroism, generosity, and love of our species. The aim is noble; but the disease, I doubt, is too far advanced to be cured by any characters that can be formed with ink.[22]

It must have been obvious to any discerning reader that Ferguson had a practical, as well as a theoretical, aim in publishing the *Essay*. Evidently Kames did not believe that its practical aim could succeed. Nor did Mrs Montagu, whose reaction to the book deserves to be quoted at length, as the letter in which it is given was passed on to Ferguson, and forms part of the subject of a letter that he subsequently wrote Hume. While preferring Athens over Sparta, she feigned admiration for Ferguson's naive partiality to Sparta, while at the same time gently mocking its supposed relevance to mid-eighteenth-century Great Britain.

> I approve extremely of Mr Ferguson in the preference he gives to the magnanimous virtues, above the effeminate and luxurious arts of modern life; and wish he could infuse into us some of that Spartan spirit he admires so justly. At the same time, if he learnt the practice of virtue at Sparta, it was at Athens he was taught to make it doctrine. A Lacedemonian [i.e. a Spartan] might have said, when he swallowed his black broth … *What do I suffer that the Athenians may praise me!* Had not the latter perpetuated its memory, the temperance of the former, like their broth, had diffused

> its salubrious effects only through a few individuals, and a few centuries. What had remained of Spartan patriotism for an example to other countries, and other ages, if the same system had prevailed all over Greece?[23]

When she penned the above she may have had in mind Ferguson's observation that 'Athens was necessary to Sparta, in the exercise of her virtue, as steel is to flint in the production of fire'.[24] But she may also have been alluding to the development of the moral doctrines of the Stoics at Athens.

Ferguson was flattered that this famous 'bluestocking' had taken notice of his book, and hoped that Hume, when he next spoke with her, would 'mix some of [his] Philosophy with [Hume's] own'. But Ferguson was 'somewhat Angry with her for conjuring up the Spartan black broth against [him]'; and as he proceeded to tell Hume: 'I know that you are an admirer of the Athenians as well as Mrs Montagu & if I were to plead the cause of Sparta against her I must appeal somewhere else'.[25] Hume regarded Sparta as a 'prodigy' to which there can be no return. Modern states cannot be turned into fortified camps of public-spirited citizens, so animated by *amor patria* that they would endure severe hardships and forego innocent pleasures for the public welfare. Since 'these principles are too disinterested and too difficult to support', Hume insisted that politicians must instead 'govern men by other passions, and animate them with a spirit of avarice and industry, art and luxury'.[26] He did not believe in a 'miraculous transformation of mankind, as would endow them with every species of virtue': a politician 'cannot cure every vice by substituting a virtue in its place. Very often he can only cure one vice by another …'[27] Hume's realistic politics was opposed to Ferguson's naive Stoicism.

Hume and Mrs Montagu were not alone in disliking Ferguson's excessive praise of Sparta. It was indeed the only criticism of the *Essay* in a review that Edmund Burke has been credited with writing. After reprinting much of Sections 1 and 6 of Part 1 of the *Essay*, he could not forebear ending without making the following criticism:

> Notwithstanding the pleasure we have received from this performance, and the esteem with which we regard the author; we cannot take leave of him without expressing our surprize, that so able and zealous an advocate for benevolence should have lavished so much praise on the Spartan government; a government, which, besides many other enormities in the very frame of it, not only tolerated, but enjoined the most inhuman cruelties to be inflicted on its innocent captives; that endeavoured to eradicate from its members all social tenderness and domestic endearment, and on every occasion to stifle the voice of nature, and the cries of humanity.[28]

Burke then recommended, as a kind of antidote to Ferguson's eulogy of the Spartans, an accurate though unsympathetic sketch of their manners that he had inserted in the *Annual Register* for 1760, and which was drawn from the English

translation of Antoine Yves Goguet's *De l'origine des loix, des arts, et des sciences; et leur progrès chez les anciens peuples.*[29] Anybody who took the trouble to read Goguet's account would be disinclined to accept Ferguson's overly sympathetic portrait of the Spartans.

A mutual friend of Hume and Adam Smith, Count de Sarsfield, also deplored Ferguson's praise of the Spartans. He did not think that one should praise a state which depended upon slaves in order to support itself. It was an 'imperfect' state because it deprived its citizens of using many of their talents, and in order to last it required many circumstances which probably would never be present together. Anyone would have been 'very unfortunate' to live near the Spartans. Moreover, excessively praising them was unfair to our own forefathers, who also displayed the martial virtues to a high degree. Sarsfield then criticized Ferguson for focusing too much on city-states at the expense of largely rural countries such as England, from which the laudable British government had been derived.[30] The history of England had, of course, been Hume's preoccupation for several years, and it was largely a political or constitutional history.

In Part 4, Section 4 of the *Essay* Ferguson compared Athens and Sparta by employing the literary device of an imaginary report of a modern traveller visiting ancient Greece. He used this device to put Athens and Sparta on the same level by suggesting that all Greeks were barbarians, something that he believed had been disguised by the great skill of the ancient Greek historians, but which he hoped could be brought out by way of this fictional report.[31] The review in the *Mémoires littéraires* singled out this episode, first summarizing, then criticizing it. 'This traveller adopts the tone of Voltaire's man of the world. He sees with an eye of contempt and indignation the determination of the Greeks for infinitely small interests, and equally mocks the poverty of Sparta and the license of Athens. The whole of Greece appears to him to be an uncouth region, from which he would rather escape'. But he then criticized it as follows:

> This pleasantry has little grandeur and still less accuracy. I picture the astonishment of this traveller, his fear and terror at the sight of Sparta; but a law, which would forbid its citizens the spoils from Asia, is little suitable to inspire contempt. At Athens he might have believed himself to be in a Tartar horde after having heard a tragedy by Euripides in a theatre built by Phidias. A pleasantry by Mr. Hume appears to have provided the idea for this fiction; but Virgil himself acknowledged that it is easier to snatch Hercules's club than to steal a verse from Homer.[32]

This reviewer regarded these uncharacteristic pages of Ferguson's book as a poor imitation of Hume's 'A Dialogue', appended to his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751). Hume was vain of this composition, so he probably also would have regarded Ferguson's effort as an unworthy imitation of it.

The Principles of Morality

While Kames was willing to accord some originality to the theoretical aim of the *Essay*, he believed that 'Ferguson, if he has failed any where, is most deficient in that part of his work where he handles the Principles of Morality'.[33] To fill this gap in Ferguson's thought Kames recommended to Mrs Montagu his own 'Essay on the Principles of Morality', which had been published recently.[34] There can be no doubt that Hume would have agreed with Kames here. In fact, Ferguson was farther from Hume's moral philosophy than he was from Kames's, so Hume would have found the *Essay* even more deficient in this respect than did Kames. Hume once privately hinted that he would have preferred Ferguson to continue as Professor of Natural Philosophy, rather than moving to the chair of Moral Philosophy in 1764.[35] Moreover, Hume certainly would have regarded Ferguson's treatment of the moral sentiments as disappointing, as it was much like that of Francis Hutcheson, the late Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow University, and was deficient for most of the same reasons, namely, in failing to probe deeply enough to account for the principles involved in moral approbation and disapprobation, and in founding all morality upon private or public benevolence, and little or none on self-interest. Ferguson had ignored or rejected the substantial contributions that Hume and Adam Smith, in their different ways, had made to the sentimentalist tradition in both metaethical and normative respects.[36] Ferguson would have been familiar with Hutcheson's moral system from his college days, but it is interesting to see that in 1766 he borrowed from the university library a copy of Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*.[37]

Ferguson's Stoic moral philosophy was shared by, and presumably partly derived from, Hutcheson; however, Hume believed that this doctrine had been refuted decisively many centuries ago. As he once told Hutcheson:

> You are a great Admirer of Cicero, as well as I am. Please to review the 4th Book, *de finibus bonorum & malorum;* where you find him prove against the *Stoics*, that if there be no other Goods but Virtue, tis impossible there can be any Virtue; because the Mind woud then want all Motives to begin its Actions upon: And tis on the Goodness or Badness of the Motives that the Virtue of the Action depends. This proves, that to every virtuous Action there must be a Motive or impelling Passion distinct from the Virtue, & that Virtue can never be the sole Motive to any Action. You do not assent to this; tho' *I think there is no Proposition more certain or important.*[38]

But Hume's dislike of the *Essay* would have commenced in its very first section, which is devoted to the supposed state of nature of the poets and philosophers. Ferguson there raised objections against philosophers who have theorized about a pre-societal state of nature according to various characteristics of man. He believed that the system-builder's desire to explain how social man emerged

from 'some imaginary state of nature' had 'led to many fruitless inquiries, and given rise to many wild suppositions'. When a naturalist treats of horses or sheep he gives us facts, not conjectures; why, then, when a naturalist treats of man, should he give us conjectures, rather than facts? The latter 'substitutes hypothesis instead of reality, and confounds the provinces of imagination and reason'. We have no record of times when society and language did not exist, so they have always existed. Ferguson's methodological moral is plain: he will collect facts and eschew conjectures. He will not be one of those system-builders who are 'tempted into these boundless regions of ignorance or conjecture, by a fancy which delights in creating rather than in merely' observing nature. Such theorists 'are the dupes of a subtilty, which promises to supply every defect of our knowledge'. The state of nature 'is here; and it matters not whether we are understood to speak in the island of Great Britain, at the Cape of Good Hope, or the Straits of Magellan'.[39]

The review in the *Mémoires littéraires* objected that this was too severe a curtailment of the philosopher's province, and countered Ferguson's argument that the historian of civil society should emulate the historian of other animal species:

> Perhaps he treats [these philosophers] too severely. Animals are everywhere the same; man, by contrast, appears different everywhere. When one compares an Englishman and a Hottentot, isn't it natural enough to suspect that the characteristics of the Hottentot himself are also the product of time and labour? Language and society scarcely exist with him; the philosopher conjectures that they haven't always existed with him. His hypothesis must explain their origin, consistently with what is invariable and necessary in the constitution of the animal body. The philosopher may propose conjectures, but must avoid the tone of a lawmaker, and limit himself to that of a modest sceptic.[40]

Hume would have welcomed this defence of philosophical conjecture, for throughout his philosophical works he engaged in it, especially in his account of the origin of justice and property, notwithstanding that he could agree with Montesquieu's remark, quoted by Ferguson, that 'Man is born in society, and there he remains'. Hume probably believed that the earliest ancestors of the Hottentots of the Cape of Good Hope lived 'in that savage condition, which precedes society'. But any such belief was irrelevant to his defence of state-of-nature philosophizing.

While explaining the origin of justice and property Hume defended his procedure of considering apart things that are really inseparable, in this emulating the procedure of the natural philosophers. He observed:

> ... that 'tis utterly impossible for men to remain any considerable time in that savage condition, which precedes society; but that his very first state and situation may justly

> be esteem'd social. This, however, hinders not, but that philosophers may, if they please, extend their reasoning to the suppos'd state of nature; provided they allow it to be a mere philosophical fiction, which never had, and never cou'd have any reality. Human nature being compos'd of two principal parts, which are requisite in all its actions, the affections and understanding; 'tis certain, that the blind motions of the former, without the direction of the latter, incapacitate men for society: And it may be allow'd us to consider separately the effects, that result from the separate operations of these two component parts of the mind. The same liberty may be permitted to moral, which is allow'd to natural philosophers; and 'tis very usual with the latter to consider any motion as compounded and consisting of two parts separate from each other, tho' at the same time they acknowledge it to be in itself uncompounded and inseparable.[41]

The invention of justice and property is the work of the passions and the understanding: in certain circumstances men inevitably invent conventions to restrain their self-interested passions. Hume's strategy in explaining the origin of justice is first to eliminate candidates for the original *non-moral* motive for the invention of, and the obedience to, the rules of justice. He first excludes self-love 'when it acts at its liberty', then *public* benevolence and finally *private* benevolence, in order to show how self-love naturally leads into justice 'in an oblique and indirect manner'.[42] In Hume's view, 'no affection of the human mind has both a sufficient force, and a proper direction to counter-balance the love of gain' than self-interest itself: The only thing that can control self-interest is self-interest 'by an alteration of its direction'; that is, by the discovery 'that the passion is much better satisfy'd by its restraint, than by its liberty'.[43] Hume's account of justice and property was presented as a discovery using the very conjectural method that Ferguson condemned. Faithful to his methodology, Ferguson simply stopped with the fact that the state of nature is imaginary; he saw no reason to go farther. For Hume, by contrast, 'This state of nature ... is to be regarded as a mere fiction ... but yet deserves our attention, because nothing can more evidently shew the origin of those virtues, which are the subjects of our present enquiry'.[44]

In Hume's technical terminology justice is an *artificial* virtue, not a *natural* one. This distinction was little understood even by Hutcheson, and perhaps still less by Ferguson, who seems either to have ignored it or to have deliberately blurred it. In the 1740s Hume's clerical enemies had a field day with this distinction. In self-defence Hume gave, in an anonymous pamphlet, what is perhaps his clearest explanation of the distinction:

> By the *natural Virtues* he plainly understands *Compassion* and *Generosity*, and such as we are immediately carried to by a *natural Instinct*; and by the *artificial Virtues* he means *Justice, Loyalty,* and such as require, along with a *natural Instinct*, a certain Reflection on the general Interests of Human Society, and a Combination with others. In the same Sense, Sucking is an Action natural to Man, and Speech is artificial. But what is there in this Doctrine that can be supposed in the least pernicious? Has

> he not expresly asserted, That Justice, in another Sense of the Word, is so natural to Man, that no Society of Men, and even no individual Member of any Society, was ever entirely devoid of all Sense of it?[45]

Hume was very sensitive to the different meanings of 'natural' and, perhaps largely as a result of Hutcheson's misunderstandings on reading a late draft of Book 3 of *A Treatise of Human Nature*, took considerable pains to avoid such misunderstandings in the future: '... when I deny justice to be a natural virtue, I make use of the word, *natural*, only as oppos'd to *artificial*. In another sense of the word ... no virtue is more natural than justice. Mankind is an inventive species; and where an invention is obvious and absolutely necessary, it may as properly be said to be natural as any thing that proceeds immediately from original principles, without the intervention of thought or reflection'.[46] In a memorable passage Ferguson virtually echoes this last sentence, while at the same time objecting to all attempts to distinguish what is natural from what is artificial: 'We speak of art as distinguished from nature; but art itself is natural to man. He is in some measure the artificer of his own frame ... and is destined ... to invent and contrive'.[47] At least one reader took him as maintaining here 'that it is a mistake to distinguish art from nature, and that, on the contrary, art is natural to man'.[48] Hume would have insisted that for certain philosophical purposes it is important to distinguish what is artificial from what is natural, while agreeing that, in another sense of the word 'natural', art is natural to man.

The sixth section of Part 1, 'Of Moral Sentiment', as we have seen, shows that in matters of moral philosophy Ferguson is not only a Stoic but, like many liberal Scottish clergymen of his day, at least sympathetic with Hutcheson's moral philosophy. But Ferguson makes it clear from the beginning that he is not interested in explaining the principles involved in making moral judgements. It is just a fact, and perhaps an inexplicable one, that we make them. He therefore saw no need to enter into the territory occupied by Hume or by Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, though he at least once alludes to their theories, suggesting that both sympathy and benevolence are at work here:

> What is it that prompts the tongue when we censure an act of cruelty and oppression? What is it that constitutes our restraint from offences that tend to distress our fellow-creatures? It is probably, in both cases, a particular application of that principle, which, in presence of the sorrowful, sends forth the tear of compassion; and a combination of all those sentiments, which constitute a benevolent disposition; and if not a resolution to do good, at least an aversion to be the instrument of harm.[49]

While entirely avoiding the word 'sympathy' for reasons best known to himself, Ferguson suggests that sympathy and other benevolent principles explain both why we disapprove of vicious actions, and why we avoid doing them. Benevolent dispositions do both jobs in Ferguson's moral universe. But, again, Hume

would not have been satisfied with the suggestion that the same principles that operate in making us blame an unjust action also keep us from acting unjustly. For Hume what keeps us from *acting* unjustly is enlightened self-interest; what makes us *disapprove* vice is sympathy with others. As he summed up this part of his theory:

'... *self-interest* is the original motive to the *establishment* of justice: But a *sympathy* with *public interest* is the source of our *moral* approbation which attends that virtue. This latter principle is too weak to control our passions; but has sufficient force to influence our taste, and give us the sentiments of approbation or blame.'[50]

In a long footnote to the above-quoted paragraph, Ferguson gives an account of the honest man's 'resolute choice of conduct, directed to the good of mankind, or to the good of that party to which the party belongs'. This discussion may have been directed at Hume. It surely would have reminded Hume of Hutcheson's account of justice and property in *Philosophiae Moralis Institutio Compendiaria* (1742), a copy of which Hutcheson had sent him. In response to Hutcheson's doctrine Hume wrote: 'You sometimes ... ascribe the Original of Property & Justice to public Benevolence, & sometimes to private Benevolence towards the Possessors of the Goods, neither of which seem to me satisfactory. You know my Opinion on this head. It mortifies me much to see a Person, who possesses more Candour & Penetration than any almost I know, condemn Reasonings, of which I imagine I see so strongly the Evidence'.[51] Twenty-four years later Hume had the mortification of seeing Ferguson implicitly condemn those same reasonings. But there were other critics of Hume's account of justice that Ferguson may also have been drawing on. Kames devoted a chapter to criticizing it in his *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion* (1751), and two years later an anonymous pamphlet adjudicated this dispute giving Kames the victory.[52] Adam Smith was critical of Hume's account of justice too, and seems to have been convinced that on this matter Kames was right and Hume wrong.

Opposition and Conflict

In the early sections of Part 1 of the *Essay* Ferguson is concerned to establish that man seeks society, and shuns solitude; that human nature consists of intellectual and moral principles; and that we are activated by principles of benevolence as well as self-preservation. In Section 2 he 'attacks moralists who have allotted everything to interested self-love, without leaving anything to benevolence except a hollow name'.[53] There is nothing here that Hume would have rejected. He was as convinced as Hutcheson and Butler that benevolence is an irreducible principle of human nature, and both Hume and Ferguson employed arguments to this end derived from these philosophers. It comes as something of a surprise

then to find Ferguson, in section 4, announcing that, in addition to these principles, man is also naturally endowed with a principle of opposition, so that national animosities and wars are natural and useful things. Here Hume would have regarded Ferguson as an unskilful naturalist for positing *another* innate principle of human nature in order to account for the opposition and conflict which Hume believed could be entirely accounted for on the basis of self-interest, benevolence, and scarcity. Hume emphasized that:

> so noble an affection [as benevolence], instead of fitting men for large societies, is almost as contrary to them, as the most narrow selfishness. For while each person loves himself better than any other single person, and in his love for others bears the greatest affection to his relations and acquaintance, this must necessarily produce an *opposition* of passions, and a consequent *opposition* of actions, which cannot but be dangerous ...[54]

Hume viewed war as what moves a society without government to embrace government, and he appealed to the American Indians to verify his theory, all without requiring Ferguson's gratuitous principle of opposition. As Hume maintained: '... so far am I from thinking with some philosophers, that men are utterly incapable of society without government, that I assert the first rudiments of government to arise from quarrels, not among men of the same society, but among those of different societies'. Foreign wars lead to civil wars, during which the rules of society require reinforcement by a military leader, which eventually leads to civil government: 'Camps are the true mothers of cities; and as war cannot be administered ... without some authority in a single person, the same kind of authority naturally takes place in that civil government, which succeeds the military'.[55] But though Hume finds a place for war in the early stage of a society without government, he did not see war as necessary and useful at more advanced stages of civil society. Far from it.

In sections 9 and 10, on national felicity, Ferguson maintains that wealth and population contribute less to national felicity than character does; he then draws the moral that peace and unanimity are not the chief or only bases of national felicity but that animosities, agitations, factions and debates are essential too. To this appeal to conflict, the reviewer in the *Mémoires littéraires* responded: 'One sees that Mr. Ferguson, faithful to his principles, regards with horror weak and passionless moderation, which produces neither love nor hatred; and that he views wars and factions as principles of life and movement. The calm philosopher will tremble at this doctrine; but the zealous citizen will embrace it; and it is for the latter that Mr. Ferguson writes'.[56]

Savage and Barbarian

Part 2 of the *Essay* is devoted to the 'History of Rude Nations' and makes an important distinction between 'savage' and 'barbarous' nations. This is not an original distinction. Montesquieu had his own way of drawing it in terms of terrain: 'savage peoples' are usually 'hunting peoples' living in 'small scattered nations which cannot unite', while 'barbarian peoples' are usually 'pastoral peoples' living in 'small nations that can unite together'.[57] Others were less precise. The distinction was invoked by Hume's Parisian friend Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Suard in his comparison of the 'savage' poetry of Ossian with the 'barbarous' poetry of medieval Wales.[58] Hume would have been interested in how Ferguson draws this distinction on the basis of a 'savage' nation not knowing property, and a 'barbarian' one knowing it. But here Ferguson is less than clear. Sometimes he suggests that savage nations have absolutely no idea of personal property, with *all* property being communal. But he sometimes concedes that the American Indian has ideas of his own personal possessions. The reviewer in the *Mémoires littéraires* picked up on this: 'Among rude nations, some have no, or at least very little, idea of property; others know it'.[59] This distinction between peoples having absolutely no idea of property, on the one hand, and others having a notion of property, would be an interesting distinction for Hume, as his theory of justice requires property. For Ferguson, however, justice can exist without any notions of property and is what Hume would have classified as a *natural* virtue. But apart from this lack of clarity on Ferguson's part, and how it might have played a part in his rejection of Hume's theory of justice, there is nothing in the distinction itself that Hume would have disliked. Indeed, Ferguson's 'savage' society seems equivalent to Hume's 'infancy of society', and, as we have already seen, Hume himself emphasized that there can be society without government, something that 'we find verify'd in the *American* tribes, where men live in concord and amity among themselves without any establish'd government …' Yet he was quick to add: 'But tho' it be possible for men to maintain a small uncultivated society without government, 'tis impossible they shou'd maintain a society of any kind without justice …'[60]

It may be true that Ferguson sometimes models his savages on the ancient Gaels celebrated in his friend James Macpherson's poems of Ossian. But between 1760 and 1766 Hume himself was a moderate partisan of Ossian: that is, like many he was sensitive to the poems without going the lengths of those who shared their vision of Celtic society.[61] Sometime after returning from Paris to London in 1766, however, Hume finally turned against the authenticity of these poems, so Ferguson's partiality to Ossian might have grated on him. And if Ossianic society is as visible in the *Essay* as many believe it to be, then Pocock[62] may be right that it was Ferguson's 'primitivist romanticism' that Hume could

not stomach**;** or rather that it was *one* among several aspects of Ferguson's book that he disliked.

It was Hume's position that the ages of polished society 'are both the happiest and most virtuous', and he set out to prove that '*industry, knowledge,* and *humanity*, are linked together by an indissoluble chain, and are found, from experience as well as reason, to be peculiar to the more polished, and, what are commonly denominated, the more luxurious ages'.[63] Ferguson was inclined to emphasize the negative side of commercial and polished ages, and to emphasize the positive aspects of rude and barbarous societies. With respect to the latter, the *Mémoires littéraires* again ably summarized his line of argument: 'These barbarous times seem dreadful; but one exaggerates; each century has its consolations, as well as its misfortunes. There was then a vigour of spirit, which rendered disorder itself respectable; and all affections, all attachments, were more intense'.[64]

The reviewer just as ably criticized the arguments offered in support of this position. He didn't entirely disagree with Ferguson's first reason for seeing barbarous times in a more favourable light than was usual, but rejected his last reason outright:

'Our author seems to me, in general, a little too friendly towards barbarous centuries. I would give some weight to his first reason, to the vigour, or rather to the hardness of spirit; but his second reason appears to me to be refuted by history.'

The annals of history of those centuries recount 'perpetual animosities, weak attachments, and a violence which respected neither ties of blood, nor those of friendship'. We find in these same annals 'fathers, children, brothers, and wives all killing one another, and the most ruthless cruelty, always accompanied by the basest treachery. There you have what he calls *all affections, all the more intense attachments*'.[65] Can there be any doubt that on this issue Hume would have sided with Ferguson's critic?

Montesquieu and National Characters

That Ferguson's *Essay* was indebted to Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* was obvious to readers from the beginning. Hume himself seems to have believed that the *Essay* would not be as successful as Montesquieu's book, and perhaps he believed this because he thought that it was inferior to the *Esprit des Lois.* In a letter dealing with both works, he allowed that Montesquieu's book 'has considerable Merit, notwithstanding the Glare of its pointed Wit, and notwithstanding its false Refinements and its rash and crude Positions'.[66] To Blair he reported that the Archbishop of York had said of Ferguson's *Essay* 'that in many things it surpasses Montesquieu'.[67] It is not possible to infer from these brief remarks alone whether Hume believed that Ferguson's book had more, or less, merit than

Montesquieu's. The mention of Montesquieu's 'rash and Crude positions' may suggest that he thought the *Essay* to be at least no better than the *Esprit des Lois.* But perhaps he thought it inferior to Montesquieu's book, inasmuch as Montesquieu was the pioneer, and Ferguson the follower. On the other hand, Hume may have agreed with his friend Helvétius that the *Essay* was a better book than the *Esprit des Lois.*

It was natural that the *Essay* would be compared with the *Spirit of the Laws.* The *Mémoires littéraires* set the tone early in its review: '*L'homme est né dans la societé, & il y demeure*, dit M. de Montesquieu, & après lui Mr. Ferguson'.[68] It noted Ferguson's 'noble acknowledgment' of his debts to Montesquieu – 'this profound politician and amiable moralist' – observing that Ferguson is 'sure to walk beside Montesquieu, at least in the latter quality'. Is this a hint that Ferguson was an 'amiable moralist', but not a 'profound politician'? I suspect that it is. But however this may be, the review added that Ferguson's book 'makes a pretty good commentary' on the *Esprit des Lois,* whose principles and plan it follows, but 'without deigning to respond to objections that have been made against these principles'.[69]

Hume had criticized Montesquieu's rationalist moral philosophy in his *Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751); but, as we have seen, Ferguson did not follow Montesquieu in this respect, being a 'sentimentalist' in moral philosophy. But Ferguson unequivocally took Montesquieu's side in the debate about whether the manners of a state are primarily the result of its climate, or entirely the effect of other so-called 'moral' causes, such as 'the nature of the government, the plenty or penury in which the people live, the situation of the nation with regard to its neighbours' and similar sorts of circumstances or institutions. Montesquieu allowed some weight to *moral* causes, but assigned a considerable amount to *physical* causes, or 'those qualities of the air and climate, which are supposed to work insensibly on the temper, by altering the tone and habit of the body'[70].

What causes the uniformity of national characters? 'There are few questions more curious than this', Hume wrote, 'or which will oftener occur in our enquiries concerning human affairs'.[71] Are national characters formed by *physical* causes or by *moral* causes? Or are they formed by both sorts of causes, and, if so, how much by each sort? In 1748 Hume composed an essay, 'Of National Characters', around the time that the *Esprit des Lois* had been printed but was awaiting publication in Turin, Italy, where Hume was then stationed on a diplomatic mission. There is some mystery as to how Hume could have had Montesquieu's views on climate as a target, when his own essay was published around the time that the *Esprit des Lois* was officially published.[72] Hume's letter[73] to Montesquieu thanking him for a copy of the book, and commenting on it, does not mention this disagreement with him. But Ferguson certainly would have known Hume's

essay and its criticism of Montesquieu's views on climate and manners. This controversial essay also contained a notorious description of the 'character' of the clergy, a feature that drew many to read an essay which they otherwise might have ignored.

It was Hume's position that while even 'the most superficial observer' must grant that a nation's character 'will much depend on *moral* causes', it was a mistake to believe that the air and climate played any role in forming national characters. In his *Esprit des Lois* Montesquieu had assigned a considerable role to *physical* causes. Hume vigorously argued against this position: 'As to *physical causes,* he wrote, 'I am inclined to doubt altogether of their operation in this particular; nor do I think, that men owe any thing of their temper or genius to the air, food, or climate'.[74] Hume sought to explain national characters entirely by *moral* causes, employing sympathy or the 'imitative nature' of the human mind, and appealing to history and reason: 'If we run over the globe, or revolve the annals of history, we shall discover every where signs of a sympathy or contagion of manners, none of the influence of air and climate'.[75] By following Montesquieu on this important controversial matter, Ferguson was at the same time implicitly rejecting Hume's battery of arguments against this popular position. Why had Ferguson rejected or ignored Hume's arguments against one of Montesquieu's 'rash and Crude positions'? We have here, I suggest, another aspect of Ferguson's book that Hume disliked.

The *Monthly Review* noted that on this topic Ferguson 'adopts many of the sentiments of the celebrated Montesquieu, who, in the opinion of some of his warmest admirers, ascribes more to the influence of climate than reason or experience can possibly justify'.[76] Dr Rose, the presumptive author of these words, would have known that Hume was both an admirer and a critic of Montesquieu, so he might have been alluding here to Hume's criticism of Montesquieu's popular position. However this may be, Hume would have agreed with, and appreciated, the review's pointed criticism of Ferguson's considerations on climate.

The *Mémoires littéraires* devoted considerably more space to criticizing Ferguson's position, situating it in the context of 'some modern philosophers' who attribute to climate 'much effect on manners, and run over the globe in a fashion very agreeable to the reader'. One of Montesquieu's early English readers was bored by the book until he reached the part that dealt with this subject: 'I read thirteen books of Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*', he wrote, 'without making the least discovery. But at length the fourteenth book rewarded all my toils'.[77] The effect of air and climate on character had been a popular topic for more than three decades, with Dr John Arbuthnot and the Abbé Dubos preparing the way for Montesquieu; but it was also a topic fraught with difficulties. As this reviewer put it:

> It is a very complex question as to the influence of the constitution of the body on the mental, not only by the limits that a true philosopher must give it, but also by the perpetual action and reaction that it is necessary to calculate without end, and which hide themselves from the reckoning. Mr. Ferguson perhaps goes too far in restricting the imagination to the climates to which nature has allotted the vine and the fig: This judgement appears unusual on the part of a fellow countryman of Thomson. Mr Ferguson himself, though a Scotsman, shows much imagination in his parallel between the Arab and the Lapplander with the animals of their countries, the horse and the reindeer respectively. The climate of Arabia gave its inhabitants strength, liveliness, and nimbleness. That of Lappland left to the animals it produces only a rigid toughness which withstands hunger and fatigue, but which gives way under a foreign sky. Our author paints with warmth: But isn't it the case that the climate of India and Africa harbours the largest, strongest, and most intelligent of all quadrupeds? But the men of these same regions are mediocre, abject, or stupid.[78]

The reviewer's criticisms here are more forceful than they appear. In his eyes Ferguson should not have restricted the imagination to southern Europe, when Scotsmen such as James Thomson, author of *The Seasons* and other poems, flourished in North Britain; and perhaps there is also interwoven a gentle hint that Ferguson's own imagination got the better of his judgement in his parallel between the Arab and his horse, and the Lapplander and his reindeer, which falls to an obvious counter-example: there is a great disparity between the characteristics of the elephants of Africa and Asia and the human inhabitants of those regions, even though they share the same air and climate.

Civil Liberty and National Defence

Ferguson's section 'Of Civil Liberty' bears little resemblance to Hume's essay of the same title, which is essentially a comparison of republics and monarchies, with the absolute monarchy of France coming out surprisingly well. He does mention, however, a source of degeneracy in the British government (the contraction of considerable national debt), as well as a source of degeneracy in absolute monarchies (the prevailing court mentality that inhibits the development of commerce). Ferguson's section, by contrast, while it ends by praising the Habeas Corpus Act and the British government, devotes almost one quarter of its space to the laws of ancient Sparta. As we have seen, some critics had annoyed Ferguson by 'conjuring up the Spartan black broth against [him]'; but he himself had invited their 'conjuring' by frequently bringing up Sparta – as if it were a suitable mirror in which modern Britons could see their shortcomings and begin imitating Sparta before it was too late. It is not easy to see how Spartan legislation is relevant to civil liberty. Civil liberty requires the rule of law; but why should mid-eighteenth-century Britons be particularly concerned with the old statutes at Sparta? The reviewer in the *Mémoires littéraires* was kinder to

Ferguson's apparent digression on Spartan laws than one might have expected, simply reporting his excuse for going on at such great length on this subject, namely, that they were the only people who had made virtue a state affair.[79] This was a hint that Great Britain should make virtue a state affair too. The reviewer, for his part, suggested that the section on civil liberty should have been placed before that on national defence.[80] To my knowledge this is the only review that recommended a structural change to the book.

This same reviewer accurately summed up Ferguson's views on mercenary armies and citizen militias, noting that he 'missed the times when the toga and arms weren't shamefully separated; when the citizen fought for his country'.[81] Ferguson indeed believed that all statesmen should be soldiers, and was nostalgic for the times when they were. But one did not have to share this extreme view in order to agree that a country should have a militia, even if it also has a standing army. Many people in Great Britain at this time believed that the nation should have a militia as a supplement to a smaller regular army.

In the section devoted to self-defence and conquest Ferguson first explained how the move from small rude nations to larger polished ones ushers in a change in the form of military service from citizen militias to standing armies.[82] When the government of a nation is placed in the hands of pacific citizens, its statesmen, having given up the sword, must now pay others to defend the country, so defence becomes a trade like other trades: 'A discipline is invented to inure the soldier to perform, from habit, and from the fear of punishment, those hazardous duties, which the love of the public, or a national spirit, no longer inspires'.[83] For Ferguson this is not progress, but decline; for when defence becomes a trade, the virtuous motives of honour and *amor patria* must give way to the baser motives of avarice and fear. The same reviewer summed up Ferguson's section thus: 'These mercenary armies contribute a great deal to smother national virtue. Moreover they are very dangerous, and one day could overwhelm Europe and the whole world'.[84] Hume would not have emphasized 'national virtue' here any more than he would have approved of Ferguson's view that the character of a nation is more important for its 'felicity' than its wealth and numbers.[85] But as Duncan Forbes has emphasized, 'Hume often expresses opinions in favour of militias and against standing armies'.[86]

One of Ferguson's earliest publications was a pamphlet directed against the national policy of leaving the defence of England entirely to the standing army by failing to muster the militia. In 1757, a bill for reviving the English militia passed unopposed in the Commons, but was thrown out by the Lords. Though Ferguson wanted the militia restored, he was opposed to this bill because it envisaged a large compulsory militia, while he much preferred a smaller select voluntary one. Men in a large compulsory militia would fight from fear and avarice alone, rather than from honour and love of country. Moreover, a compulsory militia would

be 'inconsistent with every degree of civil liberty'.[87] Ferguson advocated that the militia should be restricted to 'a select band' of 'the most respectable part of the nation' who are capable of acting from honour; that is, militia men should be *selected* exclusively from those men from the virtuous propertied classes who have volunteered to serve. Otherwise it would be a 'promiscuous multitude' and 'our arms must come by substitution into the hands of the least reputable class of the people, who cannot be reduced into the order of an army....'[88] For these reasons Ferguson advocated a militia which 'excludes all cottagers, day-labourers and servants'.[89] His ideal militia would have excluded many men that the 1757 bill would have conscripted. Dr John Robertson has observed that Ferguson's 'restriction of militia service to freeholders and exclusion of the meanest, labouring classes point to a clear division of functions within society, with one class permanently engaged in economic activity, while the other remains free to cultivate its military spirit'.[90] If this sounds a little like ancient Sparta, it is surely no accident.

When the militia was restored in England its size was reduced by about half what had been planned originally. This is the 'puny' militia of 32,000 men in which Gibbon served, and which made him 'smile' when he reflected that there were more than a million able-bodied men in England who could have been trained to arms if 'the legislators of the Militia [had not] despaired of imitating the practice of Switzerland'.[91] So, while Gibbon and Hume believed that a compulsory militia on the Swiss model was the best militia possible, Ferguson completely disagreed with them. While none of this detail is evident in the *Essay,* bringing it up lets us see the continuity between Ferguson's thought in 1757 and 1767.

Luxury, Corruption and Despotism

We have been considering what Hume disliked in the *Essay*. But what did he like about it? For he remembered approving of the 'small specimen' that he had read in 1759. I would like to single out two sections in the published work that probably incorporated material from that 'small specimen'. Both sections would have met with Hume's approval.

Section 2 of Part 6, entitled 'Of Luxury', seems to echo Hume's own 1752 essay 'Of Luxury', which had been retitled 'Of Refinement in the Arts' in 1760. Hume began this essay by attending to the meanings of the word 'luxury': 'Luxury is a word of uncertain signification, and may be taken in a good as well as a bad sense'. He went on to point out that 'since luxury may be considered either as innocent or as blameable' it is surprising that there are two 'preposterous' extremes: libertines who 'bestow praises even on vicious luxury', on the one hand, and 'men of severe morals [who] blame even the most innocent luxury'.

He then proceeded 'to correct both these extremes' and to offer a balanced account of luxury.[92] Ferguson's initial strategy in this section is identical with that of Hume: to disambiguate different senses of 'luxury', so that there can be both an innocent as well as a blameable indulgence in luxury. The reviewer in the *Mémoires littéraires* noted that Ferguson 'at first shows, that those who dispute for or against luxury give different senses to this word'.[93] He evidently approved of Ferguson's handling of this issue, declaring that he 'would gladly transcribe the entire section, where the author seems to us to maintain a just balance on a subject that has so rarely been treated with moderation'.[94]

This same reviewer accurately summarized the following two related sections. Of Section 3 he wrote: 'Luxury, in itself innocent, often leads to corruption, when riches and interest become regarded as the sole means of acquiring respect and honour …' Given that the cumulative effect of Sections 3 and 4 is often the false impression that Ferguson believed that commerce alone leads to corruption, it is interesting that the reviewer, in the first sentence of his summary of Section 4, translated an important, though sometimes overlooked, qualification: that it is *not* commerce *alone* that leads to corruption, but only when it is united with 'vices in the political situation'.[95] When this qualification is emphasized Ferguson's views on luxury may appear more closely aligned with those of Hume, who had set out to prove the moderate thesis that 'whenever luxury ceases to be innocent, it also ceases to be beneficial; and when carried a degree too far, is a quality pernicious, though perhaps not the most pernicious, to political society'.[96]

Yet even here there is a divergence between the two thinkers. From Hume's point of view sloth is more pernicious than excessive luxury. This is because the superfluous consumption of commodities is beneficial to the state by producing 'a kind of *storehouse* of labour' that can be employed to man the state's fleets and armies. But if a state rids itself of *vicious* luxury it will probably also lose this beneficial luxury, and its citizens will become 'useless to the public, which cannot maintain or support its fleets or armies, from the industry of such slothful members'. As Hume believed, 'Luxury, when excessive, is the source of many ills, but is in general preferable to sloth and idleness, which would commonly succeed in its place ….'[97] A state in which sloth prevails could easily become enslaved by an invader with superior fleets and armies. In short, excessive luxury is not the only, or even the surest, route to political slavery.

It is also possible that Section 2 of Part 3, entitled 'The History of Subordination', incorporated elements of that 'small specimen' read by Hume in 1759. It is in this section of the *Essay* that Ferguson's most frequently quoted sentence occurs: 'nations stumble upon establishments, which indeed are the result of human action, but not the execution of any design'. Though he credits this principle to De Retz's *Memoirs*, he might as easily have acknowledged Hume, as much of the latter's work involves it. 'Of the Original Contract' springs to mind,

but other essays and parts of the *Treatise* are in the same spirit. Hume himself may have begun thinking along these lines as the result of reflecting on Bernard Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*, and the various reactions to it.[98] But this principle is implicit in the way markets work, and in 1758 we find Hume defending grain merchants during a dearth by praising their usefulness in bringing about an equal distribution of grain in the country. This was the result of human action but not of human design: for they intended simply to reap profits by buying grain where it is cheap and selling where it is expensive.[99] The importance of the unintended consequences of human action was much in the air. Ferguson simply employed it to destroy the myth of founders of states. The reviewer in the *Mémoires littéraires* got considerable pleasure from the perspectives of this section 'which unite the double pleasures of novelty and probability'.[100] Though Hume would not have regarded these views as novel, he certainly would have regarded them as probable.

We have then two sections of the *Essay* of which Hume would have heartily approved, and which the most attentive reviewer of the book also applauded. We can only speculate as to whether parts of one or the other or both were in that 'small specimen' that Hume read and liked in 1759. The views expressed in both more or less coincide with Hume's own views, which would explain why he would have liked them so much. These sections do not contain original ideas, being derivative from Hume and others. But we have seen that Ferguson adopted Montesquieu's theories of the influence of air and climate on manners. This was unoriginal too. Ferguson does not seem to have been bashful in taking over other people's ideas and using them for his own purposes. Much of the *Essay* appears to be derivative from others, so it is a challenge to current scholarship to separate the original from the unoriginal in the book. Most fortunately that task can be left to others. It is sufficient for my purposes to highlight two sections of the book that Hume would have enjoyed, and to speculate that they might have had their origin in the pages of the *Treatise of Refinement* of 1759.

Readers of the *Essay* did not have to wait for Harold Laski[101] to tell them that much of it is unoriginal. Even some of its first readers apparently suspected that it contained scarcely anything novel, as we may infer from a remark in the *Mémoires littéraires.* Notwithstanding that this journal had made several effective criticisms of the *Essay*, it ended by praising Ferguson's down-to-earth method, and by defending him against the suspicion that there is little or nothing new in his performance:

> One doesn't see in these pages that spirit of system, where the imagination leads us from illusion to illusion; everything is based upon facts, and supported by arguments that are almost always sound. Those who look for the novel in philosophy will perhaps say that there is nothing new in this work. But haven't you by now seen enough of those colored balls, the playthings of a childish imagination, which a puff of reason

> makes vanish? Besides, there are in Mr Ferguson's book some points of view that are new.[102]

We are not told whether these new points of view are among those that the reviewer had criticized earlier. We can only guess. But it is interesting that he did not criticize Ferguson's style, and concluded his notice with the following remark: 'Despite the elegance of Mr Ferguson's style, one sees that he seeks more to be useful than to shine ...'[103]

We have seen that Hume would have found Ferguson's Baconian methodology too restrictive. One can refuse to delve deeply into the principles of morality and thereby avoid making conjectures about the origin of justice. There is no reason why Ferguson should have been interested in offering a theory of moral sentiments in competition with those of Hume, Smith or Kames. But one cannot always avoid conjecture, and Ferguson does not do so. For one thing he is on record[104] as subscribing to the validity of the argument from design, and would have known, from reading Hume's first *Enquiry,* that his friend was a strong critic of this argument. In his posthumously published *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* Hume has the scientific theologian (and not the sceptic) exclaim against this argument: 'Whence can any cause be known but from its known effects? Whence can any hypothesis be proved but from the apparent phenomena? To establish one hypothesis upon another, is building entirely in the air; and the utmost we ever attain, by these conjectures and fictions, is to ascertain the bare possibility of our opinion; but never can we, upon such terms, establish its reality'.[105] There are useful fictions and sound conjectures, as well as useless fictions with unsound conjectures based upon them. Hume seems to have had a surer grasp of these distinctions than Ferguson did.

Towards the end of the *Essay* Ferguson conjectured that despotic governments will finally destroy themselves and from their ruins free republics will arise. As one reviewer remarked: 'Mr. Ferguson ends his work with this consoling thought. Is it as sound as it is consoling? History provides me with no example of this political cycle'.[106] History doesn't confirm this conjecture, and a philosopher should beware of adopting any position that is so comforting. Witness what Hume says about the immortality of the soul in his essay of the same title. We have seen that, elsewhere, this same reviewer argued that history 'refutes' Ferguson's view that the barbarous centuries were not as bad as many are inclined to think. Here perhaps the facts may be said to speak for themselves, though arguably against Ferguson's position. But the facts do not always speak for themselves, and we cannot always avoid conjecture. Of the absolute monarchies in eighteenth-century Europe, this same reviewer mentioned that 'more than one of them is taking big steps towards despotism. What will be their fate at last? We are journalists, not prophets'.[107] Hume himself would not have proph-

esized which of these unnamed absolute monarchies, if any, would end up being despotic, and not just because he had more positive things to say about absolute monarchies than did Ferguson. Surely some of the differences between the two friends should be accounted for by the fact that Ferguson was writing primarily for the 'zealous citizen', while Hume's audience more frequently was the 'calm philosopher'.

In this essay I have been more concerned with what Hume disliked about his friend's book than what he liked about it. The former is a much easier target to hit than the latter, though I hope that I have hit both. But in so doing I may be thought to have neglected large stretches of the text that resonated with the reading public of his day. There is an aspect of the *Essay* that appealed far more to eighteenth-century readers than it does to us – or did to Hume. Hume would not have relished those pages in Parts 5 and 6 of the *Essay* where Ferguson is warning about the decline of polished nations and the threat of despotism. They would have reminded him painfully of Dr John Brown's popular *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757), a work which he disliked, and which his friend Robert Wallace had effectively answered.[108] Hume probably would have regarded Ferguson, at least in these pages, as among the 'corruption mongers' of the day. But as Duncan Forbes has rightly emphasized, 'Hume has virtually no affinities with the Machiavellian moralists and corruption mongers of his age'.[109]

Deyverdun and Hume

Throughout this essay I have drawn liberally on what is, to my mind, a very interesting and detailed review of Ferguson's *Essay*, which engages with it, accurately summarizes its contents, sometimes criticizes Ferguson's positions, and less often agrees with him. Reviews like this were not common at this time. To my knowledge it is the most careful review that the *Essay* received at its first appearance. The reader of this essay may therefore be curious as to who was responsible for it. Here we need to consider the personal relations at this time between Gibbon, Deyverdun and Hume.

In November 1766 Deyverdun wrote to Hume, acknowledging authorship of two anti-Rousseau newspaper squibs that Rousseau had mistakenly attributed to Hume himself. Prior to that time Deyverdun was unknown to Hume. In February 1767 Hume was appointed Under-Secretary of State in the Northern Department, and a few weeks later Deyverdun became a clerk in the same department. The Secretary was General Conway, brother of Lord Hertford, the former British Ambassador at Paris, whom Hume had served as secretary. The idea of producing a French-language review of English books was conceived while Deyverdun was in regular contact with Hume in Conway's office. Gibbon

told a potential contributor that, 'As the dull mechanic labour of [Deyverdun's] post still leaves him many leisure hours, he has formed a design of filling them' by producing the *Mémoires littéraires.*[110] Hume also had plenty of leisure in his post and was intent on telling friends so. As he related to Blair: 'I am seldom hurry'd; but have Leizure at intervals to take up a Book, or write a private Letter, or converse with any Friend that may call for me ...'.[111] Gibbon took the opportunity of asking Hume's advice on his draft history of Switzerland, and sent the manuscript by way of Deyverdun, 'as he has the happiness of supporting some connexion with you'.[112] For most of 1767 Hume was in regular contact with Deyverdun, and several months after he was no longer Under-Secretary, he was still in contact with him, successfully helping him to obtain a rare book to review.[113] And in 1768, when a new British ambassador to Paris had been appointed and was casting around for a suitable private secretary, Hume recommended Deyverdun to him.[114]

The earliest mention of the *Mémoires littéraires* occurs in a letter from Gibbon to his publisher. Without mentioning Deyverdun by name, Gibbon stated that 'my friend is an excellent Scholar, and a man of taste and ingenuity' who 'will also have the assistance of several persons of merit; as well as whatever advice I may be able to give him'.[115] Scholars have not identified any of these 'several persons of merit' other than George Lewis Scott, who is believed to have contributed some scientific articles, and David Hume, who is known to have contributed reflections on Horace Walpole's *Historic Doubts on the Reign of King Richard the Third* in the second volume, which appeared early in 1769.[116]

Unfortunately the *Mémoires littéraires* was a humiliating commercial failure. If we can infer from the small number of copies of the second volume that were sold, both volumes were scarcely read by anyone other than those who contributed to them and a small coterie of their friends.[117] But as Gibbon remarked of its reviews: 'their merit was superior to their reputation; but it is not less true, that they were productive of more reputation than emolument'.[118] This failed venture was the means whereby he and Deyverdun became acquainted with the fourth Earl of Chesterfield, and Deyverdun subsequently became the traveling tutor of Chesterfield's godson and heir, with Ferguson later succeeding him in this role.[119]

Gibbon's most recent biographer, Patricia Craddock, plausibly speculated that Deyverdun wrote the bulk of the review of Ferguson's *Essay*, with Gibbon perhaps contributing something to it.[120] She does not consider the possibility that Hume contributed anything to this particular review. But given the close personal relations between Hume and the two co-editors at this time, and Hume's intimate knowledge of the *Essay* and concern for Ferguson's reputation, we cannot discount the possibility that the review of Ferguson's book is so Humean precisely because Hume himself had some input into it. On the other

hand, both Gibbon and Deyverdun were well acquainted with Hume's writings, so that alone could explain the fact that the review makes many of the points that one might have expected from Hume himself.

Two Species of Philosophy

We have seen that Ferguson's book had its critics as well as admirers. It is plausible to believe that Hume shared most, if not all, of the criticisms that had been levelled against it, as well as others that were peculiar to himself. Lord Kames thought the book 'deficient' in its treatment of the principles of morality. But from Hume's point of view the *Essay* wasn't merely 'deficient' in this regard; it was plain wrong, and demonstrably so. Hume believed that Stoicism had been an exploded moral theory for centuries, and he must have been disappointed that it remained the dominant moral doctrine among the learned of his country. It was obvious to these Christian Stoics that Hume drew on the rival Epicurean and Academic Sceptical traditions – the natural foes of the Stoics. Sometimes his attackers were known to him, but sometimes not. To the anonymous author of one such attack Hume wrote: 'Our connection with each other, as men of letters, is greater than our difference as adhering to different sects or systems. Let us revive the happy times, when Atticus and Cassius the Epicureans, Cicero the Academic, and Brutus the Stoic, could, all of them, live in unreserved friendship together, and were insensible to all those distinctions, except so far as they furnished agreeable matter to discourse and conversation'.[121] But where was Hume to find Epicureans and Academics in the Scotland of his day? Not among the 'moderate' clergy. And given his attitude towards friendship and philosophical sectarianism, it would be surprising if he were not a little put out by Ferguson's public criticisms of his positions, veiled though they may have seemed to their author. But there was no disguising from Hume that Ferguson had rejected most of his favourite positions, usually with little or no argument. Ferguson and Hume were aware that they had different philosophies. These differences were to some extent the result of temperament, education and vocation; but they held fundamentally different conceptions of philosophy too.

Hume drew a distinction in the first section of his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748) between the 'the easy and obvious philosophy' and 'the accurate and abstruse'. Practitioners of the former type of philosophy 'paint [virtue] in the most amiable colours', and their works 'select the most striking observations and instances from common life … and alluring us into the paths of virtue by the views of glory and happiness, direct our steps in these paths by the soundest precepts and the most illustrious examples'. This is a fair characterization of Ferguson's understanding of the kind of philosophy he usually practised. The 'accurate and abstruse' philosopher, on the other hand, seeks

to uncover the foundations or sources of various branches of knowledge, hoping to 'discover some hidden truths, which may contribute to the instruction of posterity'. This kind of philosopher aims to find the highly general principles that define a science. This is Hume's own understanding of philosophy, but he insists that there is a place for both kinds of philosophy, and that 'the accurate and abstract philosophy' must underlie and serve 'the easy and humane', if the latter is ever to 'attain a sufficient degree of exactness in its sentiments, precepts, or reasonings'.[122] But from Hume's point of view Ferguson did not fully take advantage of the most accurate anatomy of human nature available to him, and as a result the *Essay* fell short of that 'degree of exactness' that Hume once expected it to possess. That seems to be the most general reason why he disliked the work. The extent of his negative attitude towards it probably never became known to Ferguson, as only Blair and Robertson in Edinburgh seem to have been apprized of it, and they had been sworn to secrecy. Ferguson and Hume remained the best of friends until Hume's death in 1776, and Hume showed his affection and respect for the personal qualities of his good friend by leaving him a legacy of £200.

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4 HUME AS CRITIC OF FERGUSON'S *ESSAY*

Vincenzo Merolle

On 12 April 1759, in thanking Adam Smith for the gift of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, David Hume informed him that Adam Ferguson had 'very much polished and improved his *Treatise on Refinement,* and added that 'with some amendments it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and singular genius'.[1] A month later, writing to William Robertson, Hume stated, 'Ferguson's book has a great deal of Genius, & fine Writing, and will appear in time'.[2]

It is not clear whether the *Treatise on Refinement* was an early draft of *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, or a part of it.[3] Years later, a few months before the publication of the *Essay*, the reaction of Hume was quite different. He did not conceal his dissatisfaction with it and even tried to prevent its publication. As he wrote to Hugh Blair:

> I have perused Ferguson's Papers more than once, which had been put into my hands, some time ago, at his desire. I sat down to read them with great Prepossession, founded on my good Opinion of him, on a small Specimen I had seen of them some Years ago,[4] and on yours & Dr. Robertson's Esteem of them: But I am sorry to say it, they have no-wise answer'd my Expectation. I do not think them fit to be given to the Public, *neither on account of the Style nor the Reasoning; the Form nor the Matter ... It is needless to enter into a Detail, where almost every thing appears to me exceptionable*. If I come down to Scotland next Summer, I should concur in any Method to prevent or retard the Publication; but they are now put into General Clerk & Lord Shelburne's hands, who are not the most proper Judges in the World; and if you do not interpose, they will certainly be printed. I shall be agreeably disappointed, if the Success prove contrary to my Opinion.[5]

Fortunately, Blair did not interpose, probably because the nature of the author was 'not overmuch given to submit';[6] once the book was published, Hume was 'agreeably disappointed' in his expectations. Yet on 24 February he could announce to Ferguson its success, 'three hours after a Copy of your Performance was open'd for the first time in London', by Lord Mansfield, who 'was extremely

pleased with it', saying that 'it was perfectly well wrote', and recommending it strongly 'to the Perusal of the Archbishop of Yorke, who was present'.[7] A fortnight later Hume confirmed the 'general Success' of the book, again praised by Lord Mansfield and, furthermore, by Lord Chesterfield, Lord Lyttelton and Thomas Cadell, the publisher, who was already projecting 'a second Edition of the same Quarto Size'.[8] A few days later he wrote to William Robertson, informing him of the favourable opinion of Mrs Montague,[9] and again, on 20 May, to Hugh Blair, telling him that Mr Dodwell considered the work 'elegantly wrote, and with great Purity of Language', while the Archbishop of York had told him, in a letter, that it 'in many things surpasses Montesquieu'.[10]

Notwithstanding the agreeable reception of Ferguson's treatise, Hume never changed his negative opinion about it. He wrote to Hugh Blair that its success gave him 'great Satisfaction', on account of his 'sincere Friendship for the Author'. He had therefore 'begun to hope, and even to believe', that he was mistaken, and he had 'several times taken it up and read Chapters of it: But to my great Mortification and Sorrow, I have not been able to change my Sentiments. We shall see, *by the Duration of its Fame, whether or not I am mistaken*'. He added that Montesquieu had consulted Claude Adrien Helvétius and Joseph Saurin about the *Esprit des Lois*, and they had told Montesquieu, 'as their fix'd Opinion, that he ought to suppress the Book; which, they forsaw, wou'd very much injure his Reputation'. Helvétius and Saurin had assured Hume that they had never lost Montesquieu's friendship, and he believed 'the like woud be my Case; but it is better not to put it to a Trial'. Therefore, to Blair he recommended secrecy, 'towards every Person, except Robertson'.[11]

The style of the *Essay* clearly dissatisfied Hume, but that same style elicited varied evaluations from others. Thomas Gray, for example, found in it 'uncommon strains of eloquence', even though he also described it as 'shortwinded and sententious'.[12] By contrast John Logan wrote of its 'Pompous rich & sometimes … bombastic Periods',[13] but Henry Home, Lord Kames, found in it 'some vigour in writing, and much original thought'.[14] Victor Cousin defined the *Essay* as 'commentaire plus eloquent qu'original de l'*Esprit des Lois*'.[15] Henry Gray Graham complained that the *Essay* is a 'superficial book', adding a few pages later that Ferguson's philosophical works, 'able in argument and elegant in style – are now completely forgotten, and as [Samuel] Johnson has said, "There is no need to criticise what nobody reads"'.[16] For Leslie Stephen, Ferguson was 'a facile and dexterous declaimer, whose rhetoric glides over the surface of things without biting into their substance',[17] but Stephen's criticism betrays a substantial incomprehension of the social philosophy of the Scottish author. Nor need we consider the opinion of Harold Laski, which betrays an even deeper incomprehension of the work, which Laski either never read, or did not try to understand.[18] In light of these conflicting evaluations, perhaps we should agree with Duncan

Forbes, who expresses how the work 'cannot be described as a literary masterpiece though it has its moments ... Ferguson has not achieved the mastery of the foreign language shown by Hume, Smith or Robertson'.[19]

But judgements upon style are not judgements of a work's philosophical contents, which are really at issue here. The contribution of a philosopher to knowledge must be measured by his ideas, his interpretation of history, his synthesis and systematization of problems and his exploration of new fields. Ferguson did all this, yet Hume's opinion about the *Essay* was uncompromising. His attitude had solid foundations, which can be understood from the point of view of Hume's philosophy. One of the principal features of that philosophy, a product of the Enlightenment, is its scepticism. Ferguson does not share this scepticism, nor does he embrace Hume's focus on empirical method. Whereas Hume is philosophical, Ferguson is anthropological. Indeed, in his focus on both society and societal change, Ferguson anticipates historicism. This sort of outlook is not congenial to Hume who judged Ferguson's work according to his own designs, without realizing the innovations that his friend had introduced in the fields of history and social science. To show this, we will first set out the main features of Hume and Ferguson's outlooks, moving subsequently to discuss some thematic differences between the two philosophers. This approach will be conducted along fairly general lines from which differing points of view are highlighted with an eye to systematic implications. The distinct outlooks of the two thinkers will suggest reasons why Hume would have dissented from embracing Ferguson's treatise.

Hume as Enlightened Sceptic

The aim of *A Treatise of Human Nature*, as the title page indicates, is 'to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into Moral Subjects'. This profession of philosophical empiricism,[20] in the tradition of English thought, is also a declaration of Enlightened ideas. The consequence of such empirical premises leads Hume to put at the centre of his enquiry the concept of human nature and to declare, as a further consequence, that all the sciences have a relation ('greater or less') to it: 'Even *Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, and Natural Religion*, are in some measure dependent on the science of Man'.[21] Since in the four sciences of logic, morals, criticism and politics, 'is comprehended almost every thing', then 'instead of taking now and then a castle or village on the frontier', it is more advantageous, in philosophical enquiry, 'to march up directly to the capital or center of these sciences, to human nature itself'.[22]

We must try first of all to become 'thoroughly acquainted with the extent and force of human understanding', which alone is at the origin of the changes and improvements of these sciences. They lie, in fact, under the cognizance of

men, 'and are judged of by their powers and faculties'.[23] In emphasizing the function of the understanding, of the powers and faculties of the mind, in declaring that his primary aim is not to explore one field in particular, but the method of research itself, Hume assures for himself a distinctive role in the history of philosophy. His aim, like Kant's, was not to criticize society with the help of reason, but to discuss the *proceedings* of reason (the understanding, broadly conceived). Such a project does not, of course, contradict his empiricist method.

However, as Hume elaborates his project he arrives at specific sceptical conclusions. Not only does he doubt the grounds of causal inference and our knowledge of a world external to our impressions, but he challenges the validity of natural rights theories, rejects an original state of nature (or a social contract),[24] and affirms that justice (or property) is a matter of convention. These specific conclusions, among others, manifest a general sceptical tendency, even if such scepticism is not the whole story of Hume's philosophy. Nonetheless, Hume's most relevant contribution to the knowledge of society and of its history is constituted by the force of his demolitions. '*I think you rather try to pull down other peoples Doctrines than Establish any of your own*', was Ferguson's own judgement about it.[25]

Despite his scepticism, Hume recognizes that human nature 'remains still the same, in its principles and operations', and that it has 'constant and universal principles',[26] which, consequently, operate uniformly in the ages. The recognition of these principles allows Hume to delineate a naturalistic analysis of the understanding, the passions and moral phenomena. Quite interestingly this analysis contains an historical, if not fully historicist, element. Hume maintains that power, although 'primarily founded on usurpation and rebellion', derives its legitimacy from '[t]ime alone', which 'gives solidity' to the rights of kings;[27] and he declares that "Tis not, therefore**,** reason, which is the guide of life, but custom'.[28] These sorts of claims appear as a profession of historicist ideas. The historicist aspects of the *Treatise* and the *Enquiries* supply the philosophical premises to the *History of England*, with its substantially Tory and conservative bias.

These historicist elements could have been the meeting point between Hume and Ferguson, but they were not. For Ferguson's thought turns on the implicit theses that society is to be understood in terms of its historical development and that practice itself is the basis for understanding. However, for Hume, it is his scepticism that pervades his thought, motivating his philosophical claims and providing the key to criticize the past**.** Such scepticism is, in the context of the European Enlightenment, a notable feature of Hume's enlightened thinking.[29] But such a strand of thought is far from constituting a main characteristic of Adam Ferguson's philosophy.

Nevertheless Hume's *Essays*, particularly the ones directly dealing with politics, deserve here a closer examination. In general, they aim to describe and to comment on the present state of things, thereby offering a splendid picture of the Hanoverian establishment and of Great Britain in the middle of the eighteenth century.[30] Let us consider, for example, Hume's essay 'Of the Liberty of the Press', which begins as follows: 'Nothing is more apt to surprise a foreigner, than the extreme liberty, which we enjoy in this country, of communicating whatever we please to the public, and of openly censuring every measure, entered into by the king or his ministers'. The aim of the essay is to answer the question: 'How it happens that Great Britain alone enjoys this particular privilege?' It concludes that 'the unbounded liberty of the press, though it be difficult, perhaps impossible, to propose a suitable remedy for it, is one of the evils, attending those mixt forms of government'.[31] These ruminations, not without larger import, take their cue from the politics then current. Similarly, if we look at the essay, 'That Politics may be reduced to a Science', the lines most frequently cited by scholars are the ones containing Hume's exhortation to his countrymen 'not to contend, as if they were fighting *pro aris* & *focis*, and change a good constitution into a bad one, by the violence of their factions'.[32]

Other essays, such as 'Of the Independency of Parliament', 'Whether the British Government inclines more to an Absolute Monarchy or to a Republic', 'Of Parties in General', 'Of the Parties of Great Britain', clarify aspects of the political life of Great Britain during this period. Although these essays form part of Hume's philosophy, they scarcely constitute a *system* of politics, valid for the societies of all ages. Their contents are therefore far from bearing any similarity with the contents of Ferguson's *Essay*, which purports to inquire more systematically into the principles relevant not to a particular historical period but to history. As the title itself declares, it is an essay on the *history* of civil society – an enquiry about the motives which impel men to act, and, consequently, to make or modify society, and to create history. In this sense it has a validity *für ewig*, and its contents apply not to the history of a period or of a particular people but to the history of mankind in general.[33]

The *History of England* manifests another difference between Hume's method of enquiry and that of Ferguson. Written between the years 1754 and 1762, the *History* is essentially narrative and, in some measure, as the author declares, according to the fashion of the times, instructive. He writes: 'Nor is the spectacle altogether unintertaining and uninstructive, which the history of those times presents to us. The view of human manners, in all their variety of appearances, is both profitable and agreeable'.[34] Hume's narrative, in reality, is pure history, a history of events, or *histoire événementielle*, based on the documents; it is not altogether easy to maintain that it is, in some measure, philosophical.[35] Its author shows all his mastery of sources and the narration is plain, proper to

a great writer and a great historian who does not need to be either sententious or didactic.

Hume maintains substantially that history is 'a collection of facts',[36] but this is far from being the method of Ferguson's *Essay*, which aims at generalizing topics recurrent in human behaviour, in the actions of men and of ranks, which together constitute and modify society. In contrast, Ferguson does not take into consideration any people in particular, but only the moral factors, which motivate men in their actions in societies of all times and places.[37] One might surmise, therefore, that the theoretical structure of his great treatise – neither historical-narrative nor philosophical-theoretical – was one of the principal problems perplexing Hume.

Ferguson's *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*

Hume's sceptical tendencies, appeal to current politics and historical narration of events and facts, would place him at some distance from the sort of project found in Ferguson's *Essay*. Of course, from a philosophical point of view, the *Essay* can scarcely claim originality. Its philosophical contents are relatively slim, if we mean by this speculative, analytic or systematic philosophy. For example, Ferguson leaves out of consideration any *enquiry* on *method*, be it experimental, like Hume's, or rationalistic. Far from aiming at such theorizing, he begins his work, Part 1, with the description of the 'General Characteristics of Human Nature'. He delineates the 'natural history of man' in an *anthropological*, rather than philosophical or speculative, sense. Ferguson seeks, in other words, to describe the dispositions of man as they manifest themselves across society and epoch; he does not, unlike Hume, attempt any inquiry into the inner springs of such dispositions. This illustrates a main divergence between the two thinkers and one might well contend that Hume's reaction to the *Essay* reflected this difference. In other words**,** and more strongly put, Hume is not yet ready to understand the novelty represented by the social sciences – in this case, the 'Reasoning' and the 'Matter' of the *Essay*, as he calls them. Such sociology or anthropology is absent from Hume's work – except occasionally, as in the essay 'Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations'– and he seems scarcely able to appreciate it in others.

In order to appreciate further these contrasts, some of the essential elements of Ferguson's work should be summarized, thereby highlighting fundamental divergences from Hume's philosophy. The first line of the *Essay* is an appropriate starting point, with the author stating that 'natural productions are generally formed by degrees. Vegetables grow from a tender shoot, and animals from an infant state'. The difference between natural productions and men is in the fact that the latter are destined to act and extend their operations 'as their powers

increase … Not only the individual advances from infancy to manhood, but the species itself from rudeness to civilization'.[38]

Ferguson immediately turns to expounding his method of enquiry, observing that, in delineating the history of man, '[t]he desire of laying the foundation of a favourite system, or a fond expectation**,** perhaps**,** that we may be able to penetrate the secrets of nature, to the very source of existence, have, on this subject, led to many fruitless inquiries'.[39] Ferguson aims to reject the theories of the law of nature philosophers, as well as the 'fond expectation' proper to the schools of philosophy, according to which 'we may be able to penetrate the secrets of nature, to the very source of existence'. He explains that, in framing our account of what man was in the 'imaginary state of nature', we overlook what he has always appeared 'within the reach of our own observation, and in the records of history'. Therefore, 'the natural historian thinks himself obliged to collect facts, not to offer conjectures'.[40]

Statements such as these are within the limits of empiricist philosophy, although there is, again, an essential difference between Ferguson and Hume. The latter, as I have said above, has as one of his main ends, the *method of enquiry* itself. This theorization of empiricism is indeed an essential premise of Hume's philosophy, with all its consequences. Ferguson, by contrast, simply *applies* this method in his enquiry, which is for him no more than the legacy of the British tradition in philosophy. He proceeds to explain that all the accounts collected from every quarter of the earth 'represent mankind as assembled in troops and companies; and the individual *always joined by affection to one party, while he is possibly opposed to another*'.[41] That humans are always found in groups may be considered as the foundation of the book. As Ferguson develops this programme, he sets troops and companies on one side, destined to become the ranks (or social classes) of modern society and, on the other, the individual, destined to act in history, whose contingencies he modifies with his uninterrupted actions. More generally, in articulating the essential sociability of man Ferguson lays the foundation of modern social sciences: 'mankind are to be taken in groupes, as they have always subsisted … and every experiment relative to this subject should be made with entire societies, not with single men'.[42] The concept of 'society', in a sociological sense, is central in his enquiry in that he seeks to describe social structures and conditions as they emerge and survive in distinct epochs. Although Hume is interested in the human being as a social creature – thus his appeals to custom and convention, not to mention his considerations on the consequences of sympathy both for the communication of passion and as a condition of moral judgment – he does not undertake a discussion of social structures nor does he relate how societies progress or regress. In this sense, the concept of 'society' is marginal to Hume's philosophy.

However, the idea of progress is essential to understand the meaning of the *Essay*. For example, in the instance of non-human animals the individual advances from infancy to age or maturity and attains, in the compass of a single life, to all the perfection his nature can reach; yet, 'in the human kind, the species has a progress as well as the individual; they build in every subsequent age on foundations formerly laid; and, in a succession of years, tend to a perfection in the application of their faculties ... to which many generations must have combined their endeavours'.[43]

The concepts of individual development and species progress, as they are here expounded by Ferguson, with all their philosophical implications, appear incompatible with Hume's philosophy,[44] a more exotic specimen in the panorama of the Enlightenment. Yet there are limits to the application of Enlightenment concepts to Hume: He essentially aims at *criticizing* the past, even as he does not construct, on the positive side, a systematic idea of politics and society. To the force of his demolitions he opposes generic exhortations in favour of the Hanoverian establishment, which, as we have said above, are interesting from a historical point of view but scarcely from a philosophical one.

In order to illustrate further how Hume deviates from other Enlightenment thinkers, it is worth considering how his thought diverges from the French, especially the Marquis de Condorcet. Behind Condorcet we find René Descartes's rationalism, behind Hume the tradition of British empiricism. The difference between the two philosophers is nevertheless mainly in Condorcet's strong belief that the 'progrès de l'esprit humain', lead by 'la raison', will be at the origin of the new society, an altogether 'rational' society. Condorcet writes that his *Esquisse* is 'a history of general errors, which have more or less delayed or suspended the progress of reason'. But this will triumph over its enemies, and then will come a moment when 'the sun will shine no more on the earth than on free men, who recognize no other master than their reason'.[45] (And consider also the words of A. R. J. Turgot: 'I search [in the succession of the thoughts of man] for the progress of human spirit, and I see little but a history of errors').[46] For Hume, by contrast, the force of criticisms and the search for 'evidence' help dispel the fog of the past, but he was far from being led by a profound faith that reason could remake or renew society. Indeed, his sceptical remarks on religion and on miracles are certainly a singular achievement, yet unlike Condorcet, his remarks on the divines bear no marks of disdain, even as Hume often pokes fun at the clergy, serving his rich sense of humour.

Ferguson shares Hume's doubts about the power of reason to remould society yet he nonetheless embraces a distinctive idea of progress not typical of the age of Enlightenment. Not a rationalist, his account of the human being reveals how we are motivated to be the catalysts of historical change. As the foundation for any full theory of such change, he delineates general characteristics of human

nature, as they appear in the literature on the savage, rather than in the texts of historians and philosophers. He maintains that man

> is in some measure the artificer of his own frame, as well as his fortune, and is destined, from the first age of his being, to invent and contrive ... At once obstinate and fickle, he complains of innovations, and is never sated with novelty ... and whether his motions be rapid or slow, the scenes of human affairs perpetually change in his management ... we may wish for stability of conduct; but *we mistake human nature, if we wish for a termination of labour, or a scene of repose.*[47]

With these words their author lays the foundation of modern anthropology as applied to politics. Paraphrasing the words of Hume, we can say that this science is grounded 'on experiment and observation', not on purely theoretical principles. As a basic premise of his enquiry, and in comparison to Hume's studies and to the philosophy of previous ages, Ferguson's anthropology constitutes the fundamental novelty of the *Essay*.

Far from representing a purely speculative system of morals, Ferguson's accounts of individual and society are applicable to history and politics. The mind of man, during the greater part of his existence, he writes, 'is employed in active exertions', and 'the demand is not for pleasure, but for something to do'. 'How many are there', he adds,

> to whom war itself is a pastime, who chuse the life of a soldier, exposed to dangers and continued fatigues; of a mariner, in conflict with every hardship ... of a politician, whose sport is the conduct of parties and factions?

He concludes that

> [s]uch men do not chuse pain as preferable to pleasure, but they are incited by a restless disposition to make continued exertions of capacity and resolution; they triumph in the midst of their struggles; they droop, and they languish, when the occasion of their labour has ceased.[48]

With this brief and schematic account of *An Essay on the History of Civil Society,* we may turn to some specific themes that divide Hume and Ferguson. These are not intended as exhaustive, though they should indicate the divergent trajectories of the two thinkers.

Themes of Divergence

Individualism, Ranks and Political Parties

In delineating the role of the individual in society, Ferguson offers a theory redolent of modern individualism, observing that 'every individual is supposed to possess his species of talent, or his peculiar skill ... and society is made to consist of parts, of which none is animated with the spirit of society itself'.[49] Of course,

Ferguson is far from being the 'founder' of modern individualism, especially if we consider that his social philosophy was scarcely understood in its true meaning in his own times, and was soon superseded by utilitarianism. His statements are, nevertheless, surprisingly modern and similarities are scarce in the contemporary philosophical or political literature. To cite one series of examples, he writes:

> Secure to the workman the fruit of his labours ... The statesman ... can do little more than avoid doing mischief ... The trader ... needs no aid from the state, but its protection; and is often in himself its most intelligent and respectable member.[50]

Although Adam Smith offers similar notations, his appear in the midst of a reasoning in which they lose force and intensity. In Ferguson these ideas are stronger and clearer.

Apart from delineating the role of individuals, the *Essay* helps to explain the history of the last two centuries essentially from the point of view of the contests of ranks. In this sense, the *modernity* of Ferguson expresses itself when the author expounds a theory not only of the role of individuals in society, but also of the role of ranks, or social classes. This is dialectic philosophy, an anticipation of Hegelianism. In Great Britain the class conflict was less evident than on the continent, and Benthamism and radicalism offered a message of reconciliation. On the continent it was the French Revolution first, then the class struggle that assumed the character of *opposition*, from which the way out was from one side individualism (as defended by Benjamin Constant and Alexis de Tocqueville) and from the other Hegelianism, with the concept that the dialectic inevitably leads to a synthesis, which represents a more advanced moment of the life of the spirit; thence to a new split and to a new synthesis, indefinitely.[51]

Ferguson employs the concept of distinctions and oppositions to explain the emergence of liberty: 'where oppositions take place ... one party may employ his right of defence'.[52] Furthermore, 'the emulation of nations proceeds from their division ... the rivalship of separate communities, and the agitations of a free people, are the principles of political life, and the school of men'.[53] Ferguson is convinced that, 'amidst the contentions of party ... liberty is maintained by the continued difference and opposition of numbers ... In free states, therefore, the wisest laws are never, perhaps, dictated by the interest and spirit of any order of men: they are moved, they are opposed, or amended, by different hands; *and come at last to express that medium and composition which contending parties have forced one another to adopt*'.[54] The theorization of laws as expressing the 'medium and composition' between contending parties postulates a reference to the phenomenon of liberal democracy, whose features, although still in embryo, Ferguson acutely observed in the British society of his own times.

That said, the author of the *Essay* is far from being interested in the defence of the present order. On the basis of his anthropology and of the observation of the social phenomena of contemporary society, he theorizes the role of competing political parties, the pillars of democracy, whose contentions are at the origin of progress. He writes, on this subject, that 'the safety of every individual ... depends much on himself, but more on the party to which he is joined. For this reason, all who feel a common interest, are apt to unite in parties; and, as far as that interest requires, mutually support each other ... *there is one party of the few, and another of the many. One attacks, the other defends*; and they are both ready to assume in their turns'.[55]

If we turn, again, to Hume's essays, we may draw a further contrast with Ferguson. In his essay 'Of Parties in General', Hume observes that

> factions subvert government, render laws impotent, and beget the fiercest animosities among men of the same nation ... Parties from principle, especially abstract speculative principle, are known only to modern times, and are, perhaps, the most extraordinary and unaccountable phenomenon, that has yet appeared in human affairs.[56]

Instead of drawing the conclusions which the modern reader would expect, Hume turns to the criticism of religion and of priestly government – a subject of relevant, enlightened meaning, undoubtedly, especially if related to the historical and cultural context of his own times. However, Hume does not explain, in contemporary society, the function of parties identified with sects and factions. To exemplify this point further, one may consider a second essay, 'Of the Parties of Great Britain'. Here Hume deals directly with the situation in Great Britain and tries to establish a 'just balance between republican and monarchical part of our constitution'. However, the conclusion of his reasoning – woven with references to the court and country party and, unfailingly, to the ecclesiastics – continues its focus on Great Britain, as he asserts that 'some biass still hangs upon our constitution, some extrinsic weight, which turns it from its natural course, and causes a confusion in our parties'.[57]

Historicism

It has been said above that, when delineating the role of parties in history, Ferguson is far from referring to contemporary society. Although Great Britain, and particularly Scotland are his main sources of inspiration, as was natural,[58] his argumentation nevertheless rises to a general level of meaning, valid for *societies of all times* and, in particular, for the societies of modern Europe. In this sense he is a precursor of Hegel, but all this is somewhat distant from Hume's philosophy, typical of the world of Enlightenment, which *comprehends* neither historicism nor romanticism. In his historical narrative, Hume thinks of Great Britain; yet Ferguson, in his natural history, takes up the idea of *society* and its history. It is

for this reason that Ferguson's philosophy, by contrast, naturally finds a large treatment and an adequate consideration in Meinecke's *Die Entstehung des Historismus*.[59]

Ferguson's historicism, as the main characteristic of the *Essay*, was first noted by Baron d'Holbach, in a letter to the Scot.[60] D'Holbach acutely observed that, although the author did not seem 'to set a high value on theory', 'it must necessarily precede practice'. For D'Holbach this means that 'theory', or 'la raison', must precede practice, i.e. history. In other words, d'Holbach had in fact realized that the *secret substratum* of the *Essay* was not the philosophy of the Enlightenment but a philosophy that sought, to his dismay, to comprehend theory as a historical practice – historicism. It was Ferguson's historicist thesis that contrasted, at least in part, with D'Holbach's philosophical and political theory.

Luxury

Historical practice is, for Ferguson, to be understood in terms of historical change. One of the most controversial developments of the eighteenth century was the rise of the commercial classes and the attendant controversy concerning virtue and luxury. Although there is some similarity in Hume's and Ferguson's discussions of the moral status of luxury, there is also some difference and this is annexed to the question of civic moralism.[61]

This essential point can be explained with the words of Lord Kames who, in a letter to Mrs Montague, wrote that Ferguson's treatise,

> besides tracing minutely the history of society from its dawn in the savage state to its meridian lustre of civilization, sciences and arts, has a further aim, which is, to wean us from selfishness and luxury, the reigning characteristics at present of all commercial nations, and to restore the manly passions of heroism, generosity, and love of our species.[62]

In answer to Lord Kames, Mrs Montague added:

> I approve extremely of Mr Fergusson [*sic*] in the preference he gives to the magnanimous virtues, above the effeminate and luxurious arts of modern life; and wish he could infuse into us some of the Spartan spirit he admires so justly ... As we Britons are in much more danger of becoming Sybarites than Lacedemonians, it is very meritorious in Mr Fergusson to endeavour to preserve the native fire of courage and magnanimity in the human breast.[63]

The current view in the eighteenth century was that luxury was a corruption and men who live a life of luxury become effeminate and unable to endure hardship. This view was developed from Roman moralists and widely adopted by the Scots. Lord Kames, for example, wrote that Rome was corrupted by 'Asiatic luxury',[64] lamenting that the 'epidemic distempers of luxury and selfishness are spreading wide in Britain'.[65] He added that commerce makes people 'effeminate

and cowardly',[66] while luxury eradicates both manhood and patriotism.[67] Ferguson, on his part, maintained that 'if the individual ... be left to pursue his private advantage; we may find him become effeminate, mercenary and sensual'.[68]

Quite different was the point of view of Hume, who, in his essays 'Of Refinement in the Arts' [69] and 'Of Commerce', rejected the current, traditional criticism of luxury.

He observed, in particular, that returning to the maxims of ancient policy was 'almost impossible', while a Spartan government 'would appear a mere philosophical whim or fiction'.[70] By contrast, 'the ages of refinement are both the happiest and most virtuous'.[71] This must have been one of the points which Hume mostly found 'exceptionable', in the performance of his younger friend.

Moralism

In reading the first lines of Hume's *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, one will find a criticism *ante litteram* of moralism and, implicitly, of that of Ferguson. Hume writes that

> Moral Philosophy, or the science of human nature, may be treated after two different manners ... The one considers man chiefly as born for action; and as influenced in his measures by taste and sentiment; pursuing one object, and avoiding another ... As virtue, of all objects, is allowed to be the most valuable, this species of philosophers paint her in the most amiable colours ... They select the most striking observations and instances from common life; place opposite characters in a proper contrast; and alluring us into the paths of virtue by the views of glory and happiness ... make us *feel* the difference between vice and virtue.[72]

Borrowing the words of Duncan Forbes, one observes that Hume 'was wholly untouched by that Machiavellian moralism, or the political pathology concerned with the degree of corruption and lack of public spirit in a state, which was so all-pervasive in eighteenth-century Britain, and which took many forms'.[73] The 'form' which moralism took in Ferguson, less evident in his *Essay*, but openly declared in the *Principles*, was Stoicism, with its commitment to political life and with its sense of duty towards friends and society. But Stoicism was a constant target of criticism on the part of Hume. In a letter to Henry Home, Lord Kames, he drew up an unsympathetic portrait of Cicero, whose first *Philippic* 'is not much admired by the ancients', while in the second 'he gives a full loose to his scurrility'.[74]

He observed, furthermore, that

> the most durable, as well as justest fame, has been acquired by the *easy philosophy*, and that abstract reasoners seem hitherto to have enjoyed only a momentary reputation, from the caprice or ignorance of their own age ... The fame of Cicero flourishes at present; but that of Aristotle is utterly decayed.[75]

And, when touching directly Stoic philosophy, he unsympathetically spoke of 'Epictetus and other *Stoics*, [as] only a more refined system of selfishness'.[76] Certainly, rather than a philosopher, Ferguson, in the pamphlets in particular, often appears as a *moralist*, who exhorts his countrymen to virtue. This element of moralism finds its origin, as has been said above, in his inspiration from Stoic philosophy, as is particularly evident both in the *Principles* and in the late manuscripts, where the author rethinks concepts of that philosophical school.[77] But there are passages in the *Essay* where the philosopher's concepts become surprisingly modern, an early but mature intimation of concepts which receive full due early in the next century.

Ferguson exhorts readers to

> those exertions of understanding and integrity, those trials of a resolute and vigorous spirit, which adorn the annals of a people, and leave to future ages a subject of just admiration and applause',[78] and adds that 'the dangers to liberty ... can never be greater from any cause than they are from the supposed remissness of a people, to whose personal vigour every constitution, as it owed its establishment, so must continue to owe its preservation ... Ordinary establishments terminate in a relaxation of vigour ... because they lead mankind to rely on their arts, instead of their virtues.[79]

He observes, furthermore, that 'nations consist of men; and a nation consisting of degenerate and cowardly men, is weak; a nation consisting of vigorous, public spirited, and resolute men, is strong ... Virtue is a necessary constituent of national strength'.[80] Consequently,

> the influence of laws ... is not any magic power descending from shelves that are loaded with books, but is, in reality, the influence of men resolved to be free . . . *Liberty is a right which every individual must be ready to vindicate for himself, and which he who pretends to bestow as a favour, has by that very act in reality denied.*[81]

Everyone who is acquainted with the history of European liberalism, especially with the texts of Constant and Tocqueville,[82] will recognize in these lines topics unmistakably pertaining to the liberal, in the sense of historicist, ethics. They recur in the *Principles*, but in the *Essay* they are fully theorized and scarcely need a more detailed explanation. Similarly, civic moralism is a recurrent topic in Ferguson's speculation, especially concerning the militia issue,[83] and is the subject of the late essay, 'Of Statesmen and Warriours',[84] which also is fully theorized in the *Essay*.

Concluding Remarks

The main differences between Hume's philosophy and the contents of the *Essay* suggest the main reasons for dissent on the part of Hume. The essential conclusion has been that, while the work of the latter must be considered from a

philosophical and analytical point of view, Ferguson's *Essay* interests the new field of anthropology, but is scarcely relevant from a purely theoretical perspective.

Hume is a man of the Enlightenment, Ferguson a precursor of Historicism and Romanticism. *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* can be considered as a *bridge* between two centuries; its contents belong to the nineteenth more than to the eighteenth century. The ethics of individualism and the role of parties on the political scene are topics familiar to the speculation of the nineteenth century, certainly not to the philosophy of the age of Enlightenment. These subjects are also the result of the direct, acute observation, on the part of their author, of the politics of his own times, rather than the outcome of purely philosophical speculation.[85]

Here lies the *modernity* of Ferguson's thought in comparison to Hume's philosophy. The latter is a splendid product of the European Enlightenment, but it also bears the marks of that age. Its legacy to posterity, apart from the attainment of unexcelled literary elegance includes its empiricist method of enquiry, as well as its insistent demand for *evidence*, both of which serve in dispelling the fog of superstition. Subsequent generations have benefited from the philosophy of Hume, while they soon forgot, at least in Great Britain, although not in Germany, the philosophy of Ferguson. 'We shall see, by the Duration of its Fame, whether or not I am mistaken', said Hume to Blair, trying to justify his perplexity towards the work of his younger friend.[86] Events immediately succeeding the death of Ferguson seemed to give him reason.

The rediscovery of the *Essay*, on the part of the world of learning, is far from being a work of mere erudition. In reality, the *Essay* has much to say in the field of historical knowledge because it constitutes a comprehensive theory of historical change, on the basis of the concept of human nature, which remains similar and stable through the ages. By contrast the Enlightenment, and Hume with it, could conceive the idea of *progress*[87] but not that of *historical change*. The Enlightenment's basic idea is that reason leads to progress but, when this is attained, it gives way to a *perfect society* which, having attained all the progress compatible with reason, cannot advance further. Hence the allegations, on the part of the historicist philosophers to the Enlightened ones, of nurturing visionary and purely speculative plans that lack the essential element of historicity.

The points of view of Hume and Ferguson were therefore not easily reconcilable. Hume was then the arbiter of taste in Scotland, and he wanted to find in the work of his younger friend his own image and likeness. He was unable to recognize the character of novelty of the *Essay*. He was somehow right in being dissatisfied with the style of the work. Nevertheless, he missed the essential point: Its contents, its 'Matter and Reasoning', were altogether new and had a different message to transmit. In fact, it spoke to posterity, not to the contemporary age.

5 THE TWO ADAMS: FERGUSON AND SMITH ON SYMPATHY AND SENTIMENT

Jack Russell Weinstein

The first two editions of *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* appeared between the publication of Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* in 1757 and his *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776.[1] Although much has been made of their differences, evidence suggests that Ferguson and Smith's work have more in common than is traditionally recognized. In this essay, I highlight their theoretical overlap while emphasizing those elements whose apparent differences belie some agreement. My emphasis will be on Ferguson's *Essay* but I will address other works whenever helpful. In particular, I will show that Ferguson's critique of Smith's sympathy is more ambiguous than it might seem, and that a comparison of Ferguson's manuscripts to his published work betrays either contradictory assertions or a change of mind regarding the moral theory proposed in the *Moral Sentiments*.

Given their publication dates, it should not be surprising that the *Essay* shares concepts with the *Moral Sentiments*, or that the *Wealth of Nations* contains material that either advances or responds to Ferguson's work. Word choice, the use of particular examples, and the framework of the three investigations suggest participation in a common discourse. This too should be expected. Smith and Ferguson were the same age, travelled in the same circles and were influenced by some of the same texts. They knew each other and interacted both socially and professionally. The Scottish literati as a whole were a tight-knit group, taking an interest in one another's lives, work and fortunes.

Smith had many of Ferguson's books in his library[2], and we can assume that social expectations would have predisposed him to be sympathetic to Ferguson's work, the *Essay* in particular. We know that Ferguson read all of Smith's publications as well. Yet their letters betray an unease in their friendship, vacillating in degrees of formality, with salutations that shift from 'Dear Sir', to 'My Dear Friend', back to 'My Dear Sir' again, and then to, 'My Dear Smith', through a lifetime of correspondences. Additionally, unlike their letters to others, there

is nothing of philosophical substance contained within them. Smith did correspond with his close friend David Hume about Ferguson's 'A Treatise on Refinement', the short essay upon which the *Essay* would be based, but he was the recipient and not the author of the comment.[3]

The two philosophers shared membership in both the Select and Poker Clubs, and Smith recommended Ferguson for a job as tutor for Charles, the Earl of Chesterfield.[4] Like Smith, Ferguson was a popular and well-respected teacher, and also like Smith, he chose a life in Scotland over the more cosmopolitan London or Paris. When Ferguson's position as professor of moral philosophy became endangered, members of his societies, including Smith, pressured the town council to reinstate him.[5]

Yet their relationship was not always congenial. Despite pressure from Hume, Smith refused to take a position in Edinburgh that would leave his own chair open for an almost desperate Ferguson,[6] and when *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* was published, Smith accused Ferguson of plagiarizing from notes of a draft that would eventually become *The Wealth of Nations*.[7] Ferguson denied this, claiming that 'he derived many notions from a French author and that Smith had been there before him'.[8] In what is, perhaps, a further rejoinder to Smith, Ferguson would later put his criticisms to paper in a dialogue that describes a discussion between Hume, Smith and General Clerk, the latter of whom may or may not be acting as Ferguson's mouthpiece in the manuscript.[9] The dialogue's tone is combative and unsympathetic.

Ferguson's wife is reported as being grateful that Alexander Carlyle was a frequent visitor to Edinburgh since he kept the peace between Smith, Ferguson and Hume.[10] Despite or perhaps because of these tensions, Ferguson visited Smith on his deathbed in an effort to mend their friendship, acknowledging in a letter that 'though matters, as you know, were a little awkward when he was in health; upon that appearance I turned my face that way & went to him without further consideration & continued my attention to the last'.[11]

Smith's accusation of plagiarism makes a *prima facie* case for similarity between the two works. This is bolstered by Karl Marx's conclusion a century later that Ferguson was Smith's teacher.[12] Perhaps this was motivated by Ferguson's only mention of Smith in the *Essay*, a fourth edition footnote characterizing the forthcoming *Wealth of Nations*, as 'a theory of national economy, equal to what has ever appeared on any subject of science whatever'.[13] Given that Ferguson's remark speaks positively about Smith's unpublished treatise, it was not unreasonable for Marx to presume that Ferguson was Smith's mentor.

August Oncken, the influential Smith scholar, argued that Smith was likely correct in his accusations of plagiarism but this conclusion has been revisited and challenged by Ronald Hamowy.[14] While the similarities between their works can be striking at times,[15] on the topic of originality I remain agnostic. For the sake

of this essay, I assume good will on the part of both men, and operate under the assumption that the intimate nature of the Scottish literati, their conversations and exposure to one another's work and ideas, and the overall *Zeitgeist* all contributed to their variations on similar themes. Proximity made overlap inevitable.

Smith's Moral Sentiments and Ferguson's Ambiguous Critique

The Theory of Moral Sentiments rejects ethical egoism from the outset. In contrast to Ferguson whose discussion of benevolence and self-love in his *Essay* emphasizes the ambiguity of language,[16] Smith begins his first treatise by affirming the possibility of benevolence: a person has multiple motivations for any given action and, as a result, there are 'principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him…'[17] This connectedness, and Smith's moral system as a whole, is built on sympathy, a technical term that denotes a spectator's 'fellow-feeling with any passion' expressed by a moral actor.[18] Sympathy allows spectators to use their imaginations to 'chang[e] places in fancy' with any moral actor and inspire within themselves 'an analogous emotion' that is the prerequisite for moral judgment.[19] For each spectator, the imaginative act is a 'cognitive process,' inspiring both change of 'circumstances' and 'personhood' with others.[20] Spectators observe moral actors (or themselves in more advanced moral deliberation) and attempt to enter into their situation to judge whether the passions of another are at an accurate 'pitch'.[21]

Although Smith's notion of 'sympathy' derives from Hume's account in *A Treatise of Human Nature*, his conception is wider. It surpasses Hume's earlier theory of shared sentiments by emphasizing context and imagination. Smith allows for a modern theory of conscience that preserves the capacity of an agent to reject community standards. As we shall see, in his later manuscript essays, Ferguson will both emphasize and critique Smith's creation of conscience.

According to Smith, a person's self-awareness derives from the socially-constructed self-reflection inspired by the judgements of others,[22] 'the only looking-glass by which we can, in some measure … scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct'.[23] Empiricist limitations and the physical separation of others necessitate the use of imagination to create analogous emotions – no direct access to another's mind is possible, for Smith, even via deduction.[24] As a result, parallel sentiments are always imperfect, the result of one's own experiences.[25] Sympathy is also a constant balancing act between self-knowledge and knowledge of others. To determine the cause, context and the possible ends of any situation, the spectator must understand the actor and be exposed to similar circumstances. Like Ferguson, Smith argues that the farther removed agents are from one another, the more difficult it is to create true understanding between them.

Sympathy provides self-knowledge as well. For Smith, as the moral agent becomes more practised, he or she can turn reflection inward and sympathize with him or herself. The agent divides 'as it were, into two persons'[26] and creates an impartial spectator who acts as an imaginary external judge and sets limits upon action. This spectator 'allows no word, no gesture, to escape it beyond what this more equitable sentiment would dictate'.[27] It is the imaginary nature of the spectator that will eventually lead to Ferguson's objection that Smith's account of morals is too subjective.

The impartial spectator provides the bridge between individuals required in any stable and cohesive society; agents are influenced by spectators because, in part, they are social beings who gain pleasure and fulfillment from sympathetic interaction. Smith argues that people are 'naturally endowed with a desire for the welfare and preservation of society'.[28] However, there is a conflict between our dispositions to prioritize ourselves and to please others[29] that leads to an intertwining of 'our own sentiments, principles, and feelings', with those of 'the persons whom we are obliged to live and converse a great deal with'.[30]

The Theory of Moral Sentiments is a wide-ranging book. Like Ferguson's *Essay*, Smith's treatise fits into no single disciplinary category but ranges across what we now recognize as philosophy, sociology, political science, anthropology, economics, history and psychology. This broad approach allows sympathy to work in tandem with the political economy of *The Wealth of Nations*, creating a theory of progress and economic development that makes the two works interdependent.[31] Together they offer an account of how society is to remain unified and productive in the face of social and political division. The destructive forces of factionalism, religious extremism and the alienating effects of the division of labour can be addressed via education, economic development, selective government intervention and mutual sympathy so as to ensure that individuals abide by the law of justice. For Smith, as for Ferguson, social and political conflict is ever-present, but Smith sees its consequences as mitigated by 'perfect liberty' and 'universal opulence', the conditions under which individuals can choose their own professions and have access to the basic resources for themselves and their families.

Ferguson never addresses Smith's account of sympathy in his *Essay*. His most explicit discussion occurs much later in his career, in the second half of the unpublished dialogue, 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation'. Smith is welcomed into the conversation with the blunt comment by General Clerk that *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 'is a Heap of absolute Nonsense'. If we were to assume that Clerk was speaking for the author then we would see right away that Ferguson intends to continue the hostility that marred his and Smith's relationship. However, the issue isn't as straightforward as it may seem. On the one hand, Ferguson and Clerk served together in the 43rd Highland Regiment and saw each

other socially from time to time.[32] On the other, as Mossner explains, Ferguson 'did not greatly admire' the General. Clerk is alleged to have uttered his ideas 'with a force and rapidity which stunned you more than they convinced', and was said to be a 'disagreeable' person in general (a behavior well represented by the interlocutor's condemnation of the *Moral Sentiments*).[33] Furthermore, on one occasion, sick with a fever, when offered a visit from Clerk, Ferguson responded 'in a voice of despair ... "God forbid ... as you regard my life"'.[34] These facts do not suggest that Ferguson would be predisposed to identify himself with Clerk even in a fictional setting.

Mossner speculates instead that the dialogue is a record of an actual conversation because, he argues, the criticisms Clerk levels against Hume and Smith are not always representative of Ferguson's published comments, a claim we will return to shortly.[35] However, his conclusion seems unlikely. Ferguson is never mentioned as being in attendance, suggesting that he wasn't present to hear the discussion and if he had been, it would have been virtually impossible for him to remember it with such exactitude. Furthermore, except for one brief transitional moment, Hume and Smith never speak to one another. This is not believable behaviour from two best friends under attack.

Of course, the dialogue could be inspired by, as opposed to a transcript of, an actual conversation, one in which Ferguson was either present or imagined himself to be, but this only allows for a factual genesis and gives no more credence to their actual words than assuming the dialogue is entirely fictional. It certainly would not tell us which comments originated from the participants and which came from Ferguson's mind. I suggest then that the conversation is more like a Platonic dialogue than an historical account.[36] Clerk the interlocutor seems to be the product of Ferguson's artistic inclinations.

If the dialogue is a work of fiction, then why does Ferguson use Clerk at all? Ferguson famously opposed Smith's position preferring a standing army over a militia and argued that 'there should be no permanent Rank of Generals'.[37] Yet, Clerk the character represents both a permanent General and a career military officer (Clerk worked his way up the ranks). In the failed military action on the coast of Brittany in 1746, 'Clerk was the only officer who advised against retreat',[38] suggesting poor leadership on his part. And, Clerk the interlocutor misrepresents Hume's theory early in the discussion, falsely asserting a more central role for utility than the *Treatise* actually prescribes.[39]

The interlocutor Smith comes into the room after the conversation has started; a symbolic acknowledgment of the younger Scot's elaboration on Humean themes. He then admits almost immediately to publishing a revised edition of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and claims to have 'removed all of the difficulties & made the Theory Compleat'. Every revised edition of Smith's treatise contains a detailed response to Hume's critique that sympathy does not

adequately allow for the painful reaction to fellow-feeling with unpleasant emotions, yet Ferguson has Clerk repeat this criticism as if it were levelled for the first time. Given the possible dates of the dialogue's creation, the older Ferguson would have already seen Smith's response to Hume. The reader must then ask why it should be rehearsed. Finally, the last remark in the dialogue – Clerk's praise of the ancients that most explicitly coincides with Ferguson's published views – begins with an approving comment towards Hume. Clerk tells him that his response is 'well done' and only then announces a position we can ascribe to Ferguson's *Essay*. All of this evidence suggests that Clerk the interlocutor represents bad rather than good judgment and might not be a stand-in for the author's voice at all.

Of course, my comments here are as speculative as Mossner's. Nevertheless, I think it is useful to regard the dialogue as a meditation on themes rather than an explicit condemnation or critique of Smith and Hume – the dialogue does foreshadow objections to Hume and Smith made in Ferguson's *Principles,* a book published much later than the dialogue's setting. Assertions of historical accuracy must be met with cautious scepticism; since the dialogue concludes with an open-ended question – 'What is the end to which a moral individual ought to strive?' – it is just as likely that Ferguson was in the process of examining his own thought as critiquing those of his Scottish brethren. Perhaps the dialogue is, in the end, a model of how *not* to attack Smith.

To summarize, Clerk's criticisms of Smith's are as follows. First, to sympathize with a sentiment is an act that is, in itself, independent of morality. Therefore, mutual approbation does not suggest that both of the parties are correct in their judgment. This assertion, that sympathy has no normative power, will be a continual refrain in Ferguson's writing. Second, Clerk continues, in invoking the notion of 'sympathy' Smith employs a newer and more abstract term to explain a more established and precise term, 'moral sentiments'. This, he suggests, is poor philosophy. Next Clerk offers the Humean critique: since the creation of analogous sentiments inspires a similar passion and since unpleasant emotions transfer from one party to another, this generates neither approval or pleasure. Their absence runs counter to Smith's claim of the mutual pleasure of sympathy. Finally, Clerk argues that sympathy and the created impartial spectator are merely theories of conscience, nothing more. Ultimately, he argues, Smith relies upon an independent standard to define moral goodness and is not, in actuality, presenting a theory of sympathy at all. He is presenting a normative account of morality hidden behind a veil of mutuality. It is worth noting that the first criticism attacks Smith's theory for its non-objective nature but the last asserts that it is objective despite Smith's (alleged) assertions to the contrary! This contradictory attack on Smith will recur in Ferguson's writing and I shall revisit it below.

Whether these criticisms are fair is a matter of debate,[40] and whether Smith the interlocutor adequately answers Clerk's criticisms is also a matter of contention. However, both questions are largely tangential to our concerns since Ferguson wrote the piece, not Smith. Rather, I would ask the more basic questions: Does Ferguson really believe that the *Moral Sentiments* is nonsense? And, is Clerk's condemnation intended to be a punctuation mark, the final word in a debate with only one remaining living interlocutor, or is it just an opportunity for more exploration? Once again, I suggest the latter. As the remainder of the essay argues, there is much more in common between the two thinkers than Clerk's criticisms allow.

Ferguson and Smith on the Moral Sentiments

In describing a progression from 'rude nations' to commercial civility and in characterizing the dispositions by which individuals live together and make judgments about how to coexist, Ferguson's *Essay* bears comparison to the historical descriptions in *The Wealth of Nations*. Ferguson acknowledges, as Smith does, that society moves forward in various and discrete increments and that 'establishments arose from successive improvements that were made, without any sense of their general effect'.[41] In other words, like Smith, Ferguson presumes the positive impact of unintended consequences, a fairly common doctrine of optimism in the eighteenth century.[42]

He also recognizes the complex forces that influence humanity's social nature. Like Smith, Ferguson argues that a person is 'inclined to communicate his own sentiments' and that the fundamental human tension is 'the mixed disposition to friendship or enmity'.[43] The two also reject any suggestion that a person could be considered separate from the group. 'Society appears to be as old as the individual',[44] Ferguson observes, and an individual raised outside of society would be both psychologically and physically immature. Whereas Smith uses the example of an isolated island to postulate the agent with no moral or aesthetic capabilities, Ferguson offers the suggestion that a 'wild man' in the woods, if ever there were such, would be an anomaly, 'not a specimen of any general character'. He even goes further than Smith, suggesting that the specimen 'would probably exhibit defects in the very structure of the organs themselves', and that this would be accompanied by 'defects and imbecilities of the heart'.[45]

Famously, both Ferguson and Smith reject the social contract,[46] but more explicitly than Smith, Ferguson acknowledges that since society is natural, the state of nature is society itself. This precludes the possibility that society developed suddenly or as a result of any collective agreement of individuals:[47]

> If we are asked therefore, Where the state of nature is to be found? We may answer, It is here; and it matters not whether we are understood to speak in the island of Great

> Britain, at the Cape of Good Hope, of the Straits of Magellan. While this active being is in the train of employing his talents, and of operating on the subjects around him, all situations are equally natural.[48]

Humanity is to be understood in groups, Ferguson insists, and 'the history of the individual is but a detail of the sentiments and thoughts he has entertained in the view of his species: and every experiment relative to this subject should be made with entire societies, not with single men'.[49]

Ferguson uses the term 'sentiment' seventy-one times in the *Essay* but he never once references 'sympathy', in the Smithian sense or otherwise. However, he does explain in the *Principles* that although the term usually references 'commiseration or pity' it has now been extended 'to sentiments of congratulations also'. Sympathy, he writes 'may be supposed a contagion' or 'to proceed from the occasion or cause' and thus certain thinkers regard it as a 'principle of approbation'.[50] He then makes the point that Clerk asserts in the dialogue: 'we are still to enquire in what manner is that sympathy itself evinced to be right';[51] in other words, just because two people agree does not suggest that what they agree on is correct.

To undermine Smith's employment of sympathy, Ferguson offers other moments of fellow-feeling – with a specific purchase or with the 'admirer of a fine woman', for example – but points out that these are not considered to be instances of virtue since 'there is sympathy, as well as utility, without approbation; and there is approbation without either'.[52] This is, yet again, the same allegation of subjectivity because it makes sympathy independent of moral standards such as utility or approval.

Ferguson concedes that 'sympathy is no doubt a part of the social nature of man',[53] then attacks the moral sense in general. He concludes that,

> If we are asked, therefore, what is the principle of moral approbation in the human mind, we may answer, it is the *Idea* of *perfection* or excellence, which the intelligent and associated being forms to himself; and to which he refers in every sentiment of esteem and contempt, and in every expression of commendation or censure.[54]

Then, while looking as if he is about to challenge this conclusion, he surprisingly reaffirms it by suggesting that although people disagree regarding what they admire, 'virtue is approved as the specific perfection or excellence of man's nature'.[55] In the end, Ferguson's critique of sympathy in the *Principles* is that it offers no external standard. And though, in response, he suggests that individuals have an idea of virtue in their own minds and pursue it, this too runs counter to his objection. Just as Clerk offered contradicting critiques, Ferguson's *Principles* offers variations on sympathy to counter sympathy; both are images of virtue in the mind. While fellow-feeling isn't normative, Ferguson claims, the image one creates in the mind is.

Is Ferguson's response significantly different from Smith's answer? We might claim that the key difference is that Smith's spectator is explicitly imagined and Ferguson's 'idea of performance of excellence' is not, pointing instead to a distinction based on moral realism (perhaps Ferguson's agent has cognitive access to objective truths via intuition or deduction, although given Ferguson's critique of the moral sense, the former is unlikely). But Smith too might also have put forth a realist theory of morality; the impartial spectator is likely the anthropomorphization of intersubjectivity. Equally unclear is the extent to which, for Ferguson, valuation is created by the agent. Again, where does the normativity of the mental image lie? The two philosophers are ambiguous in the same sort of way.[56]

Returning to the *Essay*, Ferguson pairs sentiment with reason twice,[57] and a third time he joins the two with imagination, arguing that the development of the three capacities – sentiment, reason, and imagination – helped to spread the lessons of the traditional Greek fables because the 'passion of the poet pervaded the minds of the people ... [and] became the incentives of a national spirit'.[58] This suggests that Ferguson, more than Smith, sees these two terms in opposition: sentiments seem not to be rational for him, but Smith's account presumes some form of rational component at sentiment's core.[59]

In his *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,* Smith defines moral sentiments as 'moral observations',[60] a term that presumes some sort of judgement, but Ferguson sees sentiments as being falsely replaced by 'those considerations which occur in the hours of retirement and cold reflection' when trying to explain human behavior.[61] In other words, people try to put rational explanation behind action because sentiments do not seem to provide an adequate account, an observation supported by a passage in the *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* in which Ferguson defines sentiments as 'a state of mind relative to supposed good or evil', a definition that does not include justification, only reaction to moral outcome.[62]

In fact, Ferguson is much more reticent than Smith to offer definitive explanations of human motivation. Elaborating on his reluctance, Ferguson explains in 'Of Liberty & Necessity' that the language of motive and effect, in its reliance on metaphors, is inadequate to describe moral volition. Such terminology 'dupes' people into believing it offers precision,[63] a point consistent with his remarks in the *Essay* on self-love and benevolence. There is no reason, he then argues in the manuscript, to call free will, or 'Moral Liberty', into question. Any deterministic limitations imposed upon an agent would be unknown. Therefore, he writes, 'If there be any Necessity Constraining [the mind] in every Instance there is no consciousness of such Necessity nor any Evidence of its Existence where Consciousness is the only Evidence'.[64]

Returning to the question of sentiment, Ferguson's meaning is made clearer by his other uses of the term. He pairs it with 'apprehension',[65] 'experience',[66] 'conceptions,'[67] and on three occasions 'imagination'.[68] He uses the term 'sententious' to mean aggressively emotional, once while quoting Plutarch, and once in his own voice.[69] Sentiment, then, likely means emotion and not moral judgment as it does for Smith. Ferguson pairs emotion and sentiment as synonyms twice.[70]

We see Ferguson struggle with these concepts in 'An Excursion in the Highlands', yet another dialogue involving Hume (but in this instance not Smith), and one in which Ferguson is himself an interlocutor (evidence that he was *willing* to include himself in dialogues were he so motivated). After a varied discussion, Ferguson attacks sympathy, describing it, in a Humean and Smithian manner, as 'coincidence of sentiment'.[71] Under his own name, he argues that sympathy is 'not a safe ground' for moral adjudication because it tends to 'explain away distinctions of the utmost importance to mankind turning Zeal for morality into a mere selfish interest or into a mere coincidence of sentiment which may take place among Knaves and Fools as well as honest Men'.[72]

This criticism, reminiscent of Clerk's comments in 'Of Moral Estimation' and Ferguson's own in *Principles*, suggests that a more objective notion of morality than sympathy is necessary to establish right or wrong. However, it differs in both its appeal to virtuous people alone – fools and knaves may sympathize but this congruence says nothing of moral goodness – and in the assertion that sympathy becomes self-interest. It is therefore an odd criticism given that Ferguson never condemns self-interest himself (even if he condemns those who reject the public good or see their own needs as separate from others), and that his follow-up comment sounds much like Smith's own elaborations on the impartial spectator. Ferguson writes:

> But in the Breast of the Individual Respecting himself there is seldom difficulty or Risk of That function of Wisdom or Intelligence which is termed Conscience [turning out to be] undecided or erroneous in its Judgment. It is a Watch that Seldom Slumbers or sleeps or mistakes whatever the Party concerned may plead or pretend to others.[73]

This excerpt suggests that conscience is a reliable gauge of morality; that it presides (metaphorically) in the breast. Even if 'Of Moral Estimation', has Clerk critique Smith's impartial spectator for being nothing more than a theory of conscience, Ferguson must have known from his familiarity with the *Moral Sentiments* that Smith too saw the imagined spectator as the very 'man within the breast' that he appeals to here in 'An Excursion'.[74] In this dialogue, Ferguson's final comments seem, once again, to confirm rather than counter Smith's, for Ferguson's point ultimately hangs on what is 'imagined' and why. Even as

this assertion, once again, calls into question Clerk's role as his mouthpiece, it ultimately emphasizes the similarities between the two Adams and the underdeveloped notion of sympathy and sentiment with which Ferguson himself is struggling.

We are therefore in a position to consider their theoretical overlap particularly in regards to the sentiments and reason. Like Ferguson, Smith pairs 'reason,' with a range of terms. This suggests that for both Scots, rational and emotional capacities – the capacities that allow for moral deliberation – work in concert with other human faculties. Sentiment and reason are both necessary parts of the adjudication process. Whether reason is a component of sentiment, as it likely is for Smith, or whether it is simply a frequent companion to sentiment as it is for Ferguson, the two capacities work most effectively when they do so in tandem.[75]

To continue, in *Institutes*, Ferguson tells us that there are two types of knowledge, that 'of particular facts, or that of general rules'.[76] Reason, he then writes, 'comprehends classification of particular subjects, investigations, and applications of general rules together with demonstration, the appellation of evidence'.[77] This is a more specific, albeit compatible, account than in his *Essay* in which he defines a person's reason as:

> his powers of discernment, or his intellectual faculties, which ... are distinguished from the analogous endowments of other animals, refer to the objects around him, either as they are subjects of mere knowledge, or as they are subjects of approbation or censure.[78]

This account includes elements of Smith's moral sentiments and sympathy in particular, especially insofar as reason forms the person:

> not only to know, but likewise to admire and to contemn; and these proceedings of his mind have a principle reference to his own character, and to that of his fellow-creatures, as being the subjects on which he is chiefly concerned to distinguish what is right from what is wrong.[79]

For both Scots, moral judgments are built upon a mirror, and the impossibility of isolation is intertwined with the necessity of other-oriented moral judgment and identity construction. We need others to make moral judgements because we compare them to ourselves and we compare ourselves to them.

Ferguson recognizes, as Smith does, that sentiments work with familiarity to create intimate social bonds with those with whom we share our lives.[80] Society is, he argues, not built on 'mere external conveniences' but, rather, on 'affection [which] operates on the greatest of force'.[81] He explains that this is the feeling of the parent for the child, the actor who sees his or her friend in need; it remains the sole principle that accounts for tribal loyalties. Like Smith, Ferguson recog-

nizes that commercial society does not engender this same response and that modern political arrangements find an individual to be 'a detached and solitary being'.[82] The competition of commercial society makes one treat others as if they were 'his cattle and soil, for the sake of profits they bring', and tends to pit people against each other, but, it also serves to 'continue their intercourse after the bands of affection are broken'.[83] Both thinkers see commercial society as creating rules of interaction when affection fails to do so.

Ferguson does not deny such affection. He is explicit that there is, in fact, a 'love', or 'a quality, which we call *tenderness*, that never can accompany the consideration of interest' that is entirely distinct from the 'sentiments which we feel on the subject of personal success or adversity'.[84] However, because affection and interest are discrete and independent from one another, Ferguson argues that self-love is improperly named because the selfishness typically referred to by that term has nothing to do with the love that presumes altruism or benevolence. In a passage that is likely a response to Hobbes's egoism, and one that recalls Smith's initial comments in the *Moral Sentiments* (which are themselves a response to both Hobbes and Mandeville), Ferguson rejects any system that assumes all actions, even benevolent ones, can be reduced to selfish behavior.[85] Not only does Ferguson share with Smith the notion that there are multiple motivations for our actions, he is so unwilling to exclude the possibility of other-oriented behaviour that he suggests an entirely new vocabulary must be developed in order to account for the complexity of human motivation. We must, he asserts, 'distinguish the selfishness of the parent when he takes care of his child, from the selfishness when he only takes care of himself'.[86] Although Ferguson recognizes that 'it is certainly impossible to live and act with men, without employing different names to distinguish the humane from the cruel, and the benevolent from the selfish', his acknowledgment, like that of Smith, underscores that there are humane and benevolent motives to action and that such motives exist in tandem with countervailing impulses.

Themes and Variations: Smith's *Moral Sentiments* and Part 1, Section 6 of the *Essay*

We can see that there is a lot of Smith in Ferguson and vice versa. This is made even more explicit when we focus on Section 6 of Part 1 of Ferguson's *Essay*, 'Of Moral Sentiment'. The chapter reads like *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and not just because of the title. It assumes that the proper model of moral deliberation is theatrical, dividing human beings into actor and spectator, and it explicitly challenges Mandeville's assumption that no moral distinctions are tenable.[87] But what is most striking is that like Smith's treatise, Ferguson's chapter isn't really

about moral sentiments *per se*, it is about the universe of institutions, commitments and behaviours that are the consequence of the moral sentiments.

The section begins with a claim about human nature that can be seen as playing the same core role as Smith's first sentence in the *Moral Sentiments*:

> How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion ...[88]

In the opening sentence of Section 6, Ferguson states: 'Upon a slight observation of what passes in human life, we should be apt to conclude, that the care of subsistence is the principle spring of human actions'.[89] Both thinkers assert the presence of a fundamental human motivation (reflecting, perhaps, a common Newtonian desire for minimal explanatory laws of human activity), both describe it in terms of principles, and both assume that these principles lead to action. However, while the first sentence in the *Moral Sentiments* acknowledges the possibility of benevolence, Ferguson's suggests more self-interested motives: human beings act to cultivate their own existence.[90] From such actions the human race develops technology, experiences competition and comes to distinguish necessities from amusements. Without these achievements, without the pursuit of subsistence, 'not only the toils of the mechanic, but the studies of the learned, would cease; every department of public business would become unnecessary; every senate-house would be shut up, and every palace deserted'.[91]

However, as we have already seen, Ferguson, along with Smith, accepts that there are multiple motivations for an agent's acts and that the more negative sentiments work in concert with the more positive ones: 'As jealousy is often the most watchful guardian of chastity, so malice is often the quickest to spy the failings of our neighbour'.[92] This echoes, of course, Smith's famous claim that morality and commercial activity work together to make the best out of negative human tendencies – the legacy of Mandeville's assertion that private vice leads to public good and of Smith's faith in unintended consequences and the invisible hand. Our private and self-serving motives contribute to our public influence.

For Ferguson, as for Smith, it is not the sentiments but their consequent standards of condemnation and approbation that separate human beings from other animals:

> Men assemble to deliberate on business; they separate from jealousies of interest; but in their several collisions, whether as friends or as enemies, a fire is struck out which the regards to interest or safety cannot confine. The value of a favour is not measured when sentiments of kindness are perceived; and the term *misfortune* has but a feeble meaning, when compared to that of *insult* and *wrong*.[93]

This sense of right and wrong is the wellspring of much that distinguishes the human race: its sense of history, of poetry, of compassion, the consequences of human intelligence and human action. For Ferguson, an 'active mind' is essential to human happiness,[94] and for Smith too, mental activity is only a small part of the natural tendency of humans to pursue their ends. Smith writes that human beings were 'made for action'[95] while Ferguson claims 'man is not made for repose'.[96] Humans, for Ferguson, advance as a species, not just as individuals, and their intellectual capacities distinguish them from other creatures. Being an actor or spectator, engaging in commerce and finding common interest,

> turns human life into an interesting spectacle, and perpetually solicits even the indolent to mix, as opponents or friends, in the scenes which are acted before them. Joined to the powers of deliberation and reason, it constitutes the basis of a moral nature; and whilst it dictates the terms of praise and of blame, serves to class our fellow-creatures by the most admirable and engaging, or the most odious and contemptible, denominations.[97]

Ferguson, like Smith, regards the arts as an important vehicle for both the expression and cultivation of moral judgments. And, also, as with Smith, it is the attention to detail and sophisticated analysis that helps individuals pursue not just mechanical and commercial invention, but the moral lessons of theatre and epic poetry:

> The foreigner, who believed that Othello, on the stage, was enraged for the loss of his handkerchief, was not more mistaken, than the reasoner who imputes any of the more vehement passions of men to the impressions of mere profit or loss.[98]

As we have seen, for Smith, duty, justice, affection and commercial activity all work in consort to create a wide range of human motivations; both Ferguson and Smith reject the notion that individuals engage in choice based on 'mere profit or loss'. Both see commercial activity as supported by human invention, including what we now call the arts and humanities. There are more factors to decision-making and human motivation than the sheer desire to trade or exchange.

Ferguson's account of justice in 'Of Moral Sentiment' also echoes the treatment in the *Moral Sentiments*. Smith sees justice as a negative virtue, explaining that 'We may often fulfill all the rules of justice by sitting still and doing nothing'.[99] In the *Wealth of Nations,* he adds: 'Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest his own way'.[100] Justice is the most precise virtue. It is 'the main pillar that upholds the whole edifice' of society.[101] Ferguson too explains that 'to abstain from harm, is the great law of natural justice'.[102] Individuals 'act in society

from affections of kindness and friendship',[103] and 'even in the case of those to whom we do not habitually wish any positive good, we are still averse to be the instruments of harm'.[104] Ferguson then quotes Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* to exclaim, 'I have before me ... an idea of justice, which, if I could follow in every instance, I should think myself the most happy of men'.[105] He argues that 'if virtue be the supreme good, its best and most signal effect is, to communicate and diffuse itself'.[106]

Ferguson will continue these comments elsewhere in the *Essay*, asserting that every individual is capable of doing justice, that a just action 'has no limits but in the defect of power', and that the 'right to do wrong, and commit injustice, is an abuse of language, and a contradiction in terms'.[107] He recognizes, along with Smith, that all individuals are equal,[108] and that no society can be considered just if its members are unhappy.[109]

Just as Smith ends his treatise on morals by calling for a discussion of 'the general principles of Law and Government',[110] Ferguson concludes his discussion in this section of the *Essay* by referencing the role of government in the cultivation of morals.[111] This inquiry permeates the rest of the book and shares many similarities with Smith's own account. Ferguson acknowledges, for example, that one of the great needs of human beings is occupation or, as I stated above, something to do,[112] and he is critical of the rich in many of the ways Smith is in both the *Moral Sentiments* and the *Wealth of Nations*.[113]

Like Smith, Ferguson recognizes that liberty is preserved when individuals protect their own.[114] He also agrees that there must be some personal interest (wealth or otherwise) to motivate individuals to action.[115] Proper education and a good community will help individuals overcome the natural focus on themselves and pursue the public good (clarifying that 'their own' includes society as well as family). Ferguson is clear about this in 'Of Moral Sentiment',[116] and in the same regard Smith is explicit in the *Moral Sentiments*: vanity 'arises from ... [a] ... gross ... illusion of the imagination' and is 'the foundation of the most ridiculous and contemptible vices'.[117] Thus, 'The great secret of education is to direct vanity to proper objects'.[118]

Education is, for both, a powerful antidote to the harmful effects of the division of labour on the working classes. Ferguson observes:

> Many mechanical arts, indeed, require no capacity; they succeed best under a total suppression of sentiment and reason; and ignorance is the mother of industry as well as of superstition ... [therefore] the genius of the master, perhaps, is cultivated, while that of the inferior workman lies waste ... [and, as a result] the beggar, who depends upon charity; the labourer, who toils that he may eat; the mechanic, whose art requires no exertion of genius, are degraded by the object they pursue, and by the means they employ to attain it.[119]

Compare these comments with similar points made by Smith:

> the torpor [of the worker's mind] renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. Of the great and extensive interests of his country he is altogether incapable of judging, and unless very particular pains have been taken to render him otherwise, he is equally incapable of defending his country in war ... His dexterity at his own particular trade seems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expence of his intellectual, social, and martial virtues. But in every improved and civilized society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless government takes some pains to prevent it.[120]

As Hamowy explains, Ferguson predicts that increases in specialization will lead to increased social stratification and 'thinking will, in time, become the particular province of one class of people only'.[121] Although Ferguson is more explicit than Smith that education is not the sole factor in class distinction,[122] their points are the same. Mental torpor increases social division, and because social intercourse is necessary for happiness, the uneducated worker is denied the possibility of social and political fulfillment:

> It should seem, therefore, to be the happiness of man, to make his social dispositions the ruling spring of his occupations; to state himself as the member of a community, for whose general good his heart may glow with an ardent zeal, to the suppression of those personal cares which are the foundation of painful anxieties, fear, jealousy, and envy.[123]

Like Smith, Ferguson asserts that a corrupt society corrupts individuals; moreover, the excess of 'affectation, pertness, and vanity',[124] the alienation of the cities ('where men vie with one another in equipage, dress, and the reputation of fortune')[125] and the falsities of the court ('where we may learn to smile without being pleased, to caress without affection, to wound with the secret weapons of envy and jealousy, and to rest our personal importance on circumstances')[126] are all elements that contribute to the destruction of virtue and character.

Toward the end of his *Essay*, on this same topic, Ferguson sums up the relationship between politics, morality, commercialization and sociality, and in so doing he utilizes a vocabulary that echoes to a surprising degree Smith's *Moral Sentiments*. Ferguson assumes that history helps define the state of society and government, that social intercourse helps individuals modulate their sentiments to the appropriate level, and that national spirit, martial virtues and mutual respect are a combination of individual and group factors. In essence, his natural history of society assumes many of the ideas that animate Smith's moral theory.

In so doing, Ferguson offers a compelling picture of what a just society with happy members might look like:

> The natural disposition of man to humanity, and the warmth of his temper, may raise his character to this fortunate pitch. His elevation, in a great measure, depends on the form of his society; but he can, without incurring the charge of corruption, accommodate himself to great variations in the constitutions of government. The same integrity, and vigorous spirit, which, in democratical states, renders him tenacious of his equality, may, under aristocracy or monarchy, lead him to maintain the subordinations established. He may entertain, towards the different ranks of men with whom he is yoked in the state, maxims of respect and of candour: he may, in the choice of his actions, follow a principle of justice, and of honour, which the considerations of safety, preferment, or profit, cannot efface.[127]

This passage, if taken in isolation, would be hard to attribute to either Smith or Ferguson. It is, I think, a telling example of how much the two thinkers shared. Thus, returning to the question as to whether Ferguson's dialogues and fragments constitute a true critique of Smith, there is little in the *Essay* to suggest that they do, and if Ferguson's Clerk and his *Principles* do share the same point of view, it is a perspective that Ferguson must have been toying with late in his life. Yet, that common critique fails to be compelling, and in those moments when the two seem closest – for example, in 'An Excursion in the Highlands' – Ferguson retreats as quickly as he advances.

Although the ineffectual arguments of Clerk the interlocutor may suggest that Ferguson was reconsidering his position on sympathy later in life – 'Of Moral Estimation' may have been self-deception as much as self-examination – our analysis of the *Essay* implies that there wasn't that much of a critique to reconsider. Ferguson's attack on sympathy is ambiguous, contradictory and, ultimately, weakly stated.

In the end, we cannot be certain of what Ferguson's thoughts actually were. Nevertheless, it is worth commenting that no matter how different the two thinkers have been presumed in the past, and accepting that there are specific issues on which they do differ greatly, there is every reason to believe that their commonalities indicate shared viewpoints. This is the likely consequence of their close contact and common context, not to mention the lifelong philosophical inquiry they shared with each other and their fellow philosophers. We can only speculate as to how consciously one influenced the other, but recognizing the significant conceptual overlap of their works is the next necessary step before asking the more difficult question of who influenced whom.

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6 A COMPLICATED VISION: THE GOOD POLITY IN ADAM FERGUSON'S THOUGHT

Lisa Hill

It is a commonplace observation that Adam Ferguson's social and political thought seems troubled by many conflicts. It has even been suggested that his body of work lacks system.[1] Certainly, his corpus is diverse and complex, replete with ambivalence, tension and even paradox. This essay seeks to build a picture of Ferguson's conception of the good polity and to explore the tensions that lie within it. Despite some puzzling exceptions, these tensions are, in fact, reconcilable once they are understood in relation to his social science, his historiography and his attempts to forge a new approach to politics that could be described as 'liberal-Stoicism'. The discussion begins by canvassing some of the complications and underlying assumptions of Ferguson's political thought.

The Background to Ferguson's Political Thought

Ferguson makes for demanding reading partly because of his somewhat disorderly style of writing and partly because of his ambivalent attitude to many political issues. It is not so much that his thought lacks system as it is that the system that exists must be carefully culled by the reader. Yet, Ferguson leaves no doubt that politics is important, not only because it is highly consequential, but because humans are other-regarding creatures of action and conflict and politics is the ideal forum for the exercise of this special nature.[2] Ferguson agrees with Aristotle that it is language that makes us both fit and *destined* for life in a polity.[3] Since humankind alone is capable of speech [4] it is the only species destined for political life.

Ferguson's turn of mind is, in many ways, moralistic and romantic, yet his politics seems to have been shaped and constrained by a strong desire to be practical and grounded. Normative moralizing has its place[5] but one should not moralize simply to defend an abstract principle; after all, the point of all systems and institutions is to make people happy.[6] (By 'happiness' Ferguson does not

mean utility but the Stoic sort of happiness synonymous with virtue or the exercise of benevolence.)[7] Abstract and constructivistic political philosophy is rarely helpful because social order is not brought about rationalistically: Rather, it is the unseen, unplanned, gradual and sub-rational forces that bring forth order. Ferguson explicitly accommodates the unavoidable untidiness of life within his political and social science, firmly believing that: a) commotion and conflict are a normal and healthy part of life; and b) human affairs cannot be comprehended under a few simple laws or within rigid *a priori* normative 'systems'.[8] These beliefs are linked to his perception of the laws of spontaneous order at work in every aspect of human life, including the generation of social behaviours and institutions. Rather than being the result of conscious planning and design, social order is an evolutionistic, adaptive, piecemeal, dialectical and irrationalist process.[9] I will return presently to the implications of this framework for his conception of the good polity.

In order to map the complex topography of Ferguson's political orientations the reader must be aware of a number of general underlying tensions. The most important is a progressivism that cohabits, paradoxically, with a pronounced conservatism. Sometimes this conservatism degenerates into nostalgia, even atavism, but it is usually reflected in Ferguson's simultaneous embrace of both antique and liberal/modern political values. A further tension is a consciously cultivated embrace of realism that is pitched against his equally strong idealistic tendencies. This tension feeds into his desire to balance order with the political turbulence and spirited activism he considered vital for the maintenance of civic virtue. Finally, Ferguson's belief in the spontaneously-generated nature of human social life coexists with his advocacy of some rationalistic interventions to ameliorate the negative effects of progress. The latter tension manifests itself as an apparent uncertainty about just how much human intervention is required to keep the political realm in motion.

Ferguson's worldview seems to have been shaped by the persistent question of how much he is prepared to concede to modernity and his own proto-liberal tendencies, on the one hand, and the depth of his loyalties to the past and the antique (mainly Roman Stoic) sources[10] he loved so much. Even though progress and modernity must be embraced because they are the effects of Providentially inspired laws of spontaneous order,[11] Ferguson cannot help noticing and regretting their impact on virtue and social intimacy. Though readers are often inclined to group Ferguson in either the civic humanist or proto-liberal camp,[12] his approach is perhaps best thought of as a sustained effort to create a kind of hybrid tradition that might be called 'liberal-Stoicism'. He explicitly expresses his desire to blend a classical sensibility with the conditions and constraints of commercialism: 'to mix the military spirit with a civil and commercial Policy'.[13] Ferguson hopes to show that progress and commercialism – with their promise

of greater liberty and plenty – need not mean the abandonment of virtue and civic vitality. He celebrated the increasingly high levels of personal liberty that accompanied progress, yet remained wary of the effects of progress on moral character, political community and the willingness of people to act for the public interest.[14] For Ferguson, this is a perfectly consistent position provided one agrees that the standard opposition between private wealth and public virtue, is a mistaken one for clearly '[h]uman society has great obligations to both'.[15] The trick was to devise institutional and cultural means capable of serving both sets of concerns. Ferguson was optimistic that community and commerce, wealth and virtue, and order and political vitality could all be balanced rather than played off against each other, though it should be acknowledged that his attempted reconciliation of the two sets of goals was never entirely convincing.[16]

In order to understand the nature of (and complications within) Ferguson's political thought – and especially his conception of the good polity – it is important to place it within the context of his social science (i.e. the spontaneous order framework) and its corresponding historiography as well as his deep reservations about progress.

Spontaneous Order, Progressivist Historiography and Fear of Corruption

Ferguson's entire system of thought is built around an account of the manner in which social order emerges spontaneously from the seemingly random behaviours of individual actors. Rather than being the result of conscious planning and design, social order is an evolutionistic, undirected, adaptive, incremental, dialectical and irrationalist process.[17] Ferguson emphasizes the polygenesis of our key institutions and the absence of any long-term human design in their development. Such institutions reflect and embody the collective wisdom of generations of actors who have shaped it piecemeal and dialectically through centuries of adaptation, conflict and compromise. As a result, Ferguson shares Edmund Burke's and Adam Smith's aversion to any kind of rapid social change.[18] This would disrupt 'Nature' whose *modus operandi* is exclusively sub-rational and evolutionistic.[19] This gradualism led Ferguson to a position of political conservatism and a concomitant rejection of any kind of revolutionary change, as will be shown.

Despite this conservative strain Ferguson's historiography is quite modern in offering a progressivist, spontaneous and law-driven conception of human affairs. Attacking the rationalistic device of contract as the primary principle of historical explanation he appeals to an evolutionistic perfectionism that relies instead on endogenous and unconscious causes. Ferguson makes clear that humans alone are destined for progress[20] and that such progress is both natural

and immanent in the divine plan.[21] Moreover, humanity is 'susceptible of indefinite advancement'.[22]

A key premise of Ferguson's historiography is that history is rarely moved by visionaries but is a spontaneous process generated socially, sub-rationally (via innate drives) and gradually. Significantly, the progress of the species is more or less uniform and this cannot be attributed to cultural contact (such as the diffusionist thesis promulgated by the French *Encylopedists*) or to the transmission or copying of the ideas of one or a few ingenious individuals.[23] We must, says Ferguson, 'receive, with caution, the traditional histories of ancient legislators, and founders of states' because history is, by and large, a spontaneous affair: Institutions and social practices develop insensibly and by degrees, the product of countless individual actions through time.[24] Whereas other species merely advance individually from a state of 'infancy to manhood', humans advance collectively, in a natural and teleological sequence, from 'rudeness' through to 'civilisation'.[25] There is a natural and universal tendency for all cultures to progress sequentially through several discrete stages from 'savage' (hunters and gatherers) through to 'barbarous' (agricultural) and finally to 'polished' (commercial and mass) social forms.[26] These forms, the divine blueprint of our progress, inhere in 'human nature'[27] and are brought into existence through sub-rational drives and passions.

Paradoxically, in spite of this progressivist historiography, Ferguson was also fearful of some of the effects of progress manifest in the 'polished age'. Significantly, such fears are expressed in classical terms as regret for the loss of civic virtue and social intimacy[28] and nostalgia for the traditional close-knit warrior cultures of ancient Sparta, Rome and Greece. Ferguson believed that civic virtue was easily weakened by the forces of modernity: increased specialization, geographical overextension and hedonism inevitably led to national decline wherever the signs of moral decay were not detected early enough.

Military expansion in particular, and progress in general, leads to centralization, bureaucratization and the erosion of political community. Like Aristotle, Ferguson personally believed that it was in the small to moderate scale city-state that people stood the best chance of living the 'good life', that is, as civic animals. A nation's territory must be small enough to accommodate mass participation and thereby foster communal sentiments. But when people inhabit a 'large and extensive territory, they are disunited and lose sight of their community'; government then falls to a few who 'withhold from the many every subject of public zeal or political occupation.' The great mass of people inevitably lapse into 'a state of languor and obscurity' and the people begin to suffer 'themselves to be governed at discretion'.[29]

Ferguson also dreaded the political calm that seemed to accompany the emergence of the organized and centralized state. He wrote that our 'notion of order in

civil society is frequently false' in being 'consistent only with obedience, secrecy, and the silent passing of affairs through the hands of a few'.[30] China provides a signal example of the pathological, virtue-deadening imperial bureaucracy. Here the arts of government are refined to the highest degree in order to satisfy those 'vulgar minds' for whom national 'felicity and greatness' is synonymous with the unremitting march towards specialization, compartmentalization, professionalization, atomization, differentiation, routinization, depersonalization and the rationalization of governance and authority. Such a process is associated, not with democratization and liberalization, but with increasingly despotic forms of discipline and policing.[31]

Specialization in work functions is particularly destructive. With its 'promise' of both national wealth and 'improvement of skill', specialization becomes ever more refined and ubiquitous, and as this occurs so does it erode the most precious qualities of civic ardour, sociality and moral community. In Ferguson's words: the 'separation of professions ... break[s] the bands of society'. Specialization engenders political apathy and suppresses peoples' natural liveliness and 'ingenuity'. Attention is diverted from public concerns as people are drawn into the private, individuated realm of commerce and manufacturing. People become alienated 'from the common scene of occupation, on which the sentiments of the heart, and the mind, are most happily employed' with the effect that eventually 'society is made to consist of parts, of which none is animated with the spirit of society itself.' The most pernicious form of specialization is the professionalisation of martial functions[32] which, combined with '[c]ommercial spirit' and 'an admiration, and desire of riches', brings with it 'an aversion to danger'.[33] Inevitably, political and military demobilization leads to a loss of virtue and a lapse into generalized civic incompetence. Ferguson contrasts this state of affairs with life in simple or 'barbarous' societies where '[t]he public is a knot of friends,' bound by a sense of common danger.[34] In such communities each citizen bears responsibility for the defence of common territory and this generates the vital bonds that define and preserve community.

But, since progress is natural and must therefore be embraced, Ferguson finds himself in an awkward position. He wants to avoid revisionism yet he also wants to discover effective remedies for the ills of modernity that he identifies. These solutions (and the complications they bring with them) will be outlined presently. Before doing so, it is important to establish the character of Ferguson's ideal political regime, particularly in relation to his social science and historiography.

The Emergence and Development of the State

As a spontaneous order theorist, Ferguson rejected the idea of an 'original compact' and conceived the emergence of the organized state as a natural, gradual and evolutionary process. The symmetry and complexity of government and the harmonious accommodation of its various components, could not conceivably have been the work of a single legislator, however wise. 'No constitution is formed by concert, no government is copied from a plan.' People 'proceed from one form of government to another, by easy transitions'.[35] The 'divine architect' has ensured that regular government will emerge as an unintended consequence of our natural tendency towards 'invidious comparison' which creates enmity between people; formal government develops exigently to protect citizens and their private property from invasion.[36] Government is natural and yet because of our equally natural tendency towards depredation, the peace must be *maintained* artificially: '[T]he peace of society is, in many instances, evidently forced, and made to continue by a variety of artificial means'. The whole of human history testifies to the fact that social life is impossible without 'the institution of government, and the application of penal law'.[37] Here Ferguson seems unsure about the precise role of human agency and rational action in the maintenance of social order, a problem he struggled with quite a bit.[38]

The Best Constitution

The topic of Ferguson's preferred constitution is complicated by the fact that he avoided the promulgation of *universal* ideal types, a position consistent with his spontaneous order commitments and his gradualist historiography. 'How is it possible', he wrote, 'to find any single form of government that would suit mankind in every condition?' After all, he explains in tones redolent of Montesquieu, 'forms of government must be varied, in order to suit the extent, the way of subsistence, the character and the manners of different nations'.[39] In fact, Ferguson's preferred constitution is almost always the existing one (except in the case of despotism or any other form of total or arbitrary rule)[40] since it will have evolved naturally via the various processes and operations of spontaneous order. In Britain's case, this led him to recommend the retention of its existing constitutional monarchy. Despite his theoretical and personal 'predilection' for 'small' independent states[41] Ferguson distrusts, *in practice*, 'popular or republican' government in any setting other than the small and intimate tribal community. In more developed or extensive societies, they were little more than 'mob rule'.[42] Commercial nations are characterized by a well-developed system of rank distinctions, even where 'a small extent' are 'best fitted to aristocratical government or to mixed republic'.[43] In such polities 'law is more fixed and the abuses of power better restrained.'[44]

For large-scale polities, mixed monarchies are appropriate because they are a reliable guard against degeneration. Ferguson agreed with Aristotle, Polybius, Cicero and Machiavelli that single types of polities were unstable and doomed to collapse; therefore, a system based on checks and balances and Montesquieu's 'partition of powers'[45] is best. One of the great 'beauties' of the mixed constitution is that 'it can withstand many evils without being overthrown'.[46] This is because in 'governments properly mixed' a spontaneous 'counterpoise' is found 'in which the public freedom and the public order are made to consist'.[47]

Mixed monarchies (such as prevailed in Britain) are not only more stable but are best suited 'for the preservation of liberty'.[48] Any attempt to introduce a pure or unitary constitutional form could result in either tyranny or anarchy.[49] Absolutism has extremely negative connotations for Ferguson who associates it with Jacobitism 'the stuff of yesterday's politics' and 'Catholic absolutism, evoking outdated fears of universal monarchy'.[50] Absolutist government is also rejected on spontaneous order grounds. 'Revolutionary jumps', which Ferguson continually cautioned against, are, as Vincenzo Merolle suggests, 'typical of societies where an absolute power has coerced, and finally retarded, the natural progress of mankind towards its destination'.[51]

Vigilance and Activity, Obligations and Responsibilities

While the *emergence* of formal government might be a spontaneous process, political activity itself should not be left to self-regulating mechanisms. For Fania Oz-Salzberger, Ferguson sees 'constant civic alertness – the irreplaceability of citizens in the classical sense – [a]s one Machiavellian insight that modern politics' could not afford to 'leave off'. For all his enthusiasm for the laws of spontaneous order, such laws could not preserve the political sphere. Rather '[a]ll good states nee[d] some degree of manual operation by keen amateurs'.[52] The state, emerging in rough form from spontaneous order processes, is modified and kept vital often by conscious and rationalistic means. Free constitutions must be deliberately 'preserved by the vigilance, activity, and zeal, of single men'[53] who should be prepared to correct any 'grievances' they 'experience under it'.[54] 'Reason' can even be properly applied here to make any of the necessary improvements.[55]

Donald Winch has noted correctly that 'Ferguson criticized Smith for going too far in the direction of encouraging an attitude of aesthetic distance and mandarin skepticism towards public affairs'.[56] Whereas good political economy consists (vertically) in judicious governmental restraint and (horizontally) in mutual non-interference, good *governance* means much more. It is not simply a utilitarian concern for the expansion of national wealth and power, and it certainly means more than the modest task of constraining and channelling interest, just as liberty means far more than an absence of constraint on private action.

Rather, politics is the art of keeping the political realm vital and safe from harm, of identifying those 'provisions required for the safety and better government of men in society'.[57] In fact, 'political establishments are the most important articles in the external conditions of men'.[58]

Ferguson insisted that civic virtue was the vital force of political life and that such virtue had to be consciously cultivated. Institutions alone cannot be relied upon to secure liberty for this is 'a right which every individual must be ready to vindicate for himself' by 'that firm and resolute spirit with which the liberal mind is always prepared to resist indignities'.[59] For example, the writ of Habeas Corpus is a fine achievement but it is only a piece of paper without 'the refractory and turbulent zeal' of the British people 'to secure its effects'.[60] '[W]ritten statues' and 'other constituents of law' are all very well but if they 'cease to be enforced by the very spirit from which they arose; they serve only to cover, not to restrain, the iniquities of power'.[61] Anyone with a sense of history knows that '[t]he most equitable laws on paper are consistent with the utmost despotism in administration'.[62]

Where a citizenry is vigilant political degeneration is unlikely; therefore legislators are encouraged to do anything they can to enhance civic competence, awareness and capacity.[63] Such qualities in a populace will yield a number of vital 'external advantage[s]', among them, 'public safety', security of 'personal freedom' and even security of 'private property'.[64] Mass participation also guards against the fatal weakness of simple or total forms of rule since 'the error that results from the freedom of one person is best corrected by the wisdom that results from the concurring freedom of many'.[65] Further, where a citizenry is active and alert, there is security against 'abuses of power'.[66]

The inevitable faction-fighting that accompanies a civically active populace might bring conflict and 'inconveniencies' but such effects are well worth it for the net effect is 'free government', 'the safety of the people' and 'the scope which is given to all the respectable faculties of the human mind'. Ferguson admonishes those who think that good governance ends with the achievement of order and political calm; in fact, these conditions merely obscure the sinister reality of tyranny.[67] Political disturbance indicates the *existence*, rather than absence, of the rule of law with its protection of such rights as free speech and right of protest.[68] It is far better for a political community to experience political turbulence than for its citizens to be denied an active role in public affairs.[69] Indeed, 'our very praise of unanimity' is 'a danger to liberty'.[70]

In a 'free', healthy and vital political order certain civil and political freedoms such as access to political 'redress', and 'resistance' and 'freedom of speech as well as thought' are well protected.[71] But Ferguson does not stipulate just how extensive these freedoms should be or how they could be achieved and protected. This is partly because he seems to regard most rights as adventitious (as opposed

to natural or original), so he is normatively constrained to limit his advocacy of 'rights' to those that already exist. But he does suggest that they are best protected under a strong rather than weak state because, paradoxically, the strong state is less liable to be jealous of the most innocent freedoms than a weak one.[72] Ferguson also fails to inform his reader of the appropriate forms or *fora* for political activism, though, in his defence, it should be noted that his imagination would have been severely restricted by the fact that the Act of Union (1707) had stripped Scots of their key political institutions and placed them in the awkward position of being 'willing terminator[s]' of their own 'sovereignty'.[73] It is possible that, given the lack of concrete institutions available to Scots, Ferguson's idea of citizenship was social and cultural, rather than directly political.[74] This point is discussed further in a subsequent section of this essay.

Political Rights and Authority?

Ferguson's adoption of the spontaneous order framework moved him to criticize thinkers who spoke in terms of natural and abstract political rights and obligations. Though he is just as interested in civil liberty as any other writer of the period he generally avoids traditional questions of authority and obligation.[75] The legitimacy of authority cannot be derived from some arbitrary or mythical source like an original compact or the divine right of kings; it rests on custom, convention and what J. S. Mill would later call 'the harm principle' rather than on some inviolable or foundationalist principle like divine right. Ferguson wrote that 'there is no where an original right of one person to command another, except so far as is necessary to restrain him from harm'. Instead 'convention' is 'the only principle upon which a right to command can accrue to one, or an obligation to obey can be incurred by another'. He argued that '[c]itizens, in every regular community, are bound, not by the institution of their ancestors on which they were not consulted, but by the consent which they themselves have given'.[76] Though Ferguson does speak at times in terms of individual rights,[77] in general – at least when talking about politics – he steers away from any talk of *natural* rights.[78] Such an approach mistakenly casts what are really 'adventitious rights' as natural or 'original'. 'Possession, property and command' (command being 'a right to the services or obediences of other men') are all contingent and therefore a 'matter of discussion', rather than entitlements to be taken as given. They are worthy of recognition 'only so far as they are proved'.[79] There is no divine right of kings any more than there is any natural right to popular sovereignty.[80] For practical reasons of safety and order people are bound to obey properly constituted government but only if it is not despotic or arbitrary, in which case resistance and even revolution may be defensible.[81] But under non-despotic rule, conformity to 'what is best for the state' is advised and required for the sake of a people's

'own preservation and welfare'. At times this might mean that citizens will need to 'submit to personal hardship for the benefit of [their] country'.[82]

There are few hard-and-fast rules in Ferguson's political thought. The art of governing and of being governed is an *ad hoc* affair in which questions about how rulers and ruled should relate to each other need to be worked out and adapted as circumstances demand.[83] This means that citizens need to be active in the political realm so that this relationship can be continually assessed and renegotiated. After all, history has 'abundantly shown' that public virtue and political efficacy 'are proportioned to the concern which numbers are permitted to take in the affairs of their community ... in national councils, in offices of state, or public services of any sort'.[84] As we have seen, Ferguson's main regret about modernity was the political demobilization it seemed to instigate. The perils of apathy, loss of martial virtue, civic enervation and withdrawal into the private, materialistic world of the market are all persistent themes in his work.[85]

The Franchise

Given Ferguson's persistent complaint about mass apathy one might predict suffrage reform as one of the first steps towards its amelioration. In his early work he does seem open to the idea of a wider franchise. For example, it is suggested in the *Institutes* that so long as the 'inferior class' is 'not 'greatly debased or corrupted' they 'may have a share' (but not an 'active' one) 'in the government' either by exercising veto power over the 'determinations of the aristocracy' or by being enabled to choose 'those who are to act for them'.[86] But in his later writings, despite a persisting fear of political quietism, there is little enthusiasm for the idea of popular suffrage, let alone for the alluded-to veto mechanism. Though he did push for some electoral reforms in his later years,[87] Ferguson firmly resisted the idea of a universal franchise. He notes that while 'liberty *seems* to require that every member of the commonwealth' regardless of 'order or rank ... should ... have an active share in the legislature of their country' he is careful to correct this 'misapprehension' because *sharing* in government does not mean that each person has the right to vote. Ferguson insisted that since there is no original right to either govern or be governed 'surely the indiscriminate right of every one, whether capable and worthy, or incapable and unworthy, cannot by any means be admitted'. [88] Further, '[t]he Liberty of every class and order is not proportioned to the power they enjoy, but to the security they have for the preservation of their rights'. Attempts to engage the 'licentious multitude'[89] in public decisions are deemed 'presumptuous'.[90] There never was 'any society, great or small' that had 'assembled upon a foot of absolute equality, and without exclusion of any individual, to dispose of their government'; such an idea 'is altogether visionary and unknown in nature'.[91] Popular rule is a threat to liberty as evidenced by

the fact that '[w]hen all the powers of the Roman Senate were transferred to the popular assemblies, the Liberty of Rome came to an end'.[92] Clearly 'the power of the people is not the good of the people'.[93] The populace invariably exercises its power 'with malice and poor judgement' and popular assemblies are generally tumultuous, 'capricious and disorderly', informed by 'superstition' rather than 'reason'.[94]

A very indirect form of representation was, to Ferguson's mind, perfectly adequate. Under representative government 'every order of the state, if not collectively, at least by deputation' is enabled 'to take a part in the legislature of their country, and to have a vigilant eye on the proceedings of the whole'.[95] Ferguson is careful to stipulate that those outside the franchise are as much bound by the laws of the parliament as those within it since they 'enjo[y]' the same 'effect and protection' of such laws.[96]

Ferguson's resistance to mass involvement in political affairs hardened in the aftermaths of the French and American revolutions, the effects of which also 'locked the British state into a dogged resistance to popular participation'.[97] When Christopher Wyvill tried to enlist Ferguson's support for the Parliamentary Reform movement that sought a broadening of the franchise, he was politely rebuffed.[98] Order and the gradualist aspect of his progressivism were, it seems, more important to Ferguson than the spirited, civic activism he otherwise lauded, even in his later work (especially the *Principles*). Perhaps he feels (without showing how) that both values are satisfactorily served under a mixed constitution.

Although we have seen that Ferguson fails to show how his mixed constitution could accommodate the higher levels of political activism for which he persistently called, he does have two suggestions for the reinvigoration of civic virtue: A militia scheme and a civics education programme.

The Militia Scheme

Ferguson was extremely ambivalent about the effects of the division of labour; paradoxically, the division of labour was a natural effect of progress yet it operated, at the same time, as a key source of retrogression, especially in its effect on statecraft, martial and political virtue and defence capability. Although Ferguson perceives the process of increasing specialization in work functions in progressivist terms as natural, inevitable, spontaneous and prosperity-generating[99] there is one area of life that must be carefully quarantined from its effects: the martial arts. He therefore arbitrarily and revisionistically advocates the abandonment of the exclusive use of specialized standing armies in favour of a return to the use of citizen militias. Although a professional standing army might be acceptable in times of peace this did not mean that the rest of the able population 'should

forego the use of arms'.[100] Yet, his enthusiasm for militias causes Ferguson to compromise the progressivist and anti-rationalist dimensions of the spontaneous order framework. As if to justify his revisionism Ferguson tells us that 'the separation of tasks is intended for ... the benefit of mankind in general' and that should it ever 'become prejudicial to human nature ... no doubt it should be stopped'.[101]

Ferguson supported militias in general, but was particularly keen for Scotland's right to raise them, something that had been made 'legally impossible' as a consequence of the Jacobite rebellion in 1745.[102] In preparation for his militia scheme, he called for legislation freeing up the use of arms, such as the Game Laws, and the right for freeholders to arm one man.[103] Along with other members of the Select Society he campaigned vigorously for a cause that was driven by two concerns: First a desire to deflect the effect that progress – especially work task specialization – was having upon civic virtue; and second, to secure Scotland from threats of a French military invasion.[104] Militias would have been his best and only institutional hope for reinvigorating Scottish civic virtue because the likelihood of Scotland recovering its political institutions was remote. Further, since Ferguson accepted the Act of Union as economically beneficial to Scotland he never advocated their recovery.

Yet, despite initial impressions citizen militias do not seem to be Ferguson's solution to the problem of political apathy and demobilization. He notes that it would be ideal if 'every citizen', regardless of rank, could be included in his militia scheme but decides ultimately that this could be dangerous in a modern, large scale and differentiated nation such as Britain where people are not 'nearly' on the kind of 'footing of equality' that would otherwise prevent rebellion and threats to the existing order.[105] It is preferable, he decides, that the provision of arms should be limited to persons of 'a certain condition'. It is not insignificant that he later crossed out from this sentence the phrase: 'to exclude the rabble'.[106] In its details, therefore, Ferguson's scheme was 'backward-looking' and 'socially conservative'.[107]

The Citizenship Education Programme

Ferguson also suggests that, in order to preserve the vitality of political community, governments should incorporate a kind of citizenship training into the existing school curriculum. His plans for this are mentioned briefly and only once and so give little away, but the programme clearly consists in some form of martial skills training. Ferguson notes that since 'military tactics and manual exercise are within the competence of children they ought not to be neglected amidst the Rudiments of Education in early life'. Further '[h]e who cannot defend himself is not a Man and he who cannot take part in the defence

of his country is not a citizen nor worthy of the protection which the laws of the country bestow'. Since the scheme seems to be a universal, publicly funded one, this makes the particularism of Ferguson's militia scheme even more curious. Ferguson adverts to the programme's importance for 'defence or publick safety'.[108] Acutely aware of this intrusion into the system of 'natural liberty' (as Smith referred to it) Ferguson cites Smith as his source for the principle that although education is a strictly private concern we may 'except' from 'this general rule ... every case in which defence or publick safety is at stake'. He recommends that,

> A Committee of Parliament or Other publick authority might no doubt with great Advantage be interposed to report from Age to Age what Regulations might be required in Publick Schools to prepare the rising Generation for that part which necessity might impose on every Individual for the safety of his Country.[109]

A Cultural Solution?

Aside from his advocacy of such institutional measures as a mixed constitution, a citizen militia and a civics education programme, Ferguson may have sought a more general solution to the problem of the loss of political vitality in the idea of developing and cultivating moral character, specifically of the type that seemed to come naturally to 'barbarians'. The loss of national virtue, the first casualty of progress, is a product of the 'weakness and effeminacy' of civilized nations. Because this is a mental rather than physical condition Ferguson looks for means by which to psychologically and imaginatively reconstitute such virtue.

This cultural form of citizenship (for the Scots, at least) involved recovering and perhaps even reinventing a tradition that Ferguson recreated from ancient history, a variety of contemporary anthropological sources and 'relics of the local past'. Its purpose, it appears, was to repair somehow the social fabric (the 'bands of society') ravaged by progress[110] as well as to generate a sense of cultural independence, all the more urgent in the aftermath of the Act of Union (1707). As commerce exerted its homogenizing effects on culture, Ferguson's enthusiasm for cultural relics, particularly the moral and social life of the Highland clans with which he doubtless identified,[111] reached its high point in his support for (and alleged, but never proven, involvement in the production of) James Macpherson's reproduction of Ossian's epic poems.[112] Ferguson's nostalgia for the past seems to degenerate into atavism here.

Ferguson's Political Conservatism

Apart from the relatively modest cultural, educational and military solutions canvassed above there are no recommendations for the kind of far-reaching institutional or constitutional reforms that could accommodate the high levels of civic interest and participation Ferguson seemed so urgently to desire. And there are certainly no remedial suggestions for the problem of elite rule, overextension, mass exclusion and increasing centralization and bureaucratization.

Though there appears to be an egalitarian tenor to Ferguson's call for mass political participation we have seen that he opposed any formal power sharing that might have made it a reality. He was extremely wary of any levelling project, believing as he did that class distinctions were both natural and necessary for economic prosperity, the attainment of the 'ends of government' and the maintenance of order in large-scale societies.[113] Further, when pressed on the fate of specific colonies, his advertised disapproval of imperialism is abandoned in favour of what appears to be loyalty to Britain. In theory Ferguson condemned imperialism;[114] conceived military imperialism as the surest route to internal corruption; asserted the right of all nations to self-determination; and regarded the overextension brought on by imperialism as a threat to the virtue and liberty of conquering states.[115] And yet, in the case of the American revolt he defended Britain's right of imperial rule[116] and suggested that the problem could be resolved, not by radical change (i.e. secession) but by reform (i.e. granting the colony representation in parliament).[117] He adopted a similarly conservative line on the subject of Irish independence. Although he acknowledged that the grievances of the Irish should be taken seriously and advocated 'Equitable Measures for the improvement of their Condition and Propertys' he stopped short at the idea of granting independence.[118] Finally, apart from the militia scheme, there is no call for a halt to the seemingly relentless march towards increasing specialization, centralization and bureaucratization. This conservatism is perplexing – and cannot be attributed solely to significant shifts in thinking over time – but it can be explained largely in terms of Ferguson's prior intellectual commitments, namely his social science and gradualist historiography.

Ferguson tended to regard *gradual* progress in a positive light but was consistently averse to radical political innovation of any kind. Large scale tampering is always disastrous; history has taught us 'that there is no time of more danger than those times of ... enthusiastic expectation, in which mankind are bent on great and hazardous change'.[119] Our greatest achievements do not occur overnight but 'imperceptibly arise ... in the ordinary course of things';[120] the slow evolution of our mores and 'establishments' is precisely what fits them to human needs; our wisdom and competence grow with and through our institutions. Revolutions bring rapid institutional changes with which we are ill-equipped

to cope because we have not developed and adapted with them.[121] Further, predicting 'all the consequences' and 'effects' of any 'innovation' is well 'above the reach of human wisdom'.[122] In general, Ferguson's attitude to all plans of reform seemed to harden with the years and with exposure to the realities of political change. Yet it is also important to note that this conservatism infuses all his work, including the early.[123]

Ferguson sought to avoid revisionism in any of the defective institutions or practices he identified because they were the products of our otherwise positive and progressive drives that generated the spontaneous order. It is better to put up with 'any trivial inconvenience attending the actual order of things' than to suffer the unforeseeable 'consequences' and 'effects' of change. To be sure, most governments have their 'defects' just 'as the walls or roof of the building in which we lodge may be insufficient', but revolutionaries should '*(b)eware* [they] *take not away so much of your supports at once as that the roof may fall in*'.[124] The Americans, for example, ought 'to acquiesce in the government which Providence has given' them 'until they are sure they do not change it for the worse'.[125] To Ferguson's mind, they were 'laying the seeds of … anarchy … civil wars' and, worst of all, 'military government';[126] they did not, he insisted, '*know what they [we]re doing*.'[127] Anyone who pushes for change 'not absolutely necessary to the safety of his country, is to be dreaded as a most dangerous enemy … to the peace and good order of their country'.[128] The radical reformer is like an insane 'architect' who presents 'his plan' to the commissioning client long 'after the house is built'.[129]

It is worth noting here that Ferguson is not absolute in his conservatism. He was prepared to advocate change and perhaps even revolution but only if it could be shown that the existing regime was a state of political slavery that suppressed civic virtue. But his general position is that the present order, however seemingly intolerable, is almost always preferable to 'innovation' which should only ever be a 'last remedy'.[130] Further, Ferguson considered as perfectly acceptable some judicious tinkering to improve existing political arrangements; like Burke, he thought that minor reform was sometimes permissible in order to prevent a degenerative trend that might otherwise lead to complete revolution or 'innovation'.[131]

Ferguson's support for the existing order, no matter how seemingly unjust, was not, therefore, necessarily based on blind loyalty to Britain or weakness of resolve but can be linked to his commitment to a universe he conceived as already beneficently, providentially, and therefore properly ordered.[132] He tells us that it is willed by providence that 'man … accommodate himself to [institutional] forms' not the other way round.[133] The study of nature's laws shows us that history has its own rationale; the laws of spontaneous order demonstrate the naturalness and inevitability of gradual progress and the corresponding inad-

visability of radical reform. The role of human agents is to foster appropriate change but only in an incremental fashion. Since 'men' are obviously 'the actors in this political scene ... it behoves them to know the good of which they are susceptible, and the evil to which they are exposed'.[134] In general, though, resignation to the established order is equated with wisdom and a dedication to the universal good. Any disturbance to the social fabric is an act of unsociability and even heresy: '[W]e are ill members of society, or unwilling instruments in the hand of God' when 'we do our utmost to counteract our nature, to quit our station, and to undo ourselves'.[135]

Concluding Remarks

Ferguson's vision of the good polity presents many challenges to those looking for neat or synthetic schemas. In terms of traditions his work is transitional, referring constantly to the past and the concerns of classical antiquity while embracing progress, commercialism and enlightenment. His desire to forge a hybrid (i.e. liberal-Stoic) approach to politics flows from his attitude that the social world is too complicated to be comprehended under a few *a priori* principles as well as his sincere hope that prosperity and enlightenment did not have to mean the annihilation of political virtue. Ferguson's liberal-Stoic response to the question: 'What is the good polity?' is an attempt to comprehend and embrace both progress – as a consequence of spontaneously generated natural laws – and his regret at some of its effects. It is also an attempt to balance the relationship between the gradualist and progressivist aspects of the spontaneous order framework. In diagnosing what is best for life in a polity Ferguson's diagnosis and remedies are classical in inspiration. But he is constrained in how far he can take such remedies due to his simultaneous commitment to progress and modernity. There is to be no general reversal of specialized functions or the trend towards bureaucratization; no decentralization of power; no decolonization; and no expansion of the franchise. Within the narrow bounds of the conceptual space he imposed upon himself and the historical circumstances that he approved of (and were in any case beyond his control) Ferguson sought to discover effective strategies by which to preserve some semblance of a classical ideal of citizenship.

Although it has been argued that Ferguson's simultaneous embrace of progress on the one hand, and resistance to radical change on the other, is basically consistent in terms of the spontaneous order commitment, there are certainly awkward moments: His advocacy of the use of citizen militias definitely compromises his general belief in the naturalness of progress and change, as does his cultural atavism. Similarly, his attitude to American and Irish independence is inconsistent with his advertised position on imperialism while his conserva-

tive attitude to suffrage reform, the restrictive nature of his militia scheme and his general failure to provide for mass political engagement is discrepant with his abiding fear of political quietism.

In theory, the good polity should be allowed to emerge gradually and spontaneously; it should not be overgrown, especially by such artificial means as military imperialism; its constitution should not be despotic and in large-scale societies it should be mixed. Most of all it should be kept vital by an alert, factious, fractious and active populace. Yet, in terms of his ultimate commitments, Ferguson does not find much room for these desiderata. Perhaps he believes that the retention of mixed monarchy, the limited militia scheme and a civics education programme are sufficient to keep the political realm vital and offset the damaging effects of progress. It is also likely that his desire for order was more powerful than he was prepared to acknowledge, causing him to sacrifice such other key values as self-determination (anti-imperialism) and political activism.

7 ADAM FERGUSON AND ENLIGHTENED PROVINCIAL IDEOLOGY IN SCOTLAND

Michael Kugler

There is a glint of truth in Walter Bagehot's claim that Adam Smith's Glasgow lectures on moral philosophy boiled down to a narrative of humanity's rise from savagery 'to be a Scotchman'.[1] Eighteenth-century Scots intellectuals perceived Scotland to be in the midst of an unprecedented and rapid transformation into a commercialized and sophisticated urban society. They inherited the legacy of a formerly independent nation now incorporated into a powerful commercial British Empire. At the same time they understood themselves, to perhaps a greater degree than before, as members of a print-driven, polite, Europe-wide Republic of Letters. Writing in a variety of venues on this transformation and its immediate and future setting, such men as Adam Smith, David Hume and Adam Ferguson simultaneously explained and diagnosed Scotland's new circumstances. In retrospect we might say that these Scots (and many other Europeans) confronted the development of the moral, social and economic characteristics of modern urban civilization. Bagehot shrewdly noticed that by investigating the origins and nature of civilization, enlightened Scots were also scrutinizing their own country's modern transformation. In a tone of modest celebration Alexander Wedderburn declared this self-consciousness in his preface to the first edition of the *Edinburgh Review* of 1755.[2] Scotland's barbaric and socially narrow past was over; the nation had entered a new age of polite cultural sophistication. That kind of retrospective account of achievement could appear, as it did to Bagehot, smug, even complacent. Especially after the French Revolution, such a history of civilization might seem to defend a stable type of modernity. The French had tragically pursued a different type of modernity, what Benjamin Constant might have called 'ancient liberty' immoderately revived.[3]

The polite Augustan tones of Scottish moral reflection might seem complacent. Yet they were anything but smug. Scholarship on enlightenment Scotland often refers to economic, political and religious tensions those Scots experienced

in their corner of a developing modern world.[4] Read carefully, we can discover how in significant ways the Scots were not clichéd proponents of some kind of 'Enlightenment Project'. They often rounded on their own age to challenge claims to rational certainty or reform and to reproach the pretence of escaping one's own traditions.[5] Adam Ferguson was one such enlightened critic of certain characteristics of the Republic of Letters and modern society. His European reputation, particularly in Germany, went hand in hand with his telling challenges to the modern West.[6] He taught and wrote on that peculiar eighteenth-century subject, moral philosophy, in intimate relation to natural theology, within the cultural flexibility of the Scottish Reform tradition dating from Calvin (and perhaps stretching back to St Augustine). Stoic moral thought provided a major connecting ligament between Ferguson's theology and moral philosophy. The moral philosophical question, 'How then should we live?' assumed that any answer would include an account of civic life under the broad canopy of God's created order.[7]

But Stoic Christianity was the philosophical faith of men confronting trials. Its attraction lay in its promise of inner personal order in times of abrupt change; and here is a clue to the character of this man. Scholars have concentrated on Ferguson the sociologist, on the moralist and political theorist. The disputes among them seem to emerge in evaluating his diagnosis of the moral health of modern society. He might well have been among the founding thinkers of not only modern sociology but also liberalism, concentrating upon the fundamental nature of human freedom in modern civic and economic life. A strong case can also be made for Ferguson as a conservative thinker in the tradition of Edmund Burke, also a champion of modern liberty but with particular suspicion of the advancing power of the modern interventionist state.[8] Recent accounts have emphasized Ferguson's combination of a vivid civic agonism and Christian Stoicism.[9] Historians, however, have concentrated on recovering Ferguson's moral philosophy within the richest possible historical setting.[10] We should start in this way if we want to know as clearly as possible what Ferguson hoped to accomplish.

A particular set of circumstances provoked and gave shape to Ferguson's broad moral philosophical outlook, what I call his 'provincial ideology'.[11] He responded to what he perceived to be Scotland's recent economic and cultural development, its relatively new condition of political and even cultural dependence. His was one of a variety of self-conscious narratives by intellectuals from the small culturally dependent regions of Europe. They perceived a major distinction between the cultural backwardness of their own region and the national capital's political authority and cultural sophistication. That distinction was a kind of 'distance' marked by the provincial's sense that he or she lived far from a vital cultural center.[12] The provincial intellectual expressed his regional identity

in recipes for social behaviour and action derived in part from his experience in that community.[13] The provincial was self-conscious that she was a member of a backward region, but that did not include the defence of narrow or isolationist agendas. Such a provincial considered his or her regional circumstances as sufficiently small and intimate enough to encourage the development of moral virtue towards proper social action, all of which contrasted the perceived moral corruption of the larger metropolitan centres of more advanced nations. Yet those advanced cultures, the provincial hoped, would offer useful models of enlightened civilization. The provincial intellectual then walked the difficult path between idealizing his home culture and reforming it; between criticizing advanced cultures for moral corruption and emulating them as models of advanced civilization and polite learning. To further complicate the story, Scottish provincial intellectuals considered themselves members of the European Republic of Letters. Without a doubt, such persons had complex and competing loyalties to different communities.

The Character of Provincial Ideology

A provincial ideology was the social and moral recipe for reconciling the integrity and convictions of the small home regions to the dynamic demands of modern civilization. In Ferguson's version, he seemed to worry over the close of the Renaissance dream of active citizen participation in republics based on the ancient model. He had deep concerns about the moral consequences of living in a dynamic consumer culture of mounting debt and moveable property. The spread of literacy, the growing market of diverse printed opinion and the emergence of a culture of conversation challenged traditional practice and authority. Urban commercial centres encouraged social anonymity. Colonial empires (ruled by expanding state bureaucracies) and highly competitive overseas trade were to be defended by large professional military forces financed by a state-instituted national debt. One of Ferguson's greatest concerns was the lasting effects of labour and intellectual specialization upon the human personality. For him these facts of European life showed no signs of diminishment. While the term 'modern' itself may have meant something different for Ferguson, his descriptions and diagnoses, as well as his prescriptions for moral and political reform, coincide with crucial elements of the modern world.[14]

Ferguson's provincial point of view was ideological in that it was a conviction-driven narrative aimed towards achieving a proper, just political culture. His concern may be summarized in the following way. Each of the above symptoms of the modern world created opportunities for individual advancement in wealth, creativity and knowledge. Yet those moral and political forces pressed back against that independence, challenging the individual citizen's moral integ-

rity. What explanation and treatment did a moral diagnostician like Ferguson recommend? A provincial ideology defended a narrative of civil society from the local perspective. 'Provincial' was not bigoted localism. When using the word 'provincial' Ferguson's contemporaries meant a member of a subject region ruled by distant imperial authority. It suggested loss of independence, and even the assertion of Scottish independence despite the Union settlement. My use of 'provincial' picks up that notion of asserted independence. My redefinition of the term is therefore slightly anachronistic, but it does not I believe distort the evidence of Scottish self-consciousness.[15]

Some Scots asserted this cultural self-consciousness as outsiders in an English-dominated culture, James Boswell especially, but also occasionally Hume and even at times Alexander Carlyle. Ferguson did not. But like Boswell and Hume, he did seem to build a creative, compelling moral narrative about contemporary society from his circumstances as a Scot in an English culture and as a subject of British imperial civilization. Ferguson attempted to explain the nature of vital civic life in a politically dependent Scotland, now enjoying only a few independent institutions that might nourish the praiseworthy moral character of an independent civic personality.[16]

To a large degree this ideal civic personality was to be constructed of local materials. Yet Ferguson and other Scots worked out their role as citizen-intellectuals in both a European and a British setting. Europe represented the commercial and cultural republic for a widespread, vocal literary and artistic elite. They belonged to an 'imagined community' made possible by printed works and conversation networks of coffee houses, salons, and metropolitan and provincial learned societies.[17] With their way blazed by the reputation of their published works, Hume and Ferguson could travel to France and meet the great literati. The literati could correspond with one another across Europe or the Atlantic, as did Ferguson and D'Holbach. They could learn the shared polite habits that made face to face relations possible and even pleasurable. They combined to form a true 'Republic of Letters'.[18] For some time Scots had been cultural participants in this Europe through Protestant contacts, but since the seventeenth century they were woven into it through print and shared natural and moral philosophical interests.

The Scots also were part of 'Great Britain', an expanding and powerful commercial and military empire. 'Britain' as a unifying political or cultural notion had been in play since 1603, but the pressure to sort out the exact relationship had increased in the last quarter of the century between these interdependent neighbours. The Scots' political leadership exchanged their sovereignty in 1707 for economic and political stability. This new, unique political relationship placed even more pressure on them to work out an explanation of their relationship with their cultural cousins to the south. For the generation of Scots born

around or after the Union, being 'Scottish' had to be somehow worked out in relation to membership or partnership in a British commercial empire. Though 'subtle disciples of European intellectual traditions', Fania Oz-Salzberger writes, Scottish moral philosophy in the political mode exhibited

> a powerful sense of Scotland's incomparable position as a kingdom within the British union, set apart by its church and jurisprudence, and by its singular decision to trade sovereignty for empire. Nowhere is this apparent tension more pronounced than in the field of political theory.[19]

Considering the humanist legacy of the Renaissance, these new circumstances raised serious problems for the very idea of the independent and civic person. In the long tradition of Christian ethics and earlier, in classical ethics and political thought, the individual's status as a morally responsible actor depended upon social and political independence. The boldest of such men appeared in the ancient republican narratives. After the demise of the independent polis, reflection on personal duty was strongest among the Stoics and Epicureans. From the Renaissance through the seventeenth century Christian ethical reflection adopted Stoic, or (less often) Epicurean, accounts of the passions (and their appropriate constraints), as well as Stoic notions of civic responsibility.[20] For that generation of Scots raised in 'North Britain', they would be hard pressed to find contemporary models of civic independence in highly specialized commercial capitals that no longer enjoyed political independence. True moral independence seemed to require political independence as its necessary condition. It was left to David Hume to suggest creative ways in which moral duty and a robust personality were possible without the nourishing matrix of the republic. Even if Hume could celebrate the order, stability and opportunity of modern commercial society, his fare-thee-well to the stern morals and zealous passions of Christian Stoicism did not ride well with others. Adam Ferguson was grateful for a stable society made possible by a mixed monarchy and commercial empire. Yet he had great misgivings about a revived Epicurean culture of self-satisfaction constituted, in part, by supposedly safe, moderate desires. Since Scotland was now an incorporated region, increasingly integrated into a rich commercial empire, what kind of civic personality would evolve in that environment? How should the moral scientist understand that society and its citizens?

Like any broad interpretation, my portrait of Ferguson's complex moral and political account has its contestable points. How could Enlightened Scotland be, as Roger Emerson's objection maintains, at the vanguard of Europe's Republic of Letters and remain nonetheless a cultural dependency of England?[21] In his argument the assertion of 'provincial ideology' wrongly implies that the Scottish Enlightenment was fuelled by anxiety over a supposed cultural inferiority in comparison to elite English sophistication.[22] But what matters were the

cultural convictions Scots expressed about themselves. In this instance the term 'provincial' remains useful. Emerson himself uses it to mean those who lived on the geographic periphery of the British Empire, those holding British imperial convictions and loyalties, or the inhabitants of a dependent region ruled by an imperial metropolis, as in the ancient Roman Empire. Finally, it could mean a local urban intellectual culture outside London, whether Edinburgh or Birmingham. 'Independent' Scots, including Jacobites, Episcopalians or Roman Catholics, remained committed to a distinctively Scottish nation. Scots committed to a 'North Britain' expected assimilation into a *Greater* Britain beneficial to their nation, requiring the elimination of political and cultural barriers to their full partnership.[23]

Post-Union Scots in fact did discuss the possibility that they were now 'provincials', typically in the pejorative meaning of the term.[24] Wedderburn's preface to the *Edinburgh Review* praised the Union as the political opportunity for Scots to imitate cultural models from its more sophisticated southern partner, guiding Scotland from its cultural adolescence to adulthood.[25] James Boswell's ethnic self-consciousness was an extreme version of a common Scottish tendency to second-guess their status as partners in the British civic experiment. Though confident they at times worried that in the south their achievements and status would be sold cheap.

Academic and literary Scotland was a late humanist neoclassical culture, but with its reputation at risk under the seventeenth-century's legacy of violent Christian bigotry. This politicized Scottish historical writing in distinctive ways.[26] The Union and pressure to Anglicize forced educated Scots to round on their own history, religious identity and even manner of speaking and writing. Scotland was also peculiar in having a nearby indigenous population considered by its rulers to be primitive and benighted. Lowland Scots in the cities reflected on the meaning and tensions created by economic modernity and a society and culture experiencing the diminishing moral authority of Protestantism.[27] As Franco Venturi suggested many years ago, the strains of modernity seemed more acute in a Lowland Scotland hard against the frontier inhabited by a so-called barbarian population.[28] For Scottish philosophers and historians like Ferguson, the crucial period was that of 1745–63, in which the British fought both to retain and to expand their empire.[29]

The Early Development of Ferguson's Provincial Ideology

Ferguson's moral convictions and worries developed out of these circumstances. He was a chaplain to a Highland regiment from 1745 to 1754, largely on his ties to the patron of the position (the House of Atholl), the strength of his skills in the Gaelic language and his strong loyalties to the Hanoverian regime. Ferguson

had firsthand knowledge of the British civilization and of its frontiers in Scotland and Ireland.[30] He read widely concerning the settlement of North America, with particular interest in its original population. Before that and above all, he was a student of the classics. Roman republican history and Stoic philosophy gave him a particularly intense account of citizen zeal in warlike and on occasion fairly primitive circumstances. Those heroes were not the polished knights of Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad*. Therefore, Ferguson's classical men took on sharper relief from his direct contact with what he and contemporaries considered to be the aboriginal peoples of the Highlands, in Ireland and from his reading on North America's Indians. Though he grew up in Perthshire, a Highland region that enjoyed substantial contact with Lowland Scots, he left there at eight to attend school in St Andrews. Through his reading of the classics and contemporary social theory it seems Ferguson idealized the people of his childhood and later intermittent contact. A letter from late in 1748 followed his leave from his regiment when he took a walking expedition through the Perthshire mountains. In it he exhibited his strong convictions about those people's virtues.

> If I had not been in the Highlands of Scotland, I might be of their mind who think the inhabitants of Paris and Versailles the only polite people in the world. It is truly wonderful to see persons of every sex and age, who never traveled beyond the nearest mountain, possess themselves perfectly, perform acts of kindness with an aspect of dignity, and a perfect discernment of what is proper to oblige. This is seldom to be seen in our cities, or in our capital; but a person among the mountains, who thinks himself nobly born, considers courtesy as the test of his rank. He never saw a superior, and does not know what it is to be embarrassed. He has an ingenuous deference for those who have seen more of the world than himself; but never saw the neglect of others assumed as a mark of superiority.[31]

The people of this passage by no means resemble the dangerous, rebellious and barbarous Gaels of Hanoverian nightmares. But they seem hardly realistic either: Highland virtue and character remained untouched by luxury or artificial refinement. Later, as he shaped his experiences, convictions and research into writing, the calm Augustan prose disguised to some degree Ferguson's rather unusual, even at times Rousseauian affection for the grubby, rude inhabitants of ancient Sparta and early Rome.

Stoic philosophy provided the philosophical underpinning for his account of the savage republicans, sealed by the later approval of Christian humanists, particularly John Calvin. Stoicism also played a part in providing the ethical theory for the jurisprudential tradition of comparative legal history. This jurisprudential enterprise made a key contribution to the early social science comparison of different societies at similar stages in their development.[32] Natural theology underwrote Ferguson's developing providentialism. The complexity and appar-

ently spontaneous order of human society grew out of human capacities at work in the environment of the created order, put into place by God to accomplish those ends.[33] It is no surprise that Ferguson was eventually compelled to respond to the great heretics of his age, Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Mandeville. Each of these writers drew attention to the fears of contemporary preachers, moral writers and supporters of Britain's various Societies for the Reformation of Manners. The advocates for virtue imagined an increasingly immoral society awash with speculation, luxury, gambling, drunkenness and theatre-going, all to the neglect of church attendance and the family.[34] Hobbes and Mandeville highlighted the selfish, sometimes violent baseness of human nature; however, instead of battling it they suggested building a new civil society upon immorality, properly tamed. It was not unusual for Scots of Ferguson's generation to attack Hobbes and Mandeville. Ferguson conceded that luxury, polished manners and commercial individualism were morally problematic, but refused to abandon his Stoic contention that self-discipline was possible and necessary.

He was not alone in these reflections. His Scottish colleagues speculated on the similarities between ancient Scots and the Greeks and Romans.[35] A revived interest in Homer's poems guided growing attention to the Scottish Highlands, beginning formally with the Aberdeen professor Thomas Blackwell's *The Life and Writings of Homer* (1736).[36] The Rebellion of 1745 was a major turning point in forceful, practical speculation on the origin and nature of civilization. Outraged by the Pretender's successful invasion of Lowland Scotland with clan forces, Ferguson and his friends had to explain how an advanced commercial society failed to defend itself against primitive troops. This spur to Scottish militia agitation was just part of the broader attempt to explain martial virtue and its possibility in modern society.[37]

The Rebellion also marked a turning point in clerical speculation on Scottish culture. Since 1733 philanthropic societies like the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SSPCK), modelled on English societies for the reformation of manners, contributed to the debate over the civilization of the Highlands and fought the effects of empire upon Scottish manners. Since 1744 SSPCK sermons, particularly those of Robert Wallace, Hugh Blair, James Bonar and William Robertson had highlighted the particular nature of the Scottish Highlands and the manners of its inhabitants, an attention scarcely to be found in such sermons before the Rebellion.[38] The Rebellion itself launched wave upon wave of investigation, explanation and programmes for reform.[39] Such subjects increasingly stood out in the debates of the Select Society after 1756, of which Ferguson was a member.[40] The plans for reshaping the character of the Highlands by introducing farming, industry, English and Protestantism were hardly new. What had changed was the account itself. 'Manners' became the tool for explaining differences between Highlanders and Lowlanders. Scots

began to apply a bold new social science model to figure out why the Lowlands had advanced, and why Highland backwardness had endured. These speculations were crucial for Scots reflecting upon how their country had progressed from out of what they perceived to be ignorance and bigotry a century earlier. Would such studies of the Highlands suggest clues about Scotland's future?

As the only Gaelic speaker among his circle of young, ambitious clerical and literary friends Ferguson stood out for his peculiar Highland background. For them he must have been the local 'expert' on all things Gaelic though, as I have suggested, one who early on idealized the Highlands as morally upright in its social simplicity.[41] At this time he had begun a work on the progress of humanity. It is not clear where this was taking him, but it at least suggests that at its heart lay the question of manners, probably in the comparison of ancient, primitive and modern, as well as an explanation of cultural change.[42] The debate over John Home's *Douglas* in 1757 highlighted Scottish fears of galloping luxury and immorality, particularly among their youth; Ferguson was an important participant in this debate.[43] His early interests in classical republicanism and comparative societies could only have been stimulated and guided by these dynamic circumstances of investigation into and speculation about the nature of the Scottish Highlands (and how to civilize them), and the continuing debate over the moral implications of Scotland's future role in modern, commercial Britain.

So, in 1760 as he assumed his first academic position at Edinburgh in Natural Philosophy, Ferguson drew a wide and diverse collection of concerns into his single person. His affection for the most 'rude' of the ancients separated him from many of his friends with the possible exception of John Home. He had seen the British Empire at work refashioning aboriginals into Britons; his later work suggests that he approved in broad terms with those ends but had significant reservations about the cultural and moral transformation achieved. Scots commented widely on Britain's empire and the growing wealth and luxury of Britons at home, best seen in its large cities such as London and clearly evident in smaller provincial capitals like Glasgow and Edinburgh.[44] Ferguson had the classical training to look at the Highlands through ancient eyes; his Highland-line youth gave him a formative experience among a people he apparently considered to resemble the ancients of which he read. Each of these elements contributed to his later diagnoses and remedies for Britain's modern problems.

At about the same time Ferguson began teaching natural philosophy at Edinburgh, his young friend James Macpherson published the first of his 'translations' of what would later be known as *Ossian* (1762) and *Temora* (1765). Encouraged by Ferguson, Hugh Blair and John Home, Macpherson returned to the Highlands for more oral epics. These poems had a powerful effect on the European imagination. As John Dwyer has argued, the poems are less about the

violent but plain moral exemplars identified with savagery than assertions of modern sentimental refinement. Macpherson's ancient Scots were warmhearted men of simple affections and great communal virtues. They passionately loved their friends and family; they attacked enemies without regret or fear; and living in the twilight of their world, they had a sublime tragic sense of the frailty of human life. In all they were the best versions of the sentimental self-image of Ferguson and his contemporaries.[45]

It is tempting to imagine conversations between the young Highlander eager for the approval of his venerated mentors, and a somewhat older Ferguson nursing a longstanding interest in the comparison of civilized and savage peoples.[46] Macpherson's Ossianic quest and the resulting epic verse cast the ancient Scots as magnanimous forbearers worthy of Homer, fulfilling the promise first laid out by Blackwell a quarter-century earlier. Ferguson had enormous affection for Macpherson, but his educated opinion of the poetry is hard to settle. He idealized the moral character and simple lives of contemporary Highlanders long before he met Macpherson or began work on *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*. It is worth speculating on the possible provocation *Ossian* gave to Ferguson's own account of barbarity and moral philosophy published a handful of years later in 1767. On the surface, his portrait of primitive men in the *Essay* shares certain qualities with those of Macpherson. Their deep affection and responsibility for one another bound them to their community. They exhibited extraordinary martial prowess. But to recover the primitive human Ferguson would travel beyond Macpherson's sublime modern Scots in ancient garb. He celebrated a rougher, cruder, and to him, more authentic primitive. From Scotland's ancient tradition – altogether true for Ferguson – what elements might have survived that could be activated and nurtured to serve modern Scotland?

Rude Societies in Ferguson's Provincial Ideology

Ferguson sharply highlighted the rough, unpolished nature of the ancient Spartans and contemporary North American Indians. Considering both his knowledge of Macpherson's work and his role in encouraging it, it is hard to imagine him writing those passages in the *Essay* without sensing that he was setting right the overly polite and sentimental picture offered by his younger friend.[47] He certainly joined the line of European writers praising the primitive peoples for their moral rectitude, courage and intense, even sacrificial, affection for one another. He knew his friend Hume, and Voltaire in France, found such savage-mongering anachronistically unrealistic. But his primitives, 'savages' and 'barbarians' as he called them in fairly technical terms, were not gentle. One particularly powerful passage in the *Essay* (Part 4, Section 4: 'Of the Manners of Polished and Commercial Nations') asks the reader to travel back to ancient

Greece; as Ferguson proceeds, one begins to realize he is moving deftly from fifth-century Sparta to Athens. The Greeks of both countries lived in harsh, even squalid conditions. They were poor; they were suspicious of one another's ambitions. They tolerated, nay thrived, on civil dissent, upon which often followed quarrels, abuse or violence. 'When viewed on this side, the ancient nations have but a sorry plea for esteem with the inhabitants of modern Europe, who profess to carry the civilities of peace into the practice of war; and who value the praise of indiscriminate lenity at a higher rate than even that of military prowess, or the love of their country.' His conclusion? 'That he could not understand how scholars, fine gentlemen, and even women, should combine to admire a people, who so little resemble themselves.' Ferguson's Gulliver, representing of his age's polished commercial gentlemen, sighs: 'But what pleases me most, is, that I am likely to get a passage from hence, and bid farewell to this wretched country'.[48]

But that was Ferguson's precise point. His contemporaries, most publicly Hume and Smith, understood the rough vehemence of the ancients but failed to realize how such a virtuous character was necessary for true human contentment and so critical to a vibrant community.

> Their ardent attachment to their country; their contempt of suffering, and of death, in its cause; their manly apprehensions of personal independence, which rendered every individual, even under tottering establishments, and imperfect laws, the guardian of freedom to his fellow-citizens; their activity of mind; in short, their penetration, the ability of their conduct, and force of their spirit, have gained them the first rank among nations.
>
> If their animosities were great, their affections were proportionate; they, perhaps, loved, where we are not merciful, but only irresolute. After all, the merit of a man is determined by his candour and generosity to his associates, by his zeal for national objects, and by his vigour in maintaining political rights; not by moderation alone, which proceeds frequently from indifference to national and public interests, and which serves to relax the nerves on which the force of a private as well as a public character depends.[49]

Through a filter of late-Renaissance Augustinian Christianity, Ferguson offered his contemporaries the models of morally exemplary ancients whose passionate selves were disciplined under a neo-Stoic rational will.[50] Ferguson criticized his contemporaries for a sophisticated, cultural division of labour that encouraged selfish disregard for the community and discouraged the training of citizen virtues.[51] Such passages cannot be gestured aside; Ferguson wrote in this spirit throughout the *Essay* and later in the work probably closest to his heart, the *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (1783).

It is difficult to figure out how Ferguson would reconcile that primitive character to his clear conviction that modern commercial culture was in Europe, and in Britain, to stay.[52] In fact, by 1792 he would proceed – especially in his revised

moral philosophy lectures, *Principles of Moral and Political Science* – to write of the superior and praiseworthy disciplines, including those of modern war, developed in advanced commercial societies.[53] Ferguson had his work cut out for him reconciling the greater virtues described above to the lesser virtues of commercial society. The practice and effect of the latter distracted the citizen from those virtues nurturing civic life. Modern European manners emerged from the conjoining of chivalric and commercial manners, which Ferguson discounted in comparison to the more noble character of republican manners.[54] The advance of the division of labour rendered citizens as well as soldiers more efficient practitioners of their crafts, perhaps even more self-disciplined in them, but also divided their personalities in ways that rendered them less zealous friends and patriots. Yet the lesser virtues made decent lives possible for many Europeans; in contemporary Britain they were closely joined to the peculiar liberty enjoyed by Ferguson and his contemporaries.[55] But provincials like the Scots – ambitious, comparatively poor and self-conscious of the barriers still existing to their success in a united Britain – were perhaps even more susceptible to the debilitating moral effects of commercial empire. What could be done to nurture a properly civic moral character among Scots?

Provincial Ideology and Confederated States

Ferguson did not lay out the solution in any simple form. Britain's mixed monarchy was close to his ideal. In this context, however, I want to suggest another way in which Ferguson imagined a reconciliation of the civic tradition to commercial modernity. Ferguson's prescription for this modern civic dilemma depended upon models from the federative unions of the ancient Greeks and Romans. (This was not unusual. As John Brewer has suggested, outside England the typical provincial view of the British state was federal.[56]) Such models illustrated how unity could ensure strength against national enemies, while maintaining enough regional, ethnic and cultural distinctiveness to limit imperial despotism and to energize local civic conviction.[57] Ferguson considered Great Britain to be a justly constructed union of formerly independent states, with distinctive histories and cultures, which nonetheless shared a common language and constitution of political liberty. 'Provincial ideology', then was for Ferguson partly the reality of Great Britain's political union of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. But those regional communities were now experiencing the levelling of their manners by cosmopolitan, commercial opportunities and the loss of their peculiar social bonds. These facts provide an important partial explanation of Ferguson's support for a Scottish citizen militia. When the issue really took hold in the later 1750s, William Pitt's government sought to create a militia for England but to deny one to Scotland. Patriotic Scots asserted that bands of Scottish citi-

zen-soldiers could effectively protect Britain's northern coast. They would also give the Scots a crucible for nurturing local patriotism that in time of war was fundamentally necessary if their localism could be reconciled to a larger British patriotism. Hence Alexander Carlyle's rejoinder: to deny the Scots a militia was to render them conquered 'provincials'.[58]

In such a provincial setting, Ferguson's long study of Greece and, in particular, Rome gave him hope. Scotland, already enjoying independent institutions of law, university and church, needed only the discipline and conviction from training at arms to have the necessities to serve as a virtuous province in the British union. Furthermore, a nation of virtuous provinces might just hold off the moral decay endemic to a great commercial empire like Britain's. I would even venture the possibility that Ferguson believed that the Scottish Highlands, properly ordered and ruled, could act as a reservoir of virtue against the moral decay inherent in modern commercial society and empire in general. Recall his early conviction that the impoverished Highland Scots were more truly polite and generously hospitable than the court society of Versailles. In the *Essay* he returned to the sense that savage and barbarous peoples exhibited a transparent graciousness typically called 'natural', though like Hume, Ferguson found the distinction between 'nature' and 'art' to be of little help as a social diagnostic.[59] Despite Samuel Johnson's 1773 lament, that he and Boswell had come too late to see the Highlanders in their primitive simplicity, they were far later than even they imagined.[60] Ferguson however seemed unaware that such a transformation had already taken place. In the *Essay* his idealized Highlanders appear more ancient than contemporaneous; rough but virtuous, martial and courageous, their hardiness matched by their virtuous simplicity. From the *Essay* to even thirty years later an unpublished dialogue depicting him and his Edinburgh friends on a journey into the glen, Ferguson imagined a Highland region quite distinct from the Lowlands.[61] Though far less sentimental than Macpherson in his portrait of the Highlands and its people, nonetheless Ferguson created a different fiction of the region. If Scotland was to endure and thrive as an equal partner with England, even as a distinctive region of Great Britain and its empire, the native martial vigour and simple manners of the Highlanders might be infused into the island's civic culture. His was the speculative side of convictions later to become official in Parliament's commissioning of Highland regiments around the Empire.[62]

Modern commerce and enlightened culture, the modern professional army built up from a relatively efficient fiscal bureaucracy, perhaps made despotism more likely or easier to accomplish in Europe.[63] 'Provincials' might not be able to hold off the corrupting effects of sophisticated modern society; they might not be able to defend themselves against a militarized despotism.[64] Though morally softened by increasingly polite, sophisticated participation in a modern com-

mercial culture, the modern citizen still might hold off the worst effects of moral decay if he retains basic civic liberty, benefits from a proper civic education, and participates in a modern citizen militia.

This seemed the last option left to Scots who considered themselves yet a distinctive people with a rich heritage of national culture. Ferguson enthusiastically promoted the survival of regional institutions that encouraged a sense of distinction within a larger British sovereignty. But his response to the civil dilemma of commercial success and moral decay is less satisfying in that, on one level, it seems too simple for, or rather unworthy of, the question he posed. It seems hard to imagine how the kinds of virtues Ferguson so valued could be encouraged and developed in the provincial matrix of dependent Scotland. The Christian Stoic in him at times seems satisfied to demand that the individual citizen alone must examine his heart and undertake the disciplined commitment to living up to the virtuous examples of classical history in order to remain 'possessed of himself.'[65] Provincial ideology then seems by necessity reduced to individual effort; there might be no other means of nurturing such character. On his terms such noble but stern moral simplicity seemed impossible or at best doomed in the modern Britain of his lifetime. His enduring power as a thinker is that he posed with such conviction the question of civic moral character in the modern world.

Ferguson's writings in this period exhibit his broad political and cultural understanding of the ideal of regional distinctiveness within a confederated state under central government authority. Ferguson never expressed the kind of personal, cultural soul-searching about his civil identity expressed by James Boswell, occasionally by David Hume, and even once or twice by Alexander Carlyle.[66] But the militia debate brought home to the Scots involved the painfully obvious fact that they were not really equal partners with England in the union of Great Britain. The militia agitation was one important means to make a reality of the Union's promise, where Scottish distinctiveness would endure by mutual agreement. For Ferguson local distinctiveness would contribute the kind of Scottish civil zeal necessary to Britain's national health.[67] A militia trained in modern military skills would concentrate and discipline that zeal, thereby providing a practical defense of North Britain.[68] Yet Ferguson's sense of local distinction was still just an ideal, one that would be tested in the real world by events of the next three decades.

The American Revolution provoked Ferguson's suspicions of empire's debilitating effects upon civil character. Initially sympathetic to the Americans, he questioned Parliamentary legislation intended to break colonial resistance to British rule. He favoured a negotiated settlement equitable to Parliamentary authority and American interests. But he soon found their rebellion self-serving, anarchic and an excuse for robbery. The Americans had no authority for their actions; their conception of liberty was deeply flawed; the British Parliament was

wholly justified in responding with military action. A united British Empire was justly stronger than any loose confederation of semi-autonomous regions, particularly one divided by a great ocean. Unity counted for everything in a hostile world, particularly one where France might take advantage of a colonial uprising against a weakened and distracted Britain. The revolutionaries turned to a definition of liberty under which no people could be governed without encouraging anarchy or the dispossession of legitimate authority from the state.[69]

However, Ferguson's rejection of the colonists's demands should not suggest that he had given up on his earlier championing of the ideal of federative regional states ruled by a strong central government. In the *Essay* Ferguson suggested that the increasing size of incorporating unions could prove unsatisfactory for citizens of the smaller state.[70] Though the American Revolution reaffirmed his British loyalties, Ferguson may have realized again the heightened threat imperial rule created for all subjects of the Empire. He worried that a geographically extensive empire would tempt the aggression of Britain's enemies, and ultimately harm Great Britain itself. Around 1772 Ferguson wrote to Macpherson, 'I dont wish to see this Countrey in Possession of many Provinces a Prey to Rapacity And perhaps an Engine to be turned against this Countrey itself. If this Countrey is to Subsist long enough till Engines destroy it from Abroad'.[71] In 1779 he discussed with his students the possibility that Scots enjoyed little enthusiasm for the Union with England.[72] In a 1780 letter to Lord Auckland on Irish independence, Ferguson expressed his precise convictions. He admired the Irish patriots and if Britain was free of threat from hostile states he would enthusiastically support Ireland's greater autonomy. 'My predilection is in favour of Small States & Separate Legislatures but I would carry that no farther with respect to the States I love than is consistent with their Safety.' Britain was still at war with Americans allied with France; nothing less than full unity could protect Great Britain, its empire *and* its regional peoples. The citizens of that kingdom were not conquered subjects; but they did owe a duty in protecting the integrity of the nation even as a member of an empire.[73] David Kettler seems correct in asserting that Ferguson's experience in 1778 negotiating with the Americans on behalf of the British government in the Carlisle Commission shifted his convictions, which in turn he tried to hand onto his moral philosophy students: the softening, if you will, of a rigid antagonism of empire against constitutional government.[74]

At this moment Ferguson was deep into the writing of what he considered his most important work, *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*. When published in 1783 it bore the standard narrative of Rome's rise from primitive isolation through expansionary successes, to the republic's internal moral decay and the rise of the dictatorship. As I suggested earlier, one of Ferguson's distinctive claims was his praise for the contentious political aggres-

sions of Roman citizens. He argued that as long as the Romans understood their individual ambitions within the limits of their duty, Rome could conduct imperial expansion with little real corrupting influence upon its citizens. Even though the Romans in general benefited from their military victories abroad, imperial success unleashed the typical hydra of corrupting consequences – wealth, professionalized armies, poorly supervised administrative power, Epicurean defenses of selfish ambition and the corruption of traditional Roman religious and moral constraints.

> We are apt to admire the empire of the Romans, as a model of national greatness and splendour; but the greatness we admire in this case, was ruinous to the virtue and happiness of mankind; it was found to be inconsistent with all the advantages which that conquering people had formerly enjoyed in the articles of government and manners.[75]

In speaking of 'we', Ferguson included himself and his readers in this critical evaluation of Rome's ill-fated successes. But overall there appears to be little of surprise in the *History* that Ferguson had not already seen in Montesquieu or in others. Ferguson would not have been too bothered by such a charge; he had admitted as much in the *Essay* almost twenty years earlier.

The Revolutionary War had not dampened Ferguson's intellectual adherence to some kind of confederated union of states. But the precise extent of local autonomy, he concluded, was limited by threats from abroad. Scotland might enjoy a degree of local cultural autonomy based on the survival of particular institutions; it is unclear what Ferguson's opinion might have been about similar circumstances in Ireland and Wales. But practically speaking, the American Revolution revealed how Ferguson paid homage to an ideal of confederated rule that – considering Britain's imperial, embattled status in the world – was simply impossible.

Conclusion

By 1790 another revolution would call into question the very foundations of Ferguson's classical paradigm. Initially, he and many British observers welcomed the French Revolution. The Revolutionaries at first seemed content with imitating the British experiment in representative government. Flattered by the imitation, those observers cautiously praised a reform movement bent on moderating French aristocratic and monarchic excesses. But Ferguson probably harboured suspicions early on; he had long told his students that any monarchy that rapidly adopted republican institutions would suffer a violent transition.[76] Through the remainder of his life his observation of the French Revolution is a fascinating insight into a forceful thinker's struggle to accommodate events to a long-cherished narrative. There is only a small space here in which to highlight

Ferguson's growing discomfort in the later 1790s with a republican France that simultaneously reminded him of his beloved Roman Republic but threatened Britain in a terrible drawn-out war. Ferguson found in those French soldiers a civic zeal echoing ancient Roman passion. Revolutionary France had generated a nation of citizen-soldiers aflame with patriotic courage. Ferguson admired such men all his life, using history and moral philosophy to celebrate them as moral and civic exemplars. As late as 1806 he doubted if European statesmen realized the tremendous democratizing transformation of the French citizenry.[77] Provoked, he even rewrote his university lectures as *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (1792) and revised his *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (1799). In doing so he accommodated his moral and political reflections to French events and added significant commentary on the Revolution itself.[78] Yet he did at times find his affection for ancient Rome besieged by the modern Rome threatening Britain from across the Channel.

Given his passion for the subject, it is fascinating to discover Ferguson rethinking his ideological commitment to that narrative. As Britain's war with republican France continued, the latter's civic energy deeply concerned him. If the now-liberated French people had really tapped into a volcano of republican conviction, how would the British defend themselves against this zealous, relentless opponent? By mid-decade Ferguson wondered if his long standing affection for the zealous citizens of such republics was misplaced. In 1796 he wrote that Britain's statesmen, unable to see beyond maintaining a national population and income, could not wrap their minds around patriotic French citizens willing to sacrifice everything for their nation's democratic glory.[79] In this new war, modern and commercial Britain seemed destined to play out the role of Carthage to France's Rome; and Ferguson ruefully knew how that struggle had turned out.[80] By 1797 he even admitted that observing French republican zeal in the war was undermining his affection for military citizen zeal.[81] The prospect of a long war with a democratic France left him quite fearful; he now re-evaluated his earlier praise for conflict in human society.[82] By the time Napoleon's coup occurred, it appeared that events in France were proceeding at a pace impossible in the ancient world. Having the republican tables turned on him and his country, watching in his old age an ancient European monarchy accelerate from republic to dictatorship in less than fifteen years created for Ferguson a deep kind of confusion. He had spent his life arguing that the careful study of the ancient Greeks and Romans was a school of virtue. But events since 1789 had moved so unpredictably rapidly that his confidence in his ability to understand was now close to evaporation.[83]

For many European scholars then, the French Revolution ended their affection for Rome as a civic model, and Greece became the new example. This would endure for some time.[84] Eventually the ability of historians to use the classical

past as any kind of paradigm would fade; Ferguson gives us a taste of the confusion and despair awaiting historians for whom the world was no longer made plain by the ancients. Ferguson was thus forced to consider how acceleration now characterized the modern world. France had jumped from constitutional monarchy to republic to tyranny in little more than a decade. At that moment the choice facing Ferguson seemed to be, like Tocqueville and Constant debating ancient versus modern liberty, between ancient heroism and modern tranquility. In the brutal choices of the modern state and society, perhaps Tacitus's judgment no longer held. Tranquility under authoritarianism might just be a better alternative to a vigorous, contentious liberty. The classical hero still inspired, but the cost of imitating him was perhaps too high.

But Ferguson's momentary despair was not his final word on his complex defence of dynamic civil commitment in a modern commercial culture. As a Christian Stoic he was critical of over-refinement and the intellectual division of labour unworthy of the social creatures endowed by God with capacities for other-directed virtue. His sensibilities seem Augustinian, even though that designation may have puzzled him. The fragile, divided personality beset by distractions and seductions; the modern self rooted into one labour-divided task and therefore even more hungry for the variety of diversions and entertainments, ever more the victim of fads – this person seems familiar to us. He described and lamented the isolated modern individuals increasingly beholden to distant, powerful central governments. He tried to defend a whole, civic self without psychological seams, capable of making a home in the rapidly changing print-driven world emerging throughout Europe. As Pocock has implied, Ferguson at times seems to reduce the scope of civil health and potential corruption to the lone citizen 'possessed of himself' in Christian-Stoic self-disciplines. His antidote to the psychological and moral pressures of modern commercial society and empire, a provincial ideology, defended a community of independent citizens united by necessity to a larger state. If so, Ferguson's moral response to modernity reflected some of the very problems he attempted to analyse and remedy.

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8 'BUT ART ITSELF IS NATURAL TO MAN': FERGUSON AND THE PRINCIPLE OF SIMULTANEITY

Christopher J. Berry

One of the central characteristics of the social thought of the group of thinkers who collectively constitute the Scottish Enlightenment is their adoption of a stadial account of social development. This is usually labelled the 'four stages theory' though in fact explicit avowals in published work are not as common as might be supposed. Typically it is associated with Adam Smith (pre-eminently) but other names, such as those of John Millar, William Robertson and Lord Kames, are usually invoked. David Hume is acknowledged not to have subscribed to it explicitly, though passages in his *Political Discourses* (1752), in particular, betray clear recognition of step-changes in the history of commerce and the refinement of arts. Adam Ferguson is another whose relation to this theory is not straightforward.

A preliminary measure is to note that there are clear expressions in Ferguson's work of a stadial approach in its presumptively typical form. Two are worthy of note. One occurs in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* where he appropriates, without acknowledgement, Baron de Montesquieu's division between savage and barbarian nations.[1] Moreover, the difference between these 'nations' is made in terms of 'property' – savages are not acquainted with it, barbarians are albeit without formal legal form.[2] In addition, in a manner typical of the four-stages version, savages are essentially hunter-gatherers, although some 'rude agriculture' may be practised (for Montesquieu the distinction was explicitly between *chasseurs* and *pasteurs*). Both savage and barbarian societies are labelled as 'rude' and thus can be contrasted with 'civilised'.[3] This latter more generic contrast is also stadial. Indeed, in the same context that he distinguishes savage and barbarian, Ferguson remarks that 'property is a matter of progress' and identifies as the 'principal distinction in the advanced state of mechanic and commercial arts' that there is a 'habit' formed of taking 'a view to distant objects'.

What this signifies, typical of the underlying psychology of the four-stages,[4] is the necessity to separate property from possession to enable 'industry' to develop and to overcome the disposition of the 'uncivilized' to live indolently always in the present.[5] A second, more straightforward expression occurs in the *Institutes of Moral Philosophy*. There he lists the arts that men 'practise for subsistence' as fishing, hunting, pasturage and agriculture and (he proceeds to add) progress of arts renders commerce 'expedient even necessary'.[6]

Nonetheless there is something distinctive about Ferguson. What marks him out is not a rejection of the fundamental governing assumptions of the four-stages narrative (the progressiveness of man whose advance follows a natural, that is, predictable path) but, rather, a contestation of a typical application of those assumptions, namely, that some aspects of human life (the modes of subsistence or 'commercial arts') can be prioritized temporally over others. This lack of priority I term 'the principle of simultaneity'. According to this principle the three chief types of art that Ferguson identifies – the commercial, political and fine – are coeval. One of the arguments of this essay is that while politics does indeed have a salient place in Ferguson's thought, to attribute to it special significance fails to take on board his subscription qua natural historian to those fundamental assumptions of a stadial account.

Artifice and The State of Nature

In the well-known opening chapter of the *Essay,* Ferguson criticizes (without naming them) Thomas Hobbes's and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's accounts of the State of Nature. His criticism is in a related fashion both methodological and epistemological. Both Hobbes and Rousseau seek via the heuristic device of the 'state of nature' to isolate mankind's 'original qualities' and thus distinguish the 'limits between art and nature'.[7] This, however, is an act of imagination, of poetry rather than reason and science. Ferguson here interprets the latter as a process of induction. In the narrow Baconian sense of 'natural history'[8], knowledge of human qualities can be attained only by collecting facts. These are to be found in both ethnography and history ('the earliest and latest accounts collected from every quarter of the earth'[9]) and are supplemented by introspection. This cumulative evidence, collected in this way by the natural historian, establishes that mankind is always 'assembled in troops and companies' or groups.[10]

This empirically underwritten sociality means, according to Ferguson, that the Contractarian intent to distinguish what is natural from what is artificial is fundamentally misconceived. Rather, in the phrase that gives the title to this essay, 'art itself is natural to man'.[11] In these opening pages of the *Essay* the gloss that Ferguson puts on this is to indicate that man has 'in himself a principle of progression',[12] a principle that manifests itself in omnipresent activity to improve

his condition. It is for Ferguson a postulate of human nature that 'man is not made for repose';[13] indeed, 'to advance ... is the state of nature relative to him'.[14] This inherent drive to be active means that it is as applicable to the 'streets of the populous city' as it is to 'the wilds of the forest'.[15] Accordingly, he answers his own question, 'where is the state of nature?' by stating that it is 'here', whether that be Britain, the Cape of Good Hope or the straits of Magellan, for 'all situations are equally natural'.[16] The savage and the 'citizen' both practise art; hence arboreal lodgements, cottages and palaces, for example, are for Ferguson all equally natural and artificial. Moreover, the 'refinements of political and moral apprehension are not more artificial in their kind than the first operations of sentiment and reason'.[17] While the polemical aspect is prominent in this opening chapter the implications of this understanding of the nature/art relation goes to the heart of a distinctive ingredient in Ferguson's philosophy. It is that distinctiveness I here seek to investigate.

The Principle of Simultaneity

This investigation will focus on his more extensive discussion of 'arts' in the *Principles*. The key passage for this purpose is:

> The wants of men, indeed, are of different kinds, and may be unequally urgent; but the movements, performed for the supply of very different wants, appear to be simultaneous and bring at once into practice the rudiments of every art, without any such order as we might suppose to arise from their comparative degrees of importance or the urgency of occasions on which they are practised.[18]

The crux here is the 'principle of simultaneity' (my term-of-art) with its explicit denial that some arts are only evident after others. It is not the case that urgent wants call forth some arts prior to those that meet supposedly less urgent wants. This reveals something significant about both Ferguson's philosophical anthropology and his sociology.

For Ferguson, one of the most significant ways that humans are distinctive is that they are exposed to greater hardships than any other species.[19] Human wants or needs (Ferguson does not make a conceptual distinction) are more numerous and the supply of the means to meet them sparser than is the case for any other animal.[20] The 'arts' originate as the human way of supplying the means to deal with the gap between exigency and exiguousness. However, as we have seen, Ferguson does *not* draw the conclusion that in this supply 'consideration of necessity must have operated prior to that convenience and both prior to the love of mere decoration and ornament'.[21] Rather, the convenient, the ornamental and the necessary 'arts' are coeval. As here indicated, Ferguson operates with a tripartite division of commercial, political and fine (or intellectual) arts and before proceeding to discuss them he articulates again the principle of simulta-

neity by denying that 'the pursuits of external accommodation or the rudiments of commercial arts had a priority in time to those of political institution or mental attainment'.[22] Following his lead we can investigate in turn the characteristics of the three types.

Commercial arts 'originate in the wants and necessities of animal life'[23] or 'exigencies of mere animal nature' and their object is the 'supplies of necessity, accommodation or pleasure'.[24] 'Commercial arts' is the general title for all the various ways of effecting that 'supply' and it is, perhaps, worth observing that, despite some undoubted ambiguity, it follows that commercial arts are not the prerogative of the supposedly stadially advanced 'commercial societies'. More significant, however, is that these arts do not exhaust what engages 'the attention of man.' This 'attention' is not restricted to 'mere supply of necessities' in the form of 'subsistence or safety' because man's 'views extend to decoration and ornament' to which, in a restatement of the principle of simultaneity, Ferguson adds 'nor is ornament less an original want of his nature than either shelter or food'.[25] In all humans – the savage no less than 'the polished citizen' – the 'double purpose of ornament and use is evident in the fashion of his dress, in the architecture of his dwelling, and in the form of his equipage, or furniture of every sort'.[26] Humans do indeed have basic needs but these cannot be coextensively identified as those that minister to subsistence; man truly, for Ferguson, does not live by bread alone.

The commercial arts have their source in human skill and labour or industry as they compensate (Hume's phrase) for the meagreness of the means to meet human needs.[27] But humans do not labour simply to meet some putatively prior material needs; rather, labour is not only 'its own reward'[28] but 'a source of enjoyment'.[29] One consequence of this is that 'the trader continues to labour, even after his necessities are provided for and after his wants might have suffered him to rest'.[30] The trader's motives here are symptomatic of the dynamic whereby the rich affect a superiority of wealth and the poor aspire to it. While this dynamic contributes to the 'progress of arts' it also has injurious side-effects in the form of the unequal cultivation of the mental faculties that accompanies the division of labour.[31] That is, Ferguson is able to reiterate his concerns from the *Essay*[32] while echoing Adam Smith's critique of the deleterious effect on the intellectual, social and martial virtues of the simple operative in Book 5 of the *Wealth of Nations*.[33]

However, from the perspective of the principle of simultaneity, a further aspect of this familiar Fergusonian stance is revealed. Though individuals in commercial societies evidently enjoy greater material well-being they are in fact no more satisfied with their condition than savages are with theirs.[34] More pointedly, despite the advantages of commerce, which Ferguson does not deny, our judgement is distorted if we dismiss the savage life as valueless.[35] The individual savage in several respects is superior to the 'mere labourer' in commercial society

and it is in noncommercial societies that the virtues of loyalty, courage and patriotism flourish with greater vigour than in the commercial. These virtues are all forms of our political existence with its corresponding arts. The necessity for the practice of these political arts is as deeply rooted as the need for the commercial in the human condition.

The origin of the political arts is located in 'the wants and defects of instinctive society'.[36] Echoing passages in the *Essay*, Ferguson draws attention, once more, to human distinctiveness. It is true that (like the beehive) humans instinctively assemble in 'troops and companies' with a 'species of government'[37] in line with natural hierarchies of age, gender and personal qualities such as courage. Nonetheless because humans are distinctively progressive their political arts are not confined 'to the first suggestions of nature'.[38] Furthermore because 'art is natural' then just as society 'is the natural state of man' so 'political society is the natural result of his experience in that society to which he is born'.[39] The political arts thus 'relate to the order of society or the relations of men acting in collective bodies'.[40] These arts are employed to establish neither society nor subordination (as might be supposed by Contractarian thought or by the recourse to 'celebrated law givers'[41]).

Although Ferguson does claim that these arts serve to perfect or correct abuses[42] so that they might thus appear responsive, this is no different than the others. The commercial arts are a response to the environment, because, as we have seen, humans have to labour to cultivate the ground and erect habitation to meet their needs. The political arts are a response to the 'extreme disorder' of society 'prior to any manner of political establishment' and are produced by the 'spur of necessity' with no less urgency than the commercial (and fine) arts. Moreover, the thrust of simultaneity is retained because Ferguson is not claiming that politics was a reaction to abuses or disorder that had in a temporally prior sense been occasioned by the development of economic (commercial) activity. In fact, politics can be a response, for example, to 'casual coalitions or force'[44] or have 'no other foundation than custom'.[45]

The granting of coeval status to the political comports with a defining feature of Ferguson's thought. He does think, and this is the truth in the reading of him as a 'republican', that active participation in public affairs (*rei publicae*) is an authentic expression of human nature. As is well known, this is a major polemical component of the *Essay* and I do not wish here to contend the point. What I do wish to do, however, is link this to the principle of simultaneity and in so doing put it into perspective or temper some of the claims made on behalf of his 'political' emphasis or republicanism.[46] For Ferguson, the 'political genius of man' [47] manifests itself in the exercise of the political arts, because politics presupposes not tensions in material life (the commercial arts) but simply the established fact that humans live in troops and these are marked by casual subordinations of various sorts.[48] Hence just as the development of the commercial arts are the fruit

of human industry and ingenuity so too equally are the political, as both work on the 'materials' that have been Providentially provided.[49] The attainment of a 'just political order' is 'an occasion on which the principal steps of man's progress are made' and gives scope for him 'to improve his faculties'.[50] This is a self-standing, self-generating process. The political is coeval with the commercial, it is not explained as an effect of economic causes but, as coeval, it is 'an occasion' – one, not the sole or only, aspect of human progress. In similar vein, in accord with the principle of simultaneity, he also treats as on a par human actions 'to supply his occasions' both for subsistence and ornament.[51]

As we have noted, for Ferguson mankind in the course of meeting animal necessities and obtaining political knowledge is 'also disposed to invent and to fabricate' works that 'give scope to his faculties' and enable the enjoyment of 'the fruits of his ingenuity'.[52] Mere functionality is never the sole object – the necessary is adorned and there is 'an original disposition' to fabricate 'on the models of beauty presented in nature'. These adornments and fabrications in the form of poetry, painting, sculpture and music constitute the fine arts.[53] In line with the principle of simultaneity they 'spring from the stock of society' and while they do 'adorn its prosperity' they also 'actually contribute to the growth and vigour of the plant'.[54] In his unpublished *Manuscripts* we can also see an expression of the principle, when he remarks that in 'the charms of History, of Poetry & Painting' man 'proceeds on the Law of His Nature'.[55] The fine arts are, thus, not add-ons but integral to human experience for 'men in all ages are fond of decoration; they combine ornament with the means of subsistence and accommodation'; [56] indeed, 'man is formed for an artist'.[57]

This conception of the place of the fine arts helps throw light on why Ferguson includes a chapter on the history of literature in the *Essay*.[58] He begins the chapter by affirming that what he calls the literary or liberal arts and mechanical or commercial arts are both 'a natural produce of the human mind'. While the claim that they are contemporaneous is not here explicitly addressed, it would not be unreasonable, given their common source, to regard them as in harmony with the principle of simultaneity. Ferguson elaborates by claiming that the commercial or mechanical arts are 'encouraged by the prospects of safety and gain', while the literary or liberal 'took their rise from the understanding, the fancy and the heart'.[59] In line with a familiar strain in eighteenth-century linguistic speculation,[60] he declares that the language of the savage reveals that 'man is a poet by nature'.[61] It is integral to the natural human condition of sociality that all three types or categories of 'art' are 'natural' expressions of humanity. A 'history of civil society' might, as its title principally suggests, concentrate on the political arts but the interrelatedness of human artfulness means it is appropriate to incorporate within that 'history' chapters on commercial arts (such as 'popula-

tion and wealth' [62]) as well the fine arts in the form of a treatment of the history of literature.

It is true that, in line with his earlier reference to 'intellectual arts' and mental attainment', Ferguson also regards 'the fine arts' more capaciously than we might understand that term. It is, he affirms, the case that the human pursuit of knowledge is 'no less an exigency of the mind than the means of subsistence and accommodation are an exigency of mere animal life'.[63] Accordingly, exercises of intelligence are manifest in science and moral improvement as well as elegant design. This capacious conception explains why Ferguson's chapter in the *Principles* on the 'fine arts' of poetry, sculpture and so on occurs in the middle of chapters devoted to the 'pursuits and attainments of science', 'the progress of moral apprehension' and concludes with a discussion 'of a future state'. As societies develop so too do the forms of literary expression grow more complex as historical, moral, scientific and philosophical modes are exhibited in line with the character of societies.

Of course, all three types of arts suppose the distinguishing mark of human intelligence and this itself underpins the definitive trait of human progressiveness. Ferguson links progressiveness and intelligence by identifying within humans a striving for more or the 'desire of something better than is possessed at present'. This desire he labels 'ambition'.[64] In this generic sense it is this desire or ambition that operates 'in the concerns of mere animal life, in the provision of subsistence, of accommodation and ornament; in the progress of society and in the choice of its institutions'.[65] In short it underlies, respectively, human artfulness in its commercial, fine and political forms.

Betterment and the History of Man

We are now in a position to bring back the discussion to the opening remarks about the four-stages, because it is in the context of his discussion of ambition that Ferguson also declares that 'every person, in one sense or another, is earnest to better himself'.[66] There are clear echoes here of Smith's observation in the *Wealth of Nations* that 'the desire of bettering our condition … comes with us from the womb and never leaves till we go into the grave'.[67] While Smith never explicitly links this desire to the four-stages, John Millar does. In his Introduction to the third edition of the *Origin of Ranks*, he prefaces one of the clearest of all published expressions of the 'four-stages' with the statement 'there is, however, in man a disposition and capacity for improving his condition, by the exertion of which he is carried on from degree of advancement to another … '[68]

Ferguson's articulation of the principle of simultaneity means he does not adopt the same reading of this 'advance'. This difference is most simply grasped by noting the direction and explanatory thrust of Millar's argument. This argu-

ment unfolds as follows. Savages 'feel the want of almost everything requisite for the support of life' and 'their first efforts are naturally calculated to increase the means of subsistence'. This they achieve by hunting and gathering. It is the 'experience' thus acquired that 'is apt successively to point out the methods of taming and rearing cattle and of cultivating the ground'. Success in these 'improvements' results in less difficulty in meeting 'bare necessaries' and a correspondent gradual enlarging of human 'prospects' as 'their appetites and desires are more and more awakened and called forth in pursuit of the several conveniencies of life'. This awakening introduces manufacture and 'science and literature, the natural offspring of ease and affluence'. These advances in making life 'more comfortable' produce the 'most important alterations' in the 'state and condition of a people'. Millar identifies these 'alterations' as increase in population, the cultivation of humanity, the establishment of property and associated legal rights along with government and 'suitable variations in their taste and sentiments.'[69]

An unforced reading of this argument reveals that Millar does not articulate the principle of simultaneity. Whereas Ferguson questions the sequence of necessity, convenience, decoration/ornament,[70] Millar effectively subscribes to it. He prioritizes meeting necessities to pursuing conveniences and he, similarly, regards literature and science as subsequent to the attainment of leisure and affluence. In terms of Ferguson's typology, for Millar the commercial arts do predate the fine arts. Millar also in this argument identifies government and laws as emerging from the systemic need to regulate the complexities that are generated by the passions of 'a large and opulent community'. While this echoes the responsiveness with which Ferguson had associated the political arts, Millar, even in his later treatment,[71] never treats these arts as coeval with the 'commercial' but a temporally subsequent expedient.

All this said, the difference here should not be overplayed. They are both subscribers to the enterprise of delineating a 'history of man' (a phrase they both employ on numerous occasions throughout their writings). Accordingly, both Ferguson and Millar accept a developmental model, with a similar motif, the move from ignorance to knowledge, and a similar structure, the progress from concrete to abstract.[72] For Millar implicitly dormant desires 'awaken' while for Ferguson 'nothing that the human species ever attained in the latest period of its progress was altogether without a germ or principle from which it is derived in the earliest or more ancient state of mankind'.[73] Nevertheless, difference there is and the principle of simultaneity lies at its heart. In addition, I want to suggest that this role played by the principle throws light on the moralism that is often attributed to Ferguson's thought.

Uneven Development and Critique

While Ferguson admittedly does not commit himself explicitly to the point, the implicit thrust of his argument is that the simultaneity of the arts, because they are equally natural, can underwrite judgments about their differential societal expression – some societies can develop one of the arts more than the others.[74] This unevenness provides him with some needed critical space, since it signals a distortion of the different, yet equally rooted (and Providentially endorsed), expressions of human endeavour. Hence to occlude the fine arts is damaging and to neglect the political is injurious. It is the latter, of course, that looms largest in Ferguson's work but it needs to be put 'in context'.

Although Ferguson's commitment to 'progress' means that he is no fundamental critic of 'modern' politics, we can discern at work a more subtle critique of commercial society than that proffered by Rousseau and other civic republicans. What the principle of simultaneity enables him to do is develop a critique of commercialism while recognizing it as an important, ineradicable component of human life. We can recall that for him the 'commercial arts' have their source in the exigencies of human material life. He accepts a major thrust of the Smith/Humean defence of commerce.[75] Even in the *Essay* he notes when the 'merchant forgets his own interest to lay plans for the country ... the solid basis of commerce is withdrawn'[76] so that his later high praise for the *Wealth of Nations* represents no *volte face*. Additionally, as we have noted, he recognizes that 'industry' is a proper outlet for the natural human proclivity to improve. His argument here thus means he does not indulge in the Rousseau-like critiques invoked in, for example, John Brown's *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1758), John Gregory's *Comparative View* (1765), Robert Wallace's *Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind* (1753) and indeed Lord Kames's *Sketches on the History of Man* (1774). Ferguson recognizes that their jeremiads are both intellectually and morally misplaced. Nonetheless, because he does not privilege the commercial he is able to address the 'corruptions' that attend wealth (the product of commerce), and that so exercised Kames and the others, by drawing upon the equally exigent demands of human collective life that the political arts are developed to meet. The real danger in commerce is its 'privatization', diverting humans away from, and thus undermining, the public sphere.[77] Relatedly it is a danger in the intellectual arts' that 'too much abstraction tends to disqualify men for affairs'.[78]

Yet for all of Ferguson's commitment to the political arts and despite his polemic against concentration on the commercial, the latter should not be repressed. Despite his admiration for Sparta,[79] Ferguson does not in the end endorse their (or that of the 'ancient Romans'[80]) efforts to forbid commerce.[81] Such a proscription not only runs against the human ambition for better-

ment, it also aims necessarily to impose equality. However, it can do so only by making a sharp qualitative distinction between citizens and slaves.[82] Ferguson never countenances the unjustness of the Spartan or Roman practice of slavery; indeed slavery is a 'violation of the law of nature'.[83] Nor does he deny a connection between its presence and the absence of commerce.[84] Notwithstanding the weight he attaches to the martial virtues he does not demur from Montesquieu's *doux commerce* argument.[85] Moreover, even if this is more emphatic in his later writings, liberty 'consists in the communication of safety to all, nothing could be more repugnant to it than the violation of right in any part in order to level the whole'.[86] And this basic liberty is available, given proper political arrangements, in a society where the commercial arts are practised.

In the same vein, and of equal moment, is his argument that since the fine arts are coeval with politics in human endeavour then the Roman and Spartan policy toward those must not be endorsed. These polities may have reprobated the fine arts, or even in Sparta's case with regard to decoration excluded them, but these policies did not 'secure the foundations of private or public felicity'.[87] The policy is injurious because, in line with the principle of simultaneity, the fine arts are as fundamental as the political and, as such, are of equal worth. The common source of this worth, as always in Ferguson, is Providential Design. It is this that underlies his declaration that so deeply rooted is the disposition to decorate, invent and imitate that the 'fine arts will ever make a part of the unrestrained progress of human nature'.[88] He elaborates by means of an instructive metaphor – 'the monuments of art produced in one age remain with the ages that follow; and serve as a kind of ladder by which the human faculties ... [arrive] at those heights of ingenious discernment and elegant choice'.[89]

By in this way linking the fabrication of the fine arts to the generic human capacity to progress he is able, further, to identify the incipient danger to which they are prone. Given the common source of all arts then the danger is the same. Just as tranquillity is a threat to political liberty[90] and lassitude or enervation undermines the efforts to further commercial betterment[91] so it is only when humans 'acquiesce in the enjoyment of what is supplied' that their (fine) artistic improvement falters.[92] In all the arts it is the 'enjoyment' of fruits without the expenditure of effort to attain them that runs foul of the active genius of mankind.[93]

Conclusion

The argument of this essay can be summarized as follows. Ferguson postulates the value-laden presence in human nature of a universal generic principle of progressiveness. He also holds that it follows that 'art' as the application or expression of that principle is thus 'natural'. The consequence Ferguson draws

from this is that the three chief types of art that he identifies – the commercial, political and fine – are coeval. Given their common source, and its postulated normativity, if developments in one of these arts seem to inhibit the expression of another then it can be criticized. This enables Ferguson to criticize Sparta for privileging the political over the fine and criticize commercial societies for emasculating the political. As a pervasive feature of the whole of his thought, the latter argument is made more noisily or vehemently than the former.[94] What is less commonly noted is that this criticism does not mean that he conceptually privileges the political. He is indeed alarmed by developments in the commercial arts that seem to him to sideline it but, unlike Rousseau for example, this is not because commerce per se is corrupting. Rather in virtue of his 'principle of simultaneity' the political and the commercial are on the same footing, both are arts that are natural to man.

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9 FERGUSON ON THE UNINTENDED EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL ORDER

Eugene Heath

In the title of an essay published just over four decades ago, F. A. Hayek abridged the words of Adam Ferguson to epitomize the idea that there are beneficial social outcomes that are neither the immediate result of nature nor the artificial product of a designing mind. The words employed – the results of human action but not of human design[1] – are drawn from a section of Ferguson's work, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, in which he elaborates on how structures of society, including institutions and forms of government, derive not from the speculations and reason of individuals or from the foresight of some great legislator but from the actions of individuals.

> Every step and every movement of the multitude, even in what are termed enlightened ages, are made with equal blindness to the future; and nations stumble upon establishments, which are indeed the result of human action, but not the execution of any human design.[2]

Ferguson's remarkable précis suggests a striking and powerful idea. It may seem paradoxical, therefore, that at the close of the sentence he appends a citation to the *Memoirs* of Cardinal De Retz, a man so influenced by Niccolò Machiavelli that he believed that great men could influence the course of history![3] Of course, in a strict sense Ferguson's statement does not preclude such a possibility. In any case, however, the idea of this passage is not unique to Ferguson, for it is explored in varying degrees and contexts by other thinkers of the eighteenth century, including Bernard Mandeville, David Hume and Adam Smith. Nonetheless, it is Ferguson who, more than his friends Hume or Smith, seems intrigued by the idea.

Scholars have long noted how some thinkers of the eighteenth century use or allude to the concept of unintended emergence. Before Hayek, Gladys Bryson pointed out how one of Ferguson's most salient ideas was that of the growth of culture over time.[4] In his account of conjectural history, H. H. Höpfl describes the idea of unintended consequences as one of the 'crowning glories of Scottish

philosophy'.[5] Ronald Hamowy maintains that the concept of the unintended emergence of social order is 'possibly the single most spectacular contribution to social philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment'.[6] More recently, Christopher J. Berry, David Allan, Lisa Hill and Craig Smith have each described the importance of the idea to Ferguson's overall historical and social outlook.[7] Yet despite the seeming significance of this idea, it is not as if Ferguson sets forth an explicit or systematic theory of the process of unintended emergence or a clear statement as to the sorts of outcomes that might so result. Yet it is possible to reconstruct from his texts a more systematic statement.

Such a reconstruction is the aim of this essay. Indeed, I shall contend that the idea of spontaneous or unintended emergence should be understood to include the very development of norms (morals and manners), as these manifest themselves in patterns of judgments or appraisal. In this sense, Ferguson's enterprise bears comparison to the thought of Hume or Smith. However, unlike their theories in his account, Ferguson posits no sort of 'mechanism' (no specific psychological process) that functions as a coordinating device so as to bring about orderly states out of diverse and disordered acts. Instead of counting on some such mechanism, Ferguson's implicit theory of unintended social order relies on the various and multiple actions of individuals. Within the Fergusonian framework there are reasons to conclude that unintended patterns may, over time, prove beneficial; however, such a thesis remains contingent unless one resorts to a providential form that acts outside history.

The Eighteenth-Century Context

David Allan has recently pointed out how Ferguson's appeal to unintended outcomes reflects the legacy of a Scots historiographical tradition in which the idea of causality is taken up as an essential principle in the exploration of the development of society. In the work of such seventeenth-century historians as David Hume of Godscroft and Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, Allan finds a curiosity about the way in which causes operate in spite of human intention and will. The works of such historians, Allan attests, were known to Ferguson, and like them, he too maintains that there are historical connections that are not the effects of agents' intentions.[8]

However, it is the notorious Bernard Mandeville who is among the first of the eighteenth-century thinkers to draw the distinction between intention and effect. The interaction of self-interested individuals each intending to secure their private good (vice), might nonetheless bring about a public good: Private Vices, Publick Benefits.[9] Mandeville utilized this distinction not only in his account of the benefits of commerce but also in articulating a specifically evolutionary account of the unintended emergence of morals and manners. For Mandeville, praise and flattery

function as the means by which a diversity of actions (and passions) are so coordinated that uniform expectations of conduct emerge – moral standards.[10] Like Ferguson, both Hume and Smith each reject Mandeville's assumption of egoism, but they too attempt a causal account of morals. In each of their frameworks one can isolate a universal phenomenon that serves as a law-like device that generates unintended outcomes out of individual interaction.

Some scholars have noted how in his explanation of the genesis of conventions of justice, Hume suggests that the rules governing property arise in an unintended manner.[11] Along with that theory, Hume also posits, in *A Treatise of Human Nature*, a universal force, emanating from human nature (and thus present in all societies), that can operate in an unintended manner to bring about a consensus of value and opinion. The associative process of sympathy can serve as a coordinating device by which individuals in proximity to one another unintentionally come to share similar sentiments of value regarding qualities of character useful or agreeable either to self or to others.[12] Hume describes how there is 'No quality of human nature ... more remarkable' than sympathy and that 'To this principle we ought to ascribe the great uniformity we may observe in the humours and turn of thinking of those of the same nation'.[13] In the same passage Hume contends that such uniformity is more likely a result of sympathy than of 'the soil and climate'. This perspective is repeated in his essay of 1748, 'Of National Characters'.[14] There, Hume argues that physical causes (such as temperature and climate) cannot explain differences in the characters of nation. Even if some differences result from fixed moral causes, such as government or economic conditions, sympathy may also explain the similitude of manners.[15] (On this subject of climate, it is worth recalling that Ferguson is less inclined to agree with Hume than with the Baron de Montesquieu. Ferguson admits that climate constitutes a physical cause that may influence conduct, but he is not optimistic that we can discern the ways in which it affects the organs or our behaviour.)[16]

Among other eighteenth-century thinkers, Henry Home, Lord Kames, also maintained an interest in the historical development of law and social institutions, and seemed to admit that moral differences may be found 'among different nations, and even in the same nation at different periods'.[17] However, it is in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, that one locates a moral psychology that helps to coordinate into uniformity or consensus the diverse passions and actions of individuals. According to Smith, individuals employ their imaginations in order to achieve a mutual sympathy with others. To sympathize with another is to share the same emotions, feelings or passions as the other; the occurrence of sympathy generates a judgment of moral approval. In other words, the desire for sympathy motivates individuals to adopt, momentarily, at least some of the character, values and interests of the person with whom they are attempting to sympathize. From a situation in which there is no normative

consensus, the innumerable instances of adjustments and alterations of the sympathetic imagination will gradually generate a uniformity of moral point of view. With the emergence of this standard point of view, that of the impartial spectator, certain passions come to be seen as appropriate for certain conditions or circumstances. The passions that are not judged appropriate are precisely those with which individuals do not sympathize.[18]

Each of Mandeville, Hume and Smith suggests that at least some elements of a society's moral code may result in an unintended fashion. Each posits some feature or mechanism of human psychology that serves to coordinate the disparate actions and reactions of individuals in such a way that a normative consensus will emerge. But what sort of phenomena and what sort of explanations are we invoking when we seek to explain the results of human action but not of human design? That is the topic to be explored next.

Unintended Order, Unintended Emergence

Ferguson's idea of the unintended – which scholars have referred to variously as the heterogeneity of ends,[19] spontaneous generation[20] or spontaneous order[21] – ranges over a variety of institutions and social practices. The terms employed to discuss these phenomena sometimes refer to a *process*, sometimes to an *outcome* and sometimes to an *explanation* of the emergence of the outcome. In the case of Ferguson, his allusions to the unintended, like that of other eighteenth-century thinkers, refer both to outcome and process. We turn now to outline the general contour of these concepts.

A spontaneously ordered outcome is one species of the larger genus of unintended consequences. In other words there are a variety of unintended effects that are not part of the range of spontaneous orders. After all, almost any event or occurrence is an unintended consequence of someone's action. The subject matter of Ferguson's appeal is some orderly pattern of conduct that has come into being without that pattern being part of the intention of the agents whose actions have generated it. In a quite general sense, an order is a set of elements and the relations among these elements. In the case of particular social orders – for example, norms or institutions – the elements are individuals who bear to one another certain steady and reliable patterns of conduct or behavior (including linguistic behavior). An outcome that is spontaneously derived is, therefore, not just some single event or effect but a state of affairs that manifests some complexity.[22] Such complexity refers not so much to size or scale but to the elements of the order and their manner and types of relations. It would seem to be the case, then, that a normative pattern of conduct and appraisal would constitute a complex order.

What sort of process might be involved in spontaneous or unintended generation? Since the outcome must exhibit complexity, that suggests that it is not some single event or 'the cumulative outcome of similar actions performed simultaneously or consecutively by a number of actors'.[23] If the effect were but the summary of the similar actions of individuals responding to similar circumstances, then that result would not be of interest. Moreover, a process of unintended emergence does not acquire interest until it can be shown that it is not merely a train of events but a sequence or accumulation that also has some connection with a law-like proposition. Unless that can be shown, then the series is but a causal chain, no different perhaps than the assertion in the nursery rhyme, 'For want of a nail the shoe was lost…' In other words, a causal series that extends from A to some (unintended) outcome O is an example of a spontaneous emergence *only if* the outcome O has some complexity and its emergence can be explained in terms of some law-like process. In the case of a social order we should want to explain such a series, or its outcome O, as involving agents whose various actions, in conjunction with (or as an expression of) a law-like proposition, generate that outcome O.

In addition, the process by which these orders are wrought may be understood either as aggregative or cumulative. The first type of case occurs in a relatively discrete slice of time: Various agents, having taken into account the actions and decisions of others, act in such a way that a complex and unintended state of affairs emerges rather quickly. On the other hand, the order could be a cumulative product in which the action of a person at one point in time is followed by the actions of others, perhaps in differing circumstances; together these acts gradually bring about an outcome that no party intended. Over time the accumulation of discrete actions brings about some new state of affairs, institution or practice. Thus, an explanation of the unintentional emergence of a complex pattern should show that it arises unintentionally (or 'spontaneously') from some conditions or circumstances and that, in conjunction with some law-like statement, it does so by the actions of agents who do not intend to bring it about.

It is the cumulative model of unintended growth over time that shall be our focus. Of course, Ferguson's language sometimes puts forward, as Berry suggests, a mere train of causes, as when he links 'What was in one generation a propensity to herd with the species,' with 'a principle of national union …'[24] emerging in a later age. In another instance, Ferguson writes that the very same policy that has reduced the power of feudal lords generates the consequence of increasing the power of the sovereign. On other, and perhaps more numerous, occasions he expresses more clearly the assumptions of a theory of spontaneous emergence over time. Thus does he characterize various phenomena –including the institution of property[25] – as outcomes of slow and gradual progress[26] or as emerging in

slow degrees.[27] Of course, the mere fact that some outcome emerges in degrees or as a result of slow progress does not establish that the outcome is unintended. But Ferguson's point must be taken in light of his rejection both of the 'Great Man' theory of history[28] and of the very notion that a government or constitution could be instituted from a plan.[29] More generally, Ferguson's appeal to slow or piecemeal change occurs in reference to the unintended,[30] or with an eye to how some projects emerge from the instincts, not from the speculations, of men.[31]

Among the outcomes described as unintended are such institutions as language, property and particular forms of government. Along with these examples are those of particular laws (emerging for example out of conflict), virtues and dispositions, as well as the ethos of a social order as a whole. For example, the disposition to industry, or industriousness, is also acquired by many and by slow degrees,[32] just as commerce may bring about the virtues of punctuality, enterprise, and liberality. [33] From instinctive feelings there may arise integrity and candour, and from the very contagion of society itself, an esteem for what is honourable and praise-worthy.[34] Regarding improvements of technology or craft, he writes, 'The steps which lead to perfection are many; and we are at a loss on whom to bestow the greatest share of our praise; on the first or on the last who may have bore a part in the progress'.[35]

Fania Oz-Salzberger contends that Ferguson's interest in unintended order had limits: 'he considered it applicable to technological and institutional processes far more than to moral issues.'[36] Yet it would be difficult to deny that the framework that Ferguson puts forth is, in fact, widely applied and plausibly suited to underpin his understanding of moral improvement and diversity. One of the most energetic Ferguson scholars, Lisa Hill,[37] noting a range of examples, suggests that they include 'Standards of merit, ethics, national sentiments, the sentiments governing our social and emotional relationships'; in this way, she explains, 'the moral sentiments are partly socially constructed'.[38] In her most recent account, she describes Ferguson as setting forth a two-tiered model in which the lower or first tier concerns the activity of individuals motivated by specific and limited aims. Their actions, functioning as efficient causes, gradually bring about outcomes that were not intended or foreseen. At the second tier, that of the social system,[39] the beneficial nature of spontaneous outcomes, she says, appears as the result of providential design working at the holistic level.[40]

Ferguson's Moral Theory and The Emergence of Norms

The normative phenomena that emerge over time are manners and patterns of moral appraisal about human qualities (including virtues); from these patterns of appraisal, moral standards arise. Yet, as previously noted, Ferguson does not

postulate some particular psychological operation that either communicates or aggregates disparate sentiments. It is interesting to consider this in light of two features of Ferguson's philosophy. An appeal to a psychological mechanism, such as a process of sympathy (whether of the sort illuminated by Hume or the agreement of passions stipulated by Smith), introduces into an explanation a certain element of conjecture or supposition. It may be simple enough to describe how some process of sympathy may work in the case of a spectator and agent, but this same process must be replicated innumerable times if that mechanism is to serve a coordinating function. Such a process requires some imaginative supposition which, though not without grounds or reason, might have been rejected by Ferguson. After all, he claims to forswear the use of conjecture in his natural history of society.[41] Secondly, Ferguson complains, in his *Principles of Moral and Political Science* and in a later manuscript essay, that Smith's use of the notion of sympathy to explain moral judgment, leads us 'to explain the known by the unknown'.[42] By implication, then, Ferguson's appeal to unintended processes should invoke concepts that are clear rather than obscure, factual rather than conjectural. In order to grasp how these processes might work, let us first revisit Ferguson's moral theory, taking into view what he says about moral appraisal and the objects of appraisal.

From his earliest work in the *Institutes of Moral Philosophy,* it was clear that, for Ferguson, true moral judgments were objectively so and that the objects of these judgments were qualities of mind.[43] In the later *Principles,* Ferguson devotes some attention to the question of moral judgment, rejecting any plea to reason alone, arguing against any instrumental calculation of utility, and dismissing Adam Smith's invocation of sympathy. Towards the close of that discussion, he admits that, 'It is difficult to name the power by which man is enabled to distinguish between right and wrong…'[44] However, in recognizing that approbation influences the will, he nonetheless concludes that moral approval must be related to some particular sort of *sentiment*. (He does not, however, grant that this is tantamount to some 'moral sense', as first urged by Lord Shaftesbury and developed by Francis Hutcheson, for that vocabulary should be employed only as a figurative expression of a capacity of moral discernment, not as a means of explaining the judgment itself. [45])

Even if moral approbation springs from some sentiment, the qualities of mind that are the objects of approbation do not *depend* on subjective sentiment for their *moral* properties. Rather, the moral sentiment cognizes or apprehends right and wrong as these are manifested in real moral qualities of mind.[46] (One reason for the paucity of discussion lies in the fact that Ferguson often takes for granted certain basic moral distinctions and, consequently, he has less interest in probing their underlying grounds than in delineating issues relevant to the more practical normative question of the end of man.) Thus, he affirms that the

general lines of right and wrong, good and bad are easily discerned, even as the 'multiplicity of Particulars'[47] sometimes makes it difficult to render a moral judgment.[48])

Ferguson states that moral science requires 'some general expression of what is good'[49] but the determination of that requires knowledge both of human nature and of human circumstance.[50] What is Ferguson's normative moral theory? In his view, 'the important and Genuine Question of Moral Philosophy [is] *de finibus*, or what is the End'[51]. In suggesting that *how* we ought to live is, in part, a function of *who* we are – our human nature[52] – he sketches a type of perfectionism in which he proposes, within the broader framework of a providentially ordered universe, that certain qualities or characteristics are good in themselves and, accordingly, that the best life is one which attempts to develop progressively these qualities. Because these traits are sufficient for happiness, there is no conflict between goodness and self-interest.

However, our moral knowledge is not *a priori* knowledge but is acquired in history via the interplay of circumstance and human nature. Of human nature, Ferguson discerns three laws, that of self-preservation, that of society, and that of progression, and it is out of these that moral good is derived. As a matter of human nature we are capable of desires and evaluations distinct from animalistic concerns or narrow self-interest.[53] The 'basis of a moral nature' is inborn; from that feature alone, Ferguson rejects Mandeville's account of morals as being born of vice.[54] What is this disposition? In the *Essay,* Ferguson states that the amicable disposition is the foundation of morals.[55] If this or some other quality constitutes some innate moral sensibility (not to be identified with some moral sense), then how is that sensibility developed? In other words, in what sense are morals subject to unintended emergence? Before turning to discuss a framework for this, I offer two points in defence of my interpretation.

If we take into account how Ferguson characterizes the evolution of language, we can see how he views the development of morals. Just as some form of communication is coeval with society, so is some basic moral sensibility. Thus, Ferguson accepts as a natural or innate characteristic that some particular looks, movements, or gestures can be understood without 'any previous convention or agreement of the parties'[56] and that it is out of these natural signs that we elaborate other 'arbitrary signs of speech, or of written characters'[57] He writes 'we must suppose human nature, in its lowest state, competent to the use of them [parts of speech]; and, without the intervention of uncommon genius, mankind, in a succession of ages, qualified to accomplish in detail this amazing fabric of language, which, when raised to its height, appears so much above what could be ascribed to any simultaneous effort of the most sublime and comprehensive abilities'.[58] Just as there is an innate ability to develop a language, so there is an ability to develop and progress morally. But this is no mere speculation, for there

is no society that has not enjoyed some basic moral distinctions, even as these may grow into a 'more enlarged, luminous, and comprehensive system'.[59]

If the manners of diverse ages and geographic locations were all the same, both in type and in token, that might constitute some prima facie evidence, that moral norms are derived in some direct manner from some innate sensibility. There would be, in other words, nothing to explain. But Ferguson clearly and consistently recognizes some sort of diversity, noting how distinct societies valorize and admire distinct goods.[60] In the *Institutes* he devotes several sections to this topic, noting that the diversity arises from the way in which distinct circumstances may affect judgement (difference of the case), differences of opinion, and differences in interpreting certain indifferent acts. This would seem to suggest that even if there is some general knowledge of good and evil, the particular tokens of these types may differ across ages and societies. Thus, if we assume that there is some original moral sensibility – perhaps registered in some general types of benevolence, wisdom, or courage – then the particular moral tokens of that sensibility may differ in content, tone, and rank.

If we can assume that moral norms can emerge unintentionally, then how might we reconstruct the framework of their emergence? Such an explanation must include some description of the initial circumstances, along with some law-like propositions that will explain how the actions of agents could generate some outcome that we call a moral norm of appraisal. Let us take the circumstances and the law-like expressions, and use these to consider the abstract framework of Ferguson's implicit theory.

The Framework of an Explanation

In setting out a framework, we draw primarily from Ferguson's *Essay*. Although this framework is applied, in this instance, to the development of morals and manners, it is sufficiently general that it might also apply to other kinds of outcomes, including, for example, institutions. The framework limned below stipulates certain essential elements, all present in Ferguson's natural history of society: circumstances, law-like propositions, and a process by which a complex outcome (uniformity of moral appraisal) might be achieved.

Circumstances

There are two senses in which one might conceive the initial circumstances of an unintended evolution of norms. There is first the rudimentary (or original) condition that, Ferguson maintains, should not be conceived as a state of nature: 'Mankind are to be taken in groupes, as they have always subsisted',[61] and the family is the first or 'elementary form of society'.[62] A second and more fluid sense of 'circumstances' refers to any set of factual conditions from which an explanation begins. In either of these cases, of course, the unintended emergence of

moral norms occurs against a prior background of normative aims and purposes, as well as social and economic conditions, all of which may influence in various and contingent ways.

Ferguson offers summary, if not inchoate, accounts of 'stages' of social development, each of which – savagery, barbarism, and polished commercial ages – manifest a particular social, economic, and moral character. Presumably, each stage, along with structures and norms within each stage, emerges in some unintended fashion. Each of these has a particular social, economic and moral character. Granting the distinction between moral or physical causes, and admitting that extremes of climate have particular (and negative) influences on political and social life,[63] are there other fixed or physical determinants that are critical? Although other fixed physical features may affect opinion and sentiment, including physical need, scarcity and so on, it is not clear that these alone determine the content of the norms of appraisal. Something else is needed.

If we turn to moral or social causes, then we should discover, alongside our natural moral sensibility, some features of society that work in tandem with, but are distinct from, the actual moral norms of a particular epoch. What does Ferguson suggest? Here we might introduce a distinction between *prevailing* circumstances throughout any epoch, *stage-relative* circumstances, and *incidental* circumstances. The prevailing circumstances are those general circumstances of society that affect change or progress across all epochs (e.g. that we use language, that we are born into families; that there are social hierarchies or stratifications); stage-relative conditions would be the moral norms or facts that influence conduct within a particular stage or period; incidental circumstances are other causes or events that affect change in some particular society or for some particular person.

Setting aside both the prevailing and incidental conditions, there are various stage-relative conditions that affect the generation of specific norms or manners. For example, in commercial societies, the division of labour encourages the norm of industriousness.[64] The very population of growing cities can 'tend to corrupt the lowest orders of men',[65] just as commercial societies may render it more likely that the pursuit of particular vocations 'serves, in some measure, to break the bands of society … [so that]society is made to consist of parts, of which none is animated with the spirit of society itself'.[66]

Law-like statements

Ferguson contends that there are laws of the will: self-preservation, society and progress. We may take these, as well as another element of human nature, to be law-like in that they purport to be both empirical and universal. Taking into account that all agents must, in various ways, preserve themselves, what is most

crucial to an account of the unintended emergence of norms are the laws of society and progress. The law of society would seem to include a fundamental disposition to adhere to the group[67]; a certain natural and unreflective ease in the communication of passions and sentiments[68]; a propensity to imitate others; an ability to learn (in the sense of 'improve') via 'example and intercourse';[69] and a receptivity to encouragement and praise. These are general and prevailing tendencies of human nature essential to the social and individual formation of character – for better or ill.[70] Ferguson, for example, states that our passions and sentiments are affected by the passions (etc) of others; even so, it is not clear how he understands this to occur or to what extent it is accidental. He mentions that we are drawn to others and imitate them; that we 'improve by example and intercourse'; [71] and that we may alter our conduct 'in proportion as [we] are encouraged and directed to act on the maxims of freedom and justice...'[72] (Whereas Ferguson writes, 'Mere acquaintance and habitude nourish affection, and the experience of society brings every passion of the human mind upon its side',[73] a philosopher such as Hume would account for these twin phenomena with reference to the association of ideas and sympathy).

Beyond this social tendency, Ferguson delineates another complementary, if not countervailing and law-like tendency, variously referred to as that of conflict or opposition. These terms suggest a disposition that complements one's attachment to society as a whole, and may be understood to suggest the tendency to oppose others and to distinguish ourselves. Ferguson delineates this tendency in terms of the poles of friend and enemy, countryman and foreigner, but he also applies it to less global concerns. For example, he suggests that the public good is often best achieved by challenge and opposition: 'Liberty is maintained by the continued differences and oppositions of numbers, not by their concurring zeal in behalf of equitable government'.[74] He notes too that we seem to 'embrace the occasions of mutual opposition, with alacrity and pleasure'.[75] After all, 'We are fond of distinctions; we place ourselves in opposition, and quarrel under denominations of faction and party, without any material subject of controversy'.[76]

There are two additional law-like propositions, one of habit, the other of progress or ambition. The very idea of habit serves to preserve a norm. Ferguson contends that habit can 'reconcile man to what was once disagreeable'.[77] Habits are particular to distinct societies even as 'the sentiments themselves, whether of benevolence towards men, or devotion to God, retain their distinctive quality under all the variations of external expression'.[78]

Alongside habit is a tendency to progress and improvement. This may also be construed as ambition. Ambition, Ferguson explains, is a species of 'settled or habitual desire',[79] grounded in the natural propensity to excel, a desire that, 'is one of the most powerful of the human Breast'.[80] In a section of *Principles of*

Moral and Political Science devoted entirely to this topic, Ferguson employs the definition of Samuel Johnson ('the Desire of something higher than is possessed at present'), to note that ambition is 'not satiated with any given measure of gratification'.[81] Ferguson explains,

> The life and activity of intelligent being consists in the consciousness or perception of an improveable state, and in the effort to operate upon it for the better. This constitutes an unremitting principle of ambition in human nature. Men have different objects, and succeed unequally in the pursuit of them: But every person, in one sense or another, is earnest to better himself.[82]

Ambition operates in a variety of arenas and towards disparate ends, but Ferguson maintains that there is a 'genuine' and primary object of ambition, namely, moral qualities,[83] the realization of which constitutes the true end of the human being. Nonetheless, even when ambition is not aimed toward its true end, it remains a powerful and generally beneficent propensity and even if 'aimed at a mistaken end [which may include distinction or honor], [it may] nevertheless occasion the improvement of faculties ...'[84] Much less than Hume or Smith, Ferguson articulates a mode of ambition that draws less from the audience or spectator than from a sense of the degrees of excellence discernable within any field of endeavour.

Process

Thus do we have four law-like tendencies: one to initiate (ambition); one to communicate (society); one to preserve (habit); and one to distinguish and challenge (conflict). Given these tendencies, it is not entirely without justification that Ferguson could consider the 'establishments of men' to be 'suggested by nature' and to arise 'from successive improvements that were made, without any sense of their general effect'.[85] Our moral sensibility inclines us to receive and accept appraisals and to habituate and interalize them; however, our ambition moves us to initiate change under the guise of improvements. These changes, in turn, may be challenged by those who adhere to a given habit. But others may also perceive the changes as improvements and imitate them. Through this process of trial and error – fueled and guided by a dialectic of ambition, social communication, habituation, and challenge – particular norms of appraisal emerge and moral standards are set. None of this suggests that whatever emerges is right. However whatever is right bears that rightness in relation to the norms that have emerged.

But how might these outcomes be *unintended*? How could there be no sense of their general effect? Here Ferguson adopts an epistemic outlook that is both local and limited. In other words, the agent is typically engaged by his local circumstance as these affect his capacity to improve. What engages the intellect

are the 'wants and necessities they have to supply, the inconveniences they have to remove, or the advantages which are placed in their view; as the spur which nature applies to excite and to direct their exertions'.[86] Of course, we are averse to admitting such, for 'In accounting for actions we often forget that we ourselves have acted; and instead of the sentiments which stimulate the mind in the presence of its object, we assign as the motives of conduct with men, those considerations which occur in the hours of retirement and cold reflection.'[87] An epistemology that discounts speculation and reasoning[88] would seem compatible with Ferguson's iteration that the achievements of the species 'are generally formed by degrees'[89] Thus the species as well as the individual can be said to progress, but the 'steps are progressive and slow; and his force, like the power of a spring, silently presses on every resistance; an effect is sometimes produced before the cause is perceived; and with all his talent for projects, his work is often accomplished before the plan is devised'.[90]

We have now a framework in place, albeit quite a general one. Given some set of circumstances, the prevailing conditions, along with the law-like processes, may ensure that some small incremental change will be imitated or carried out by others. This change may then spread to the larger group or be abandoned entirely. However, the acting agents, as Ferguson suggests, are not *too* ambitious! That is to say, they do not have in mind the more general idea of effecting some improvement or alternation of a given norm. What they have in mind is some more local improvement.[91] (Of course, it is possible that under a different sort of explanation, agents would have grand ideals that they are constantly *failing* to put into effect. This account would not be incompatible with some theory of spontaneous order, even if it is inconsistent with Ferguson's.)

With this framework in mind, I append a brief and speculative coda. In the *Essay,* in his discussion of the corruption that may occur in polished or commercial societies, Ferguson pauses to note that,

> Corruption, however, does not arise from the abuse of commercial arts alone; it requires the aid of political situation; and is not produced by the objects that occupy a sordid and mercenary spirit, without the aid of circumstances that enable men to indulge in safety any mean disposition they have acquired.[92]

Ferguson intimates here that abusive, and therefore inappropriate, norms, may prevail when there is not the sort of challenge that comes from opposition. For in this case one is able to 'indulge in safety' the sort of conduct that should be challenged. In other words, if the framework just limned is, effectively, one of trial and error, then the conditions that allow for such experimentation must be in place to filter out moral excrescences. None of this denies, of course, that other unintended practices can be harmful or wrong. Ferguson admits as much.[93]

Concluding Remarks

As I have reconstructed things, Ferguson is framing a history of objective morals as these acquire their objectivity in a contingent manner: Out of a series of contingencies and law-like processes, an objective set of moral standards emerges. Unlike Hume or Smith he has not isolated one specific feature of human psychology that would serve to aggregate or coordinate disparate phenomena. The particular contingency of Ferguson's framework renders it appealing, at least if we doubt that there is some universal 'mechanism' such as Hume's sympathy or Smith's imaginative process of sympathy. This contingency also reveals how Ferguson's account is pre-eminently historical. But why should we countenance his appeal to society, habit, ambition, and opposition? Unless we accept his providentialism, there is no guarantee that these propensities of human nature will so function as to ensure progress. Nonetheless, those interested in contingency theories of moral development should consider Ferguson as an intelligent, provocative and worthy contributor. There are, after all, few guarantees in life.

Acknowledgements

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NOTES

Introduction

1. L. Hill, *The Passionate Society: The Social and Political Thought of Adam Ferguson* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), p. 27.
2. The account of Hume's efforts on Ferguson's behalf are described in J. B. Fagg, 'Biographical Introduction', in A. Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, ed. V. Merolle, 2 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1995), vol. 1 (1745-80), esp. xxviii –xxxiii.
3. This interpretation may be found in J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), esp. pp. 498–505.
4. Pocock, 'Cambridge Paradigms and Scotch Philosophers: A Study of the Relations between the Civic Humanist and the Civil Jurisprudential Interpretation of Eighteenth-century Social Thought', in I. Hont and M. Ignatieff (eds), *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Englightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 235. J. Robertson notes the 'abstractness of the civic tradition, and the uncertainty of its boundaries', but he attests that such vagueness does not 'diminish its significance'. 'The Scottish Enlightenment and the Civic Tradition', in Ibid., p. 140.
5. A clear difference also emerges in comparison with a later theorist of the historical development of society, Karl Marx. For Marx, some activities, such as the arts, are the *effects* of other more fundamental (economic) modes of interaction.

1 Fry, 'Ferguson the Highlander'

1. Anon., Article II: 'Adam Ferguson', *Edinburgh Review*, 125:255 (January 1867), p. 54.
2. '... the barbarous orthography which few, and I among the rest, never learned to read', Letter to James Macpherson, 30 May 1793, in Ferguson *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, p. 353.
3. A. Carlyle, *The Autobiography of Dr Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk, 1722–1805*, ed. J. H. Burton (Edinburgh: Foulis, 1910), pp. 295–7.
4. Ibid., p. 282.
5. First reported by Sir Walter Scott, review of Henry Mackenzie, *The Works of John Home*, in *Quarterly Review*, 36 (1827), p.196; see the comment by J.B. Fagg in her Introduction, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol. 1, p. xxiv.

6. A. Ferguson, *A Sermon Preached in the Ersh Language to His Majesty's Regiment of Foot, commanded by Lord John Murray* ... (London: A. Millar, 1746), p. 23.
7. F. Oz-Salzberger, 'Ferguson's Politics of Action', in E. Heath & V. Merolle (eds), *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), pp. 150–1.
8. Carlyle, *The Autobiography of Dr Alexander Carlyle*, p. 296.
9. Ferguson, *Sermon*, p. 3.
10. R. Adam to Nelly Adam, 9 April 1757, National Archives of Scotland, GD 18/4387/33.
11. H. Mackenzie (ed.), *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, appointed to inquire into the nature and authenticity of the poems of Ossian* (Edinburgh, 1805), appendix 4; 'Account of the Life of Mr John Home', *The Works of John Home* (Edinburgh, 1822); D. Thomson, 'Ossian Macpherson and the Gaelic World of the Eighteenth Century', *Aberdeen University Review* 40 (1963–4), p. xl.
12. J. Macpherson (ed.), *Fingal* (London, 1762), p. xiv and preface; J. H. Burton, *Life and Correspondence of David Hume*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: William Tait, 1846), vol. 1, p. 468.
13. Hume to Gilbert Elliot of Minto, 2 July 1757, D. Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, ed. J. Y. T. Greig, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), vol. 1, p. 255. I have taken a minor liberty with the phrasing and have modernized the spelling; the exact phrasing is: '...is it not strange, I say, that in these Circumstances, we shou'd really be the People most distinguish'd for Literature in Europe?'
14. R. Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment: The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), ch. 6.
15. Macpherson (ed.), *Fingal*, especially pp. 109, 111, 279, 288.
16. A. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. D. Forbes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), pp. 76–7.
17. Ibid., p. 77.
18. Ibid., pp. 77–8.
19. Ibid., pp. 79.
20. Ibid., p. 78.
21. Ibid., p. 104.
22. Ibid., p. 115.
23. J. D. Brewer, 'Ferguson's Epistolary Self', in Heath and Merolle (eds) *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature,* pp. 7–22.
24. See Davie's essay, 'The Scottish Enlightenment', in his collection *The Scottish Enlightenment and Other Essays* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1991), pp. 1–51.
25. For the most graphic depictions of this complex, see James Boswell *passim*.
26. I. S. Ross, *Life of Adam Smith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 33.
27. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 151.
28. H. Cockburn, *Memorials of his Time* (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1856), p. 74.
29. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 59.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid, p. 60.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid. p. 61.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid, p. 141.
36. Hume to William Strahan, August 1770, Hume, *Letters of David Hume*, vol. 2, p. 230.

37. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. D. Forbes pp. 105–6.
38. A. Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, ed. V. Merolle, with E. Heath and R. Dix (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006), pp. 48–9. The text as printed there reproduces the unedited MS, but I have modernized it for these quotations.

2 Buchan, 'Adam Ferguson, the 43rd, and the Fictions of Fontenoy'

1. A. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), ed. F. Oz-Salzberger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 77.
2. See for example, J.A. Lynn, *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2003), pp. 111–15, 143–4.
3. This was the view developed by Duncan Forbes in his 'Introduction' to A. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767; Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), pp. xxxviii–xl. For further exposition of the relationship between Ferguson's background and his political thought see, M. J. Kugler, 'Savagery, Antiquity, and Provincial Identity: Adam Ferguson's Critique of Civilization' (PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1994).
4. J. D. Brewer, 'Putting Adam Ferguson in his Place', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 58:1 (2007), pp. 112–13. J. D. Brewer, 'Ferguson's Epistolary Self', pp. 7–22.
5. B. Mazlish, *Civilization and its Contents* (Stanford, CT: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 5–7; A. Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 117, 153–5, 160–5.
6. J. Starobinski, *Blessings in Disguise, Or, the Morality of Evil*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), p. 3.
7. A. Pagden, 'The "Defence of Civilization" in Eighteenth Century Social Theory', *History of the Human Sciences*, 1:1 (1988), pp. 33–45; C. A. Bayly, 'The British and Indigenous Peoples, 1760–1860: Power, Perception and Identity' in M. Daunton and R. Halpern (eds), *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 20, 25, 27–9.
8. L. Febvre, 'Civilization: Evolution of a Word and Group of Ideas', in P. Burke (ed.), *A New Kind of History from the Writings of Febvre*, trans. K. Folca (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 223–5; Starobinski, *Blessings in Disguise*, pp. 14–15.
9. F. Oz-Salzberger, 'The Political Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment', in A. Broadie (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 160.
10. F. Gilbert, 'The "New Diplomacy" of the Eighteenth Century', *World Politics*, 4:1 (1951), pp. 11, 15.
11. J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Volume 2: Narratives of Civil Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 258–62.
12. N. Phillipson, 'Propriety, Property and Prudence: David Hume and the Defence of the Revolution' in N. Phillipson and Q. Skinner (eds), *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 313, 318–9. See also, D. Wootton, 'David Hume "The Historian" ', in D. F. Norton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to David Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 292–3. P. Jones, 'On Reading Hume's *History of Liberty*' in N. Capaldi and D. W. Livingston (eds), *Liberty in Hume's History of England* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990), pp. 10–17.

13. D. Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688*, 8 vols (London: J. Mcreery, 1807), vol. 5, p. 66, 488; and vol. 6, p. 165. See also, A. B. Stilz, 'Hume, Modern Patriotism, and Commercial Society', *History of European Ideas*, 29:1 (2003), p. 27; J. Darwin, 'Civility and Empire' in P. Burke, B. Harrison and P. Slack (eds), *Civil Histories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 324; J. Robertson, 'The Scottish Enlightenment'.
14. Hume, *History of England*, vol. 2, p. 432. Interestingly, like Ferguson, Hume did have experience of the military, but seemed to regard his exposure to the 'ignorant blockheads' in uniform as less than salutary. Hume to John Home, 4 Oct 1746, and Hume to Henry Home, undated 1747, in *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, pp. 96, 99.
15. Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws* (1748), ed. and trans. by A.M. Cohler, B.C. Miller and H.S. Stone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 461–2.
16. I. Kant, 'Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch' (1795), *Kant's Political Writings*, ed. H. Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 103–5.
17. In this sense, Hume's argument that the cannon unexpectedly led to further moderation of warfare by stimulating new calculations of interest, can be placed alongside his analysis of how technological advances ('industry') stimulated the growth of '*knowledge*, and *humanity*' by opening up more avenues for sociability, leading to greater knowledge and refinement of manners. D. Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts', *Essays Moral, Political and Literary* (1777), ed. E. F. Miller (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1985), p. 271.
18. W. Robertson, *History of the Reign of Charles the Fifth* (1769), 4 vols (London: George Routledge, 1856), vol. 1, see for example, pp. 15–16, 26, 34.
19. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 413.
20. Such views were indeed becoming very common in Britain at this time. James Marriott, the English Advocate General, gave voice to this kind of view in a letter to John Pownall, Secretary to the Lords of Trade, in 1765. Marriott argued that the application of the law of nations – which he referred to as the 'public law of Europe' – 'must be different in different Ages of Mankind', and therefore cannot universally apply to civilized *and* uncivilized peoples. In this way, Marriot drew an important distinction between the violent anarchy that must prevail in relations with less civilized peoples, and the regulation of international conduct in Europe, '... the present Age [is] ... an interval of Time from the Treaty of Westphalia down to the last definitive Treaty of Versailles, which may be called the Age of Negotiation... In [this] ... present Age ... War is commenced on different Principles from the Wars of Antiquity ... [and] ends with different Principles, in both more to the Honour of Humanity. The public law of Europe abhors the sanguinary Object of antient Wars, universal Slavery, or Extirpation – Every War in these Times is considered but as an Appeal to the rest of the powers of Europe, and is but a temporary Exertion of Force to decide a Point of Interest which no human Tribunal can determine ...' 'James Marriott to John Pownall, 15 February 1765', *Superintendent's Office Correspondence 1756–1772*, Canadian Archives (microfilm, Reel C-1222).
21. Robertson, *History of the Reign of Charles the Fifth,* vol. 2, pp. 413–4. Other Enlightenment luminaries, such as the Abbé Raynal, saw commerce and civilization as agents of a form of globalization or 'mutual intercourse' rather than empire. G. T. F. Raynal, *A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies*, 6 vols (Edinburgh, 1782), Volume 1, Part 1, pp. 1–2; Volume 2, Part 5, pp. 223–36. Robertson's view however, was that Europe's claims had been elevated to a 'visible ascendant' over India, Africa, and America, 'from which it has derived

an immense increase of opulence, of power, and of enjoyments.' W. Robertson, *An Historical Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India* (London, 1791), p. 167.

22. Robertson did not advocate a rigid and inflexible view of historical progress. N. Hargraves 'Enterprise, Adventure and Industry: the Formation of "Commercial Character" in William Robertson's *History of America*', *History of European Ideas*, 29 (2003), pp. 33–54.
23. Hume, 'Of the Balance of Power' in *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, pp. 338–341.
24. Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts', in *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*, pp. 274–5.
25. Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, p. 487.
26. This tension is also discussed by A. Kalyvas and I. Katznelson, 'Adam Ferguson Returns; Liberalism Through a Glass, Darkly', *Political Theory* 26:2 (1988), p. 176; L. Hill, 'Ferguson and Smith on "Human Nature", "Interest" and the Role of Beneficence in Market Society', *History of Economic Ideas* 4:1–2, 1996, pp. 353–399; and R. B. Sher, 'Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, and the Problem of National Defence', *Journal of Modern History*, 61:2 (1989), pp. 240–68; Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2, p. 347. On republican themes in Scottish thought see, C. Robbins, '"When it is that Colonies may Turn Independent": An Analysis of the Environment and Politics of Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746)', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 11:2 (1954), pp. 214–51.
27. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 1; and Robertson, *The Progress of Society in Europe* (1769), ed. F. Gilbert (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 97. See also, Ferguson, A., *Analysis of Pneumatics and Moral Philosophy. For the use of Students in the College of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid & J. Bell, 1766), p. 5.
28. Adam Ferguson, *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (1792), 2 vols (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1975), vol. 1, pp. 143, 151.
29. Ferguson, *An Essay*, pp. 53–8.
30. Ibid., p. 81; Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 426. L. Hill, 'Anticipations of Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Social Thought in the Work of Adam Ferguson', *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 37:1 (1996), pp. 203–28 p. 217.
31. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 84.
32. Ibid., pp. 95, 99–100.
33. Ibid., p. 121.
34. Ferguson to Sir John Macpherson, 13 August 1802, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 92–8.
35. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 150, 155.
36. Ibid., p. 138; Ferguson, 'Of the Separation of Departments, Professions, and Tasks Resulting From the Progress of Arts in Society' in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 143–150.
37. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 241.
38. Ibid., pp. 242–3.
39. Ibid., pp. 256. Ferguson's arguments here were drawn from his earlier, *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1756), esp. pp. 6–15.
40. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 145.
41. Ibid., p. 180; see also *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 250; and Sher, 'Adam Ferguson', *Journal of Modern History*, 61:2 (1989), p. 254.
42. Ferguson, 'Of the Separation of Departments, p. 146–7; and Ferguson, 'Of Statesman and Warriours', Ibid., pp. 33–46.
43. J. B. Fagg, 'Biographical Introduction'.

44. F. J., McLynn, 'The Ideology of Jacobitism on the Eve of the Rising of 1745 – Part I', *History of European Ideas*, 6:1 (1985), p.4.
45. P. K. Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); and P. K. Monod, 'Jacobitism and Country Principles in the Reign of William III', *The Historical Journal*, 30: 2 (1987), pp. 289–310.
46. On this see, T. Hanazaki, 'A New Parliament of Birds: Aesop, Fiction, and Jacobite Rhetoric', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 27: 2 (1993–4), pp. 235–54; J. Feibel, 'Highland Histories: Jacobitism and Second Sight', *Clio*, 30:1 (2000), pp. 51–77; F. J. McLynn, 'The Ideology of Jacobitism – Part II', *History of European Ideas*, 6: 2 (1985), pp. 173–88, pp. 175–6, 183–4.
47. According to Sher, Presbyterian moderates (such as Ferguson) articulated strong rhetorical appeals for Scottish loyalty to the Hanoverian Crown in the face of the 1745 rebellion that combined 'a religiously inspired commitment to morality' with a 'civic humanist' appeal to stoic virtue. R. B. Sher, *Church and University*, pp. 40–1, 63. The SSPCK became an important part not only of Britain's internal colonization, but of its external, American colonization as well. See, F. V. Mills, 'The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge in British North America, 1730–1775', *Church History*, 63:1 (1994), pp. 15–30.
48. L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (London: Pimlico, 1992), pp. 71–85. M. Sankey and D. Szechi, 'Elite Culture and the Decline of Scottish Jacobitism 1716-1745', *Past and Present*, 173 (2001), pp. 93–4.
49. S. Conway, 'War and National Identity in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Isles', *The English Historical Review*, 116: 468, (2001), pp. 873–4; and Colley, *Britons*, p. 15.
50. I. M. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains: The Highland Regiments in the French and Indian War, 1756–1767*, 2 vols (New York: Purple Mountain Press, 2006), vol. 1, pp. 28–9.
51. M. Newton, 'Jacobite Past, Loyalist Present', *E-Keltoi: Journal of Interdisciplinary Celtic Studies*, 5 (2007), pp. 34–8. Online edition: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/celtic/ekeltoi/volumes/vol5/index.html, accessed 12 April 2008.
52. Following information on the Code is drawn from, R. Black (ed.), *An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2001), pp. xix–xx, 525–7.
53. Sher, *Church and University*, p. 259.
54. Ferguson's recollection was printed in a letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Ferguson to Dr. Blair, 18 August 1781, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, pp. 272–3. Maclaggan served as regimental chaplain to the 42nd Highland regiment from 1764 to 1788. He also amassed throughout his lifetime an extensive body of authentic Gaelic poetry.
55. This information is drawn from Ferguson to Henry Mackenzie, 26 March 1798, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, pp. 430–1.
56. These quotations come from Ferguson's letter to James Macpherson, 30 May 1793, and Ferguson to Henry Mackenzie, 26 March 1798, Ibid., vol. 2, p. 353 and p. 431.
57. Ferguson to Henry Mackenzie, 26 March 1798, Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 431.
58. Sher, *Church and University*, p. 198. J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1985), p. 7. Sher argues that this issue lay behind Ferguson's long involvement in the 'militia issue': *Church and University,* pp. 218–24.
59. See for example, 'State of the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge in the year 1769' in J. Brown, *The Extensive Influence of Religious Knowledge. A Sermon*

Preached before the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge ... June 2 1769 (Edinburgh: A. Murray and J. Cochran, 1769), p. 12. See also, McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, vol. 1, pp. 3–4. S. Nenadic, 'The Impact of the Military Profession on Highland Gentry Families, c. 1730–1830', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 85:1 (2006), pp. 82–6. Among the obvious motivations of prestige, place and pay, demonstrating personal and familial loyalty to the British Crown was an especially strong motivation among the officer class who had much to lose if their loyalty remained suspect in the wake of defeat at Culloden. Ferguson's own commanding officer, major general Lord John Murray was himself the half-brother of Lord George Murray, Bonnie Prince Charlie's wily general.

60. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, vol. 2, pp. 157–8. Some Scots intellectuals collated and contributed to Gaelic verse, employing it as a language of atonement for rebellion, loyalty to the Crown, and the need to show courage in battle for the Empire. Newton, 'Jacobite Past, Loyalist Present', pp. 38–44. A.C. Dow, *Ministers to the Soldiers of Scotland: A History of the Military Chaplains of Scotland prior to the War in the Crimea* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), pp. 195–248.
61. Anon., *Rules and articles for the better government of His Majesty's horse and foot guards, and all other his forces in Great Britain and Ireland ...* (London, 1749), pp. 3–4.
62. Railton, J., *The army's regulator, or the British monitor* (London, 1738), pp. 39–40, 45–6.
63. Agar, W. *Military devotion: or, the soldier's duty to God, his prince and his country. Containing 14 Sermons Preached at the Camps near Blandford and Dorchester A.D. 1756 and 1757* (London, 1758). R. Kane, *A system of camp-discipline, military honours, garrison-duty, and other regulations for the land forces. Collected by a gentleman of the army... by an Impartial Hand* (London: J. Millan, 1757), pp. 11, 17.
64. Ferguson's one published sermon was preached in Gaelic to his regiment on their brief return to England in December 1746 when it seemed likely they would face the Jacobite army. See, D. Kettler, 'History and Theory in Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society: A Reconsideration*', *Political Theory*, 5: 4 (1977), pp. 440–2; Ferguson, *A Sermon*. In 1745, another Highland regimental chaplain composed a sermon emphasizing the need for loyalty to the British King and for the demonstration of battlefield courage. See, L. Macpherson, *A New Form of Prayer as Used (Since the Battle of Fontenoy) by the British Troops in the Allied Army in Flanders* (London: T. Lion, 1745). The fighting capacity of Highland troops led some British commanders, such as General James Wolfe, to see their usefulness. Wolfe had been present at Culloden but earned posthumous fame by dying at the point of victory over the French at Quebec in 1759. In 1751 he commented that the Highland troops 'might be of use' in the irregular style of warfare in the backwoods of America. 'They are hardy, intrepid, accustomed to a rough country', he commented, '...and no great mischief if they fall.' 'James Wolfe to Rickson, 9 June 1751' quoted in McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, vol 1, p. 21.
65. H. Strachan, 'Scotland's Military Identity', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 85:2, (2006), pp. 315–332, pp. 321–2.
66. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains,* vol. 1, p. xvi.
67. P. P. Hutchison, *A Short History of the Highland Regiment; Interspersed with Some Occasional Observations as to the Present State of the Country* (London: Jacob Robinson, 1743), pp. 18, 21.
68. Ibid., pp. 27–36. Apparently the troops believed they were destined for the disease-ridden West Indies.

69. Stewart emphasizes the connection of the regiment to Athol, the place of Ferguson's 'nativity' (see note 55 of the present essay). D. Stewart, *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland, with Details of the Military Services of the Highland Regiments* (1822), 2nd edn, 2 vols (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1977), vol. 1, p. 243. While Stewart made a number of mistakes in his account of the regiment's origins, the connection to Athol was certainly of long standing. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains,* vol. 1, p. xvi.
70. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains,* vol. 2, p. 161.
71. For details of Ferguson's movements in this period see Fagg 'Biographical Introduction', pp. lxiv–lxv. Following the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), the regiment was transferred to Ireland to perform garrison duty. Ferguson left the regiment in 1754 as preparations were being made for deployment to America.
72. A central feature of Enlightenment conceptions of 'civilized' war was that military leaders would conduct themselves to win honour. Honour was to be won in the open conduct of battle in which the aim was to defeat the enemy by means which win the 'approbation and esteem of mankind'. Waging war according to the 'principles of humanity' would lead to abstention from 'slaughter as much as possible' and the protection of non-combatants. J. J. Burlamaqui, *The Principles of Politic Law: Being a Sequel to the Principles of Natural Law*, 2 vols (Dublin: J. Sheppard and G. Nugent, 1776), vol. 2, pp. 38, 209, 214. Considerations of interest also played a role in leading to finer calculations of the benefits of securing a peace favouring future commercial prosperity rather than continual conquest. Accordingly, under considerations of honour and interest 'the Effusion of Blood is spar'd', and indiscriminate reprisal is forbidden. S. Brewster, *Jus Feciale Anglicanum: or a Treatise on the laws of England Relating to War and Rebellion*...2nd edn, (London: T. Cooper *et. al.*, 1740), p. 7. See also, F. Hutcheson, *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy in Three Books* (Glasgow: Robert Foulis, 1747), pp. 232–4, 333; Hume, 'Of Refinements in the Arts', *Essays Moral, Political and Literary,* p. 274; C. Lofft, *Elements of Universal Law, and Particularly of the Law of England* (London: His Majesty's Law Printers, 1779), p. 127. On the battle of Fontenoy, see R. Weigley, *The Age of Battles: The Quest for Decisive Battle From Breitenfeld to Waterloo*, (London: Pimlico, 1993), pp. 203–7; and J. Black, *Warfare in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Cassell, 1999), pp. 187–8.
73. Stewart, *Sketches of the Highlanders,* vol. 1, p. 266.
74. Weigley, *The Age of Battles*, p. 206.
75. Ibid.
76. 'An Account of the action between the allied army and that of France, near Tournay, the 11th of May, N.S. 1745...' *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 15 (May 1745), p. 247.
77. Anon., *The Journal of the Battle of Fontenoy: as it was Drawn up and Published by Order of His Most Christian Majesty* (London: M. Cooper, 1745), p. 6.
78. John Lindsay, Earl of Craufurd, *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Right Honourable John Earl of Craufurd* (London, 1769), p. 303.
79. M. de Voltaire, *The History of the War of 1741* (London, 1756), p. 215. Voltaire's story remained little changed in his later *The Age of Louis XV. Being the Sequel of the Age of Louis XIV* (Dublin: G. Faulkner, J. Exshaw, H. Saunders, W. Sleater, D. Chamberlain *et. al.*, 1770), p. 142.
80. W. H. Dilworth, *The Life and Military History of the Celebrated Marshal Saxe* (London: G. Wright, 1758), pp. 84–5.

81. The following supposition is informed by the analysis of David Chandler's, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Marlborough* (London: Batsford, 1976), pp. 119–127.
82. Interestingly, the story less often told about Fontenoy pertains to the controversy after the battle about French atrocities. A writer identifying himself only as an army surgeon asserted in the *London Magazine* that the wagons and surgeons sent to treat and to retrieve the Allied wounded were impounded and robbed by the French causing further loss of life, *London Magazine, and Monthly Chronologer* (June 1745), pp. 296–7. The surgeon further relates that pieces of broken glass, flint and twisted metal from French cannon fire were extracted from the soldiers' wounds and presented to the Duke of Cumberland. Cumberland is said to have sent the bloody pieces to de Saxe with a letter to the effect that '... if he intended to make War like a *Turk*, and not like a *Christian*, he would learn in future how to receive them.' Samuel Boyse repeated the story claiming that the pieces of glass etc., had been taken from the body of Sir James Campbell, adding that wounded British soldiers left on the field were 'barbarously murder'd by the Enemy, who knock'd them o' the Head in cold Blood, with such harsh Expressions as these, *You Dogs! Are you not dead yet?*' S. Boyse, *An Historical Review of the Transactions of Europe, from the Commencement of the War with Spain in 1739, to the Insurrection in Scotland in 1745* (London: D. Henry, 1747-8), pp.150, 153. These stories were also aired in Anon., *A Copy of a Letter from a Person of Distinction at the Hague, to the Abbe de la Ville* (London: M. Cooper, 1745).
83. Ferguson's letters do not indicate that he was present himself. See Letters 1 (to John Adam, 11 September 1745) and 15 (to Gilbert Elliot, 19 March 1758) both in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. 3–6 and 26–27. Hamowy writes that 'He [Ferguson] joined the regiment in Flanders and accompanied it at the battle of Fontenoy', R. Hamowy, 'Progress and Commerce in Anglo-American Thought: The Social Philosophy of Adam Ferguson', *Interpretation*, 14: 1 (1986), p. 62. Others who place Ferguson at Fontenoy include: A. C. Dow, *Ministers to the Soldiers of Scotland: A History of the Military Chaplains of Scotland prior to the War in the Crimea*, (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962) p. 231; and R. Sorenson, 'Fame as the Forgotten Philosopher: Meditations on the Headstone of Adam Ferguson', *Philosophy*, 77 (2002), pp. 109–14, p. 110. Kettler makes no mention of Fontenoy, noting only that Ferguson served in General St Clair's 'disasterous expedition to Brittany' and that he applied for release after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. D. Kettler, *The Social and Political Thought of Adam Ferguson* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1965), pp. 45–7. Brewer denies that Ferguson could have participated in the battle because it was 'fought months before he even enlisted', see 'Putting Adam Ferguson in his Place', p. 114.
84. H.G. Graham, *Scottish Men of Letters in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1908), pp. 107–8.
85. D. Stewart, *Sketches of the Highlanders*, vol. 2, p. lvii.
86. McCulloch, *Sons of the Mountains*, vol. 1, p. xvii. Of his sources, Stewart refers to 'several old officers', an officer's wife, and 'several Highland gentlemen' who had formerly served as soldiers in the 43rd 'when first organized'. Stewart, *Sketches of the Highlanders,* vol. 1, p. viii. McCulloch also suggests that Stewart lived in London when compiling his information and drew on the memories of veterans at Chelsea Hospital.
87. Nonetheless, one of Ferguson's brothers, Alexander, did fight at Fontenoy, was wounded and taken prisoner. Ferguson to Gilbert Elliot, 19 March 1758, in Merolle, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. 26–7.
88. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 189–90.

89. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 295.
90. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 190.
91. R. Weigley, *The Age of Battles*, p. 211.
92. Brewster, *Jus feciale Anglicanum*, pp. 7, 30, 34, 51. See also note 19 in this essay.
93. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 131.
94. Sir Grey Cooper to Ferguson, 23 March 1776', in Merolle, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, p. 137. All following references to Ferguson's pamphlet are from, A. Ferguson, *Remarks on a Pamphlet lately Published by Dr. Price* ... (London: T.Cadell, 1776), pp. 21, 27, 35, 41.
95. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p. 59.
96. See for example, Carlisle Commission, 'Manifesto and Proclamation', *Collection of papers that have been published at different times, relating to the proceedings of His majesty's Commissioners* (New York: James Rivington, 1778), pp. 1–43. This manifesto (the Carlisle Commission and Ferguson himself) was roundly condemned by Thomas Paine in letter 6 (20 October 1778) of *The Crisis* (New York: Dolphin Books, 1960), pp. 154–63. See also, D. I. Fagerstrom, 'Scottish Opinion and the American Revolution', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 11:2 (1954), pp. 252–75.
97. Anon., 'Protest of the Lords, Dec 7, 1778', *Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics and Literature for the Years 1778*, (London: J. Dodsley, 1781), pp. 300–3.
98. Fagg, 'Biographical Introduction', pp. liii-lv. In private correspondence, Ferguson's views appear complicated but tending toward severity. In 1778 for example, he proffered his views on the proper conduct of the war, noting that the objective of military campaigns was to 'induce' the 'Rebels' to 'prefer accommodation to the Continuance of Such A War. But Lord have mercy on those who expect any Good in this business without Sufficient Instruments of Terror in one hand & of Moderation and justice in the Other.' Ferguson to John Macpherson, 15 January 1778, in *Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, p. 162. In 1780 he wrote to Eden that there 'never was a National Cause more just than ours ... against France & Spain and all their Abettors'. Indeed, he suggested that '[every] well meaning Clergyman ought to Stuff his Sermon' with righteous indignation, telling the Americans that they have been 'Spared by Providence' alone and that they were 'Traytors to their King'. Ferguson to William Eden, 2 January 1780, Ibid., vol. 1, p. 227.
99. A. Ferguson, 'Notes on the Enquiry into General Sir William Howe's Conduct in the American War, 10 May 1779,' in Ibid., vol. 2, p. 561.
100. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 562–4.
101. A. Ferguson, *Institutes of Moral Philosophy*, 3rd edn (Edinburgh: John Bell and William Creech, 1785), pp. 227–8.
102. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 253, 256.
103. J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1985), p. 7.
104. Ferguson, 'Of Statesmen and Warriours', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 35.
105. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 415, 425; and Kettler, *Social and Political Thought*, footnote 11, pp. 100–1.
106. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. R. H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976; rpt Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1981), vol. 2, V.i.a (p. 695).
107. Ferguson to Smith 1776, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. 142–3.
108. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue*, pp. 88–90.
109. Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, vol. 2, V.i.a (p. 706).

110. Ferguson, *Reflections*, pp. 24–5. Here I concur with Raynor who argues that Ferguson's apprehensions about national defence shaped his conviction that the virtuous should serve in the militia. D. Raynor, 'Ferguson's *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia*' in E. Heath and V. Merolle (eds), *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature* (London Pickering and Chatto, 2008), pp. 65–72.
11. Hill, *The Passionate Society*, pp. 176–182.
112. Ferguson, *Reflections*, p. 18.
113. Ibid., p. 35.
114. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 216–7.
115. Ibid., pp. 219–20.
116. Ibid., pp. 148, 257. Notwithstanding those concerns, Ferguson would later take a hard-line against American Independence. See Ferguson, 'Notes', in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, p. 564. See also, 'Memorial Respecting the Measures to be Pursued on the Present Immediate Prospect of a Final Separation Of The American Colonys from Great Britain', in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, pp. 556–9.
117. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2, p. 350.
118. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 225.
119. L. Hill, 'Adam Ferguson and the Paradox of Progress and Decline', pp. 677–706.
120. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 225, 228, 238–9.

3 Raynor, 'Why Did David Hume Dislike Adam Ferguson's *An Essay on The History Of Civil Society*?'

1. Hume to Smith, 12 April 1759, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 304.
2. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. xvii.
3. Hume to Blair, 11 February 1766, Hume *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 2, pp. 11–12.
4. Ferguson, *Reflections*, p. 53.
5. *Diary of George Ridpath, 1755–1761* (Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Society, 1922), p. 126.
6. Hume to Blair, 24 February 1767, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 2, p. 121.
7. Hume to William Robertson, 19 March 1767, Ibid., pp. 131–2.
8. Hume to Hutcheson, 17 September 1739, Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 32–3.
9. Anon., Review of *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, *Critical Review* (February 1767), pp. 180–6. The quotations are taken from pages 180 and 186.
10. Anon., Review of *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, *Scots Magazine*, March 1767, pp. 149–152.
11. The serialized review took up pp. 220–4 in the March number, pp. 257–70 in the April number, and pp. 341–52 in the May number. The review consists primarily of extracts from the book itself. For the attribution to Rose, see B. Nangle, *The Monthly Review, New Series, 1749–1789: Index of Contributors and Articles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), p. 11.
12. 'I am much Obliged to you for the Review and to the Author of it for his favour & partiality to me.' Ferguson to Hume, 17 April 1767, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, p. 75.
13. Anon., Review of Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society, The Monthly Review*, *Monthly Review*, March 1767, p. 221.

14. V. P. Helming, 'Edward Gibbon and Georges Deyverdun, Collaborators in the *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne*', *PMLA* 47 (1932), p. 1039; P. B. Craddock, *Young Edward Gibbon: Gentleman of Letters* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p. 259.
15. 'On voit avec surprise que la Religion, qui a toujours tenu une si grande place dans Societé civile, n'en tient aucune dans son livre. Il semble même qu'il evit avec soin des matières aussi delicates. En louant sa prudence, il nous convient de l'imiter.', *Mémoires littéraires de la Grande Bretagne pour l'an 1767*, p. 74. It is interesting that this criticism is made almost as an afterthought in this review, whereas it had been the first of two criticisms in the earlier notice in the *Monthly Review*.
16. Hume to Smith, 28 July 1759, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 314.
17. Hume to Robertson, 1759, vol. 1, p. 299.
18. Hume to Blair, 25 March 1766, vol. 2, p. 31.
19. Hume to Robertson, 1759, vol 1, p. 300.
20. Hume to Smith, 12 April 1759, *New Letters of David Hume*, ed. R. Klibansky and E.C.Mossner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 540.
21. Anon., in *Critical Review* (February 1767), p. 103. This fifteen-page review was subsequently reprinted in the *Scots Magazine*. Reasons for tentatively attributing it to Hume are given in D. Raynor, 'Hume and Robertson's *History of Scotland*', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 10 (1987), pp. 59–63.
22. Lord Kames to Mrs Montagu, 6 March 1767, in H. Kames, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Honourable Henry Home of Kames*, ed. A. F. Tytler, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1807), vol. 2, pp. 48–9.
23. Mrs Montagu to Lord Kames, 24 March 1767, Ibid., vol. 2, p. 50.
24. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 61.
25. Ferguson to Hume, 17 April 1767, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol. 1, pp. 75–6.
26. Hume, 'Of Commerce', in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 259 and 262ff. For Hume's treatment of Sparta, see C. J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 142–52.
27. Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts', *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, p. 280.
28. *Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politicks, and Literature, for the Year 1767* (London: J. Dodsley, 1768), part 2, p. 309. Burke was responsible for compiling all of the volumes for the years from 1758 until 1764; but he is also believed to have contributed some reviews after that period, including this one, and his library contained a copy of *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*. See F. Lock, *Edmund Burke,* 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), vol. 1, p. 166; vol. 2, p. 300 n. 35.
29. 'Account of the Lacedemonians, from the celebrated President Goguet's *Origin of Laws, Arts, and Sciences, among the Nations of Antiquity*', in *Annual Register for the year 1760* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1761), part 2, pp. 1–9. In his preface to this article, Burke highlighted the one-sidedness of the Spartan republic:

    'The single point of view in which Lycurgus considered the state, whose constitution he modelled, was in that of a military establishment. To perfect this, he sacrificed almost every other purpose of government, and not a few of the most amiable of the most moral virtues. For which reason this celebrated model, though greatly admired by antiquity, and indeed justly admirable in that single view upon which it was framed, has scarcely been in any points imitated by succeeding legislators. What in reality ought we to think of an insti-

tution, which gave up all the freedom, ease, and quiet of civil society, only to be the better fitted to disquiet or enslave all that had the misfortune of being seated near them?'

30. Count de Sarsfield to Smith, 23 June 1767, in Smith, *The Correspondence of Adam Smith*, ed. E. Mossner and I. S. Ross, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 128–9.
31. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 185–8.
32. 'Ce Voyageur prend le ton du Mondain de Voltaire. Il voit d'un oeil de mepris, d'indignation, l'acharnement des Grecs pour des interêts infiniment petits, & se moque egalement de la pauvreté de Sparte & de la license d'Athènes. La Grèce entière ne lui paroit qu'une contrée sauvage, dont il se sauve au plutôt. Cette plaisanterie a peu de noblesse, & encore moins de justesse. Je conçois l'etonnement de ce Voyageur, sa crainte, son horreur à la vuê de Sparte; mais une legislation, qui fesoit dedaigner à ses Citoyens les depouilles de l'Asie, est peu propre à inspirer le mepris. A Athènes se feroit il encore crû dans une Horde Tartare, après avoir entendu une tragedie d'Euripide dans un théatre elevé par Phidias. Une plaisanterie de Mr. Hume paroit avoir fournit l'idée de celle-ci; mais Virgile lui-même reconnut, qu'il etoit plus aisé d'arracher à Hercules sa massuë, que d'enlever un vers à Homère.' *Mémoires littéraires*, pp. 63–4. The reviewer indicated Hume's 'A Dialogue' in a footnote, and in another gave Virgil's quip in the original Latin. Hume was pleased with 'A Dialogue', and maintained that he had 'scarcely wrote any thing more whimsical'. Hume to Gilbert Elliot, 10 February 1751, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 145.
33. Lord Kames to Mrs Montagu, 16 April 1767, Kames, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 53. Kames evidently did not think that Ferguson had made up this deficiency in his *Institutes of Moral Philosophy for the Use of Students in the College of Edinburgh* (1769); for he told a Swiss jurist that 'Dr Ferguson's Institutes is a careless trifle intended for his scholars and never meant to wander out of that circle'. Kames to Daniel Fellenberg, 20 April 1773, Bürgerbibliothek, Bern, Switzerland.
34. Kames, 'Preliminary Discourse; being An Investigation of the Moral Laws of Society', in *Principles of Equity*, 2nd edn, corrected and enlarged (Edinburgh, 1767), pp. 1–37.
35. 'Between Ourselves, I know not whether I ought to rejoice at Ferguson's getting the Class of moral Philosophy: He succeeded perfectly in his former Department, to speak in the ministerial Style.' Hume to Blair, 26 April 1764, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 438.
36. See my 'Adam Smith and the Virtues', *The Adam Smith Review* 2 (2006), pp. 239–45. There seems to be a brief allusion to the theories of Hume and Smith at *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 38, discussed below.
37. J. B. Fagg, 'Ferguson's Use of the Edinburgh University Library: 1764–1806', in *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature*, ed. E. Heath and V. Merolle (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), p. 60.
38. Hume to Hutcheson, 17 September 1739, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 35; emphasis added.
39. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 8–12 and 14.
40. 'Peut-être les traite-t-il trop sevèrement. Les animaux sont partout les mêmes; l'homme, au contraire, paroit partout different. Quand on compare un Anglois & un Hottentot, n'est-il pas assez naturel de soupçonner, que les qualitiés de l'Hottentot même sont aussi le fruit du tems & de l'industrie? Le langage & la societé existent à peine chez lui; le Philosophe conjecture qu'elles n'y ont pas toujours existé. Son hypothèse doit rendre

compte de leur formation, & se concilier avec ce qu'il y a de necessaire & d'invariable dans le phisique de l'animal; mais content de proposer les conjectures, il doit eviter le ton legislateur, & se borner à celui du Pirrhonien modeste.', *Mémoires littéraires*, pp. 45–6.

41. D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature: A Critical Edition*, ed. D. F. Norton and M. J. Norton, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), vol. 1, 3.2.2.14.
42. Ibid., 3.2.1 and 2.
43. Ibid., 3.2.2.13.
44. Ibid., 3.2.2.14 and 16.
45. Hume, *A Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend in Edinburgh*, in Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, vol. 2, p. 430.
46. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 3.2.2.19. 'I have never call'd Justice unnatural, but only artificial.' Hume to Hutcheson, 17 September 1739, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 33.
47. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 12.
48. 'C'est par une collection de faits, conclut nôtre Auteur, & non par des conjectures, qu'on doit juger l'homme ainsi que les animaux. C'est en rassemblant ces faits qu'on voit que l'homme est né pour la societé, qu'on a tort de distinguer l'art de la nature, & qu'au contraire l'art est naturel à l'homme.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 46
49. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 38. This entire passage was translated in the review in *Mémoires littéraires*, pp. 48–9.
50. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature,* 3.2.8.2 and 3.
51. Hume to Hutcheson, 10 January 1743, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 47.
52. Anon., *Some Late Opinions Concerning the Foundation of Morality, Examined. In a Letter to a Friend* (Edinburgh, 1753). William Strahan's printing ledgers in the British Library reveal that he printed 500 copies of this pamphlet for Dr William MacGhie (*c.*1717–56). MacGhie was a protégée of Sir John Pringle, and a classmate at Edinburgh of Hugh Blair and William Cleghorn. Hume found the pamphlet 'well wrote, but ill reason'd'. Hume to Sir David Dalrymple, 3 May 1753, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 175.
53. Ferguson, 'après avoir parlé du *Désir de la conservation*, attaque les Moralistes, qui ont tout accordé à l'amour propre interessé sans rien laisser à la bienveuillance qu'un vain nom'. *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 46. The review reports that Ferguson treats of benevolence in Sections 6 and 8: Ferguson takes 'le parti de l'homme, contre ceux qui le peignent en laid, prétendant qu'il n'en a point d'independants de l'interet personnel'. Ibid., p. 48. 'L'Auteur presente ensuite la bienveuillance comme une autre source de bonheur très liée avec le veritable amour propre. Tout ce morceau est ecrit avec beaucoup de noblesse & de chaleur, & le conduit naturellement à la sociabilité & à l'amour pour la patrie; amour dont la realité existoit chez les Grecs & chez les Romans, & dont le nom seul nous est resté.' Ibid., p. 50.
54. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 3.2.2.6.
55. Ibid., 3.2.8. 1 and 2.
56. 'On voit que Mr. F. fidèle à ses principes regarde avec horreur la moderation foible & insensible, qui ne fait ni aimer ni haïr; & qu'il envisage les guerres & les factions comme les principes de vie & mouvement. Le Philosophe tranquille fremira de cette doctrine,

mais le Citoyen zelé l'embrassera; & c'est pour lui qu'écrit Mr F.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 51.

57. Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, part 3, book 3, ch. 11.
58. In a review in the *Gazette Littéraire* of November 1764: 'But what a difference between the manners portrayed by Ossian and those presented by the Welsh poets! Bravery joined with humanity, love, friendship, and finally the purest heroism of Chivalry is to be found among the ancient Scotch; while one finds among the Welsh a warlike nation, fierce and superstitious, whose manners are less simple than crude. The ignorance of a savage people is favourable to poetry because it allows more openness, energy, and strength to the imagination and passions; but the Welsh poets, depraved by the monkish superstition and pedantry which dominated their time, already had an artificial style corrupted by bad taste and prejudices.' Translated in D. Raynor, 'Hume and Ossian', in H. Gaskill (ed.), *Ossian Revisited* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), p. 157. Hume sent Dr Hugh Blair a copy of this review from Paris.
59. 'Parmi les nations qui ne sont pas policées, les unes n'ont point, ou du moins très peu, d'idées de proprieté; les autres la connoissent.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 52.
60. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 3.2.8., pp. 1–3.
61. See Raynor, 'Hume and Ossian'.
62. 'Hume's own commitment to the life of a man of letters must hold him back from any kind of primitivist romanticism. This was why he was never happy with his friend Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, and why his emotions discharged themselves on the evident fraud of Macpherson's Ossian with something like relief.' J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 130.
63. Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts', *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 269, 271.
64. 'Ces tems barbares paroissent affreux; mais on exaggère; chaque siècle a ses consolations, ainsi que ses malheurs. Il regnoit alors une vigueur d'esprit, qui rendoit le disordre même respectable; toutes les affections, tous les attachements, etoient plus vifs.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 54.
65. 'L'Auteur me paroit, en general, un peu trop ami des siècles barbares. J'accorderois quelque poids à sa première raison, à la vigueur, ou plutôt à la dureté des esprits; mais sa dernière raison me paroit dementie par l'histoire. Parcourez les annales de ses siècles ... vous y verrez des haines eternelles, des attachemens foibles, & un fureur qui ne respectoit ni les liens du sang, ni ceux de l'amitié ... Quelles horreurs! Des pères, des enfans, des frères, des epoux massacrées les uns par les autres; & la cruauté la plus impitoyable toujours accompagné de la plus basse perfidie. Violà ce qu'on appelle *toutes les affections, tous les attachemens plus vifs.*' Ibid., pp. 54–5. The best place to see Hume's attitude towards these barbarous times is his essay 'Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations', in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 377–464.
66. Hume to Blair, 1 April 1767, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume,* vol. 2, p. 133.
67. Hume to Blair, 20 May 1767, Ibid., vol. 2, p. 136.
68. *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 56.
69. 'Il suit les ideés & le plan de ce grande homme, & en fait un fort bon commentaire: On voit qu'il a bien lu Montesquieu, qu il traite *de profond Politique & de Moraliste aimable*. Mr. Ferguson est bien sur de marcher à ses cotés dans cette dernière qualité du moins.

Il develope avec clarté les principes de la Democratie, de l' Aristocratie, & de la Monarchie. C'est toujours *la vertu, la moderation, & l'honneur*, qu'il expose d'après son illustre Guide, sans daigner repondre aux objections qu'on fait contre ces principes.' Ibid., pp. 51–2.

70. These definitions are taken from Hume's 'Of National Characters', *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, p. 198.
71. Hume, 'Of National Characters', p. 202.
72. P. Chamley, 'The Conflict between Montesquieu and Hume', in A. Skinner and T. Wilson (eds), *Essays on Adam Smith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 274-305.
73. Hume to President de Montesquieu, 10 April 1749, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, pp. 133–8.
74. Hume, 'Of National Characters', in Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary,* pp. 202, 198, and 200.
75. Ibid., p. 204. Hume sets out *nine* arguments supporting his thesis. It is also worth noting that as early as 1739 Hume had argued that national characters were the result of sympathy rather than air and climate. He thought of this issue long before he encountered Montesquieu in 1748. In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (2.1.11.2), he writes: 'To this principle [of sympathy] we ought to ascribe the great uniformity we may observe in the humours and turn of thinking of those of the same nation; and it is much more probable, that this resemblance arises from sympathy, than from any influence of the soil and climate, which, though they continue invariably the same, are not able to preserve the character of a nation the same for a century together'.
76. Anon., [probably W. Rose], Review of Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, *Monthly Review* (April 1767), pp. 548–9.
77. Quoted in R. Shackleton, *Montesquieu: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 302.
78. 'C'est une question très delicate que l'influence du Phisique sur le Moral, non seulement par les bornes qu'un vrai Philosophe doit lui donner, mais encore par l'action & la reaction perpetuelles qu'il faut calculer sans cesse, & qui se derobent toujours au calcul. Mr. Ferguson s'avance peut-être un peu trop loin en renfermant l'Imagination dans les climats auxquels la Nature a accordé la vigne & le figuier: Cet arrêt me paroit singulier de la part d'un compatriote de Thompson. Mr Ferguson lui-meme, quoiqu' Ecossois, montre beaucoup d'imagination dans son parallêle de l'Arabe & du Lapon avec les animaux de leurs pais, respectifs le cheval & le renne. Le climat de l'Arabie a doué ses habitants de la force, de la vivacité, & de la legereté. Celui de la Laponie n'a laissé aux animaux qu'il produit qu'une dureté inflexible qui resiste a la faim & aux fatigues, mais qui succombe sous un ciel etranger. Nôtre Auteur peint avec feu: Mais ne fait il pas que le climat des Indes & de l'Affrique nourrit le plus grand, le plus fort, le plus intelligent de tous quadrupedes? Les hommes de ces mêmes contrées sont mechans, lâches, ou stupides.' *Mémoires littéraires*, pp. 55–6.
79. 'Il s'excuse de sa longeur en disant d'après Xenophon, que les Spartiates sont le seul peuple, où la vertu ait été affaire d'Etat.' Ibid., p. 59.
80. 'Peut-être cette section auroit-elle dû preceder celle de la Defence & de la Conquete.' Ibid., p. 58.
81. 'Il regrette les tems où la toge & les armes n'etoient point indignement separées; où le Citoyen combattoit pour sa patrie.' Ibid., p. 58.

82. Edward Gibbon, writing for a posterity that might not know the difference between these forms of military service, explains the difference thus: 'The defence of the state may be imposed on the body of the people, or it may be delegated to a select number of mercenaries: the exercise of arms may be an occasional duty or a separate trade; and it is this difference which forms the distinction between a militia and a standing army.' E. Gibbon, *Memoirs of My Life*, ed. G. A. Bonnard (London: Nelson, 1966), p. 107. He was thinking of a universal compulsory militia as in Switzerland, not a select voluntary one of the sort that Ferguson advocated and the Duke of Argyll's Fencible Regiments in many respects instantiated.
83. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 146. This is the *only* sentence from 'Of National Defense and Conquest' that is quoted in *Mémoires littéraires*, p.58.
84. 'Ces armées mercenaires contribuent beaucoup à etouffer les vertus nationales. Elles sont d'ailleurs très dangereuses, & peuvent bouleverser un jour l'Europe & le Globe entier.' Helming, *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 58.
85. 'Mr. Ferguson, après avoir montré les divers avantages qui peuvent contribuer à la felicité d'une nation, conclut, que cependant c'est surtout son caractère qui en fait la force. La phalange d'Agesilas defendoit mieux Sparta, que toute autre fortification.' Ibid., p. 50
86. D. Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 212. In a note he usefully collects many of these passages.
87. Ferguson, *Reflections*, p. 33.
88. Ibid., pp. 46, 47, 53.
89. Ibid., p. 51.
90. J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1985), p. 91.
91. Gibbon, *Memoirs of My Life*, p. 109. Gibbon compared the English militia of 1758 unfavourably with the Swiss militia: 'Instead of summoning to the standard *all* the inhabitants of the Kingdom who were not disabled by age, or excused by some indispensable avocation, they directed that a moderate proportion should be chosen by lot for the term of three years, at the end of which their places were to be supplied by a new and similar ballot. Every man who was drawn had the option of serving in person, of finding a substitute, or of paying ten pounds; and in a country already burthened, this honourable duty was degraded into a tax'. For the history of this legislation, as well as an interpretation of Ferguson's pamphlet, see Raynor, 'Ferguson's *Reflections*'. In his 'Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth' Hume advocated a militia on the Swiss model, observing that 'without a militia, it is in vain to think that any free government will ever have security or stability'. *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 520, 525.
92. Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts', in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 268–9. This aim for balance, but with a bias towards luxury, is also evident in the index that Hume himself prepared for the 1758 edition of his *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*: 'Luxury, its different Senses – its Advantages – its Disadvantages – Luxurious ages most happy – most virtuous.'
93. *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 69.
94. 'Nous transcririons volontiers toute cette section, où l'Auteur nous paroit tenir un juste milieu sur une matière qu'on a bien rarement traitée avec moderation.' Ibid., p. 70.
95. 'Le Luxe, en soi-même innocent, conduit souvent à la Corruption; parceque les richesses deviennent une distinction exclusive, & qu'on regarde l'interêt comme la route à la

consideration & à l'honneur ... La corruption ne nait pas seulement de l'abus des arts du commerce, il faut encore qu'il s'y joigne des vices dans la situation politique.' Ibid., p. 70. This last sentence translates part of an important sentence at *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 242.

96. Hume, 'Of Refinement in the Arts', in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, p. 269.
97. Ibid., pp. 272 and 280.
98. This seems to be suggested in Ferguson's dialogue 'Of the Principles of Moral Estimation'. F. A. Hayek has argued that Mandeville 'made Hume possible': 'It is only in Hume's work that the significance of Mandeville's efforts becomes wholly clear, and it was through Hume that he exerted his most lasting influence'. F. A. Hayek, 'Dr Bernard Mandeville', in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 52 (1962), pp. 125–41, p. 139.
99. See Raynor, 'Who Invented the Invisible Hand?', *Times Literary Supplement* (14 August 1998) p. 22. This prints a manuscript in Hume's handwriting found among the Pulteney Papers at the Huntington Library. The manuscript is catalogued as PU 1806, and most of it was printed as a preface to Charles Smith, *A Short Essay on the Corn Trade and the Corn Laws* (Edinburgh, 1758), pp. iii–vi.
100. 'Je suis faché de ne pouvoir m'etendre d'avantage sur ces vues qui réunissent le double agrément de la nouveauté & de la vraisemblance.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 57.
101. 'Ferguson seems to have been immensely popular in his time, and certainly he has a skill for polished phrase, and a genial paraphrase of other men's ideas. His *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), which in a quarter of a century went through six editions, was thought by Helvétius superior to Montesquieu, though Hume himself, as always the incarnation of kindness, recommended its suppression. At least Ferguson read enough of Montesquieu to make some fluent generalities sound plausible.' H. Laski, *Political Thought in England: Locke to Bentham* (New York: Henry Holt, 1920), pp. 172–3.
102. 'On n'y voit point cet esprit de systêmes, où l'Imagination nous promène de chimères en chimères; tout est bâti sur les faits, & appuié par des raisonnemens presque toujours justes. Ceux qui cherchent le Roman dans la Philosophie diront peut-être, il n'y a rien de neuf dans cet ouvrage. Et n'avez vous pas encore assez vû de ces Globes colorés jeux d'une imagination enfantine, & qu'on souffle de la raison fait evanouïr? Il y a d'ailleurs dans le livre de Mr. Ferguson quelques points de vue qui ont le merite de la nouveauté.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 73–4.
103. 'Malgré l'elegance du stile de Mr. Ferguson, on voit qu'il cherche plus à être utile qu'à briller...' Ibid., p. 74.
104. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 12.
105. Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (London, 1779), Part 10.
106. 'C'est par cette idée consolante que Mr. Ferguson termine son ouvrage. Seroit elle aussi juste qu'elle est consolante? L'histoire ne m'offre point l'exemple de ce cercle politique.' *Mémoires littéraires*, p. 72.
107. '... il semble qu'il y en a plus d'une qui s'avance à grands pas vers le Despotisme. Quel sera enfin leur sort? Nous sommes Journalistes, & non point Prophètes.' Ibid., p. 73.
108. See Part 5 of his *Characteristics of the Present Political State of Great Britain* (London, 1758). At page 193 Wallace noted: 'Few things are more popular, than severity against national vices. Those divines, who paint their audience blackest, raise the most dreadful specters, and speak the worst of the times and of human nature, are frequently the most popular'.
109. Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 225. He argues that Hume 'was wholly untouched by that Machiavellian moralism, or

the political pathology concerned with the degree of corruption and lack of public spirit in a state, which was all-pervasive in eighteenth-century Britain ...When tempted to talk of Hume's 'social pessimism', it is worth remembering that he never fell for this form of it, fashionable as it was...'.

110. Gibbon to George Lewis Scott, 19 October 1767, in E. Gibbon, *The Letters of Edward Gibbon*, ed. J.E. Norton, 3 vols (London: Cassells, 1956), vol. 1, p. 219.
111. Hume to Blair, 1 April 1767, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 2, 133–4. To Ferguson Hume reported: 'I am not hurry'd with Business. I commonly attend on the Secretary from ten to three; but often read a Book of my own, and see Company there ...', 10 March 1767, Ibid., vol. 2, 127.
112. Gibbon to Hume, 4 October 1767, in Gibbon, *The Letters of Edward Gibbon,* vol. 1, p. 218.
113. Hume to Horace Walpole, 11 November 1768, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume,* vol. 2, p. 13: 'This letter will be deliver'd to you by M. Deyverdun, a Swiss gentleman, a man of letters and of merit, whom I had occasion to know particularly, because he was in the Secretary's office, and in Mr Conway's department. He has undertaken a work, of which he has publish'd only one number, under the title of Memoirs literaires de la Grande Bretagne; and he has a second in hand. He wishes to enrich it by an account of Lord Herbert's Life; but not knowing where to find a copy, he uses the freedom, through my recommendation, to apply to you: I hope you will have no objection to supplying him with one'.
114. '[Deyverdun] is at this time in the Secretary of State's Office ... and it was there I had an Opportunity of being acquainted, and have conceivd a great Esteem for him. He is a young Man of Knowledge and Sense, very modest and well behavd, and of irreproachable Morals. He understands English sufficiently and French is his native Language. I thought it might be of great Advantage to the young Man to be introduced to your Lordship; and he might also be of Use to you in your Embassy.' Hume to the Earl of Harcourt, 1768, in J.C. Hilson and J.V. Price, 'David Hume and Jacques-Georges Deyverdun: New Letters', *Revue de littérature compare*, 51 (1977), p. 84.
115. Gibbon to Thomas Becket, 6 September 1767, in F. P. Lock, 'New Gibbon Letters', *Review of English Studies* (forthcoming 2008), p. 2.
116. 'Réflexions sur les Doutes Historiques, par Mr. D. Hume', *Mémoires littéraires*, vol 2, pp. 26–35.
117. 'This volume did not sell any better than the first. By September 22, 1769, only twelve copies had been disposed of in England and twenty-five for sale in Germany, these latter at the wholesale price of 1*s*. 6*d.* each, while the expenses amounted to some £29.' J.E. Norton, *A Bibliography of the Works of Edward Gibbon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 13. Hume's library included a copy of this rare second volume: see D. F. Norton and M. J. Norton, *The David Hume Library* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, in association with the National Library of Scotland, 1996), pp. 37, 93.
118. Gibbon, *Memoirs of My Life*, p. 143.
119. The fourth Earl of Chesterfield appointed Deyverdun tutor to the future fifth Earl in 1772, but in October 1773 Deyverdun stepped aside. Ferguson filled the position from the summer of 1774 until 1775, when he resumed his professorship. See D. D. Raphael, D. R. Raynor, and I. S. Ross, '"This Very Awkward Affair": An Entanglement of Scottish Professors with English Lords', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 278 (1990), pp. 419–63; and D. D. Raphael, 'Adam Ferguson's Tutorship of Lord Chesterfield,' *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 323 (1994), pp. 209–23.

120. See note 14 to this essay.
121. Hume *To the* AUTHOR *of 'The Delineation of the Nature and Obligation of Morality,'* 15 March 1753, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 173.
122. This section is entitled 'Of the Different Species of Philosophy'; the quotations are drawn from paragraphs 1, 2, and 8.

4 Merolle, 'Hume as Critic of Ferguson's *Essay*'

1. Hume to A. Smith, in Hume, *New Letters of David Hume*, p. 52.
2. Hume to Robertson, 29 May 1759, Ibid., p. 57.
3. It was apparently a draft incorporated in the final book. The 'small specimen' that Hume saw in 1759 could have been the chapter 'Of Luxury' (Part 6, Section 2), which seems to echo Hume's essay of the same title ('Of Luxury', later retitled 'Of Refinement in the Arts'). See also, Ferguson *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. D. Forbes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), Part 3 ('Of the History of Policy and Arts'), Sections 7 ('Of the History of Arts') and 8 ('Of the History of Literature'). On the same subject, see the letter of Ferguson to Gilbert Elliot, 19 March 1758: 'I have begun to revise the Paper you saw, & I am changing it to a Dissertation on the Vicissitudes incident to Human Society, & propose when that is done to write two more on the History of Manners, & on the History of Literature', in Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, p. 27.
4. Apparently the *Treatise on Refinement*.
5. Hume to Hugh Blair, 11 February 1766 in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 2, pp. 11–12. Emphasis added.
6. Blair to Hume, 24 February 1766, MS R.S.E., cited in ibid., vol. 2, p. 12, n. 4. Blair added that he thought Hume too severe in his criticism.
7. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 120–1. On the same day (24 February 1767) Hume wrote these identical words to Hugh Blair: see ibid., vol. 2, p.121.
8. Hume to Ferguson, 10 of March 1767, ibid., vol. 2, pp. 125–6. Hume added: 'I had almost said universal Success, and the Expression would have been proper, as far as a book can be suppos'd to be diffus'd in a Fortnight, amidst this Hurry of Politics and Faction'.
9. Hume to Robertson, 19 March 1767, ibid., vol. 2, pp. 131–2.
10. Hume to Blair, 20 May 1767, ibid., vol. 2, p. 136.
11. Hume to Blair, 1 April 1767, ibid., vol. 2, p. 133. Italics mine.
12. T. Gray, *The Correspondence of Thomas Gray*, ed. P. Toynbee and L. Whibley, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), vol. 3, pp. 974–5.
13. Logan to Gilbert Stuart, National Library of Scotland, MS 646 f.1, and in Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol. 2, p. 575.
14. Kames, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 48.
15. Cousin, *Philosophie Écossaise*, troisième édition (Paris, 1857), p. 500.
16. H. G. Graham, *Scottish Men of Letters in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1908), pp. 113, 118.
17. L. Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, 2 vols (New York: Peter Smith, 1949), vol. 2, chap. 10, p. 215.
18. Laski maintains that 'this pinchbeck Montesquieu can best be left in the obscurity into which he has fallen', Laksi, *Political Thought in England*, p. 174.
19. D. Forbes, 'Introduction' to Ferguson, *An Essay*, p. xxv.

20. On Hume's empiricism see D. W. Livingston, *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium: Hume's Pathology of Philosophy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), esp. chap. 1 ('Is Hume an Empiricist?'), pp. 3–16. Livingston maintains that the term 'empiricist' begins only 'at the end of the nineteenth century ... to take on the favorable connotations it has today'. Therefore, his paradoxical conclusion is that 'if Hume was an empiricist, he could not have known that he was; since the favourable connotations of the term were not available to him' (p. 4).
21. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2nd edn rev. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), Introduction, p. xv.
22. Ibid., p. xvi.
23. Ibid., p. xv.
24. 'I assert, that in the *state of nature*, or that imaginary state, which preceded society ... there was no such thing as property; and consequently, cou'd be no such thing as justice or unjustice.' Ibid., III.II.ii (p. 501)
25. A. Ferguson, 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation: A Discourse between David Hume, Robert Clerk and Adam Smith', in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 207. Italics added.
26. See D. Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* in *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 3rd edn, rev. by P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 83.
27. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, p. 556.
28. Hume, 'An Abstract of a *Treatise of Human* Nature', in ibid., p. 652.
29. '[T]he reader will easily perceive, that the philosophy contain'd in this book is very sceptical, and tends to give us a notion of the imperfections and narrow limits of human understanding.' Hume, 'An Abstract', in *A Treatise of Human Nature*, p. 413. On Hume's scepticism, see Livingston, *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium*, esp. chapter 7 ('True Philosophy and the Skeptical Tradition'), pp. 143–72.
30. D. Forbes in *Hume's Philosophical Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) emphasizes the 'historical context' both of Hume's *Essays* and his *History of England*. See 'Introductory Preface', p. vii ff. He also writes (p. 193) that the occasion of Hume's first batch of political essays, published in the autumn of 1741, was the controversy generated by Walpole's administration and Bolingbroke's opposition ... Hume must have learnt much of his domestic English politics from this debate. The political topics he took up in his essays were discussed at much greater length in the journals and pamphlets of the 30s and 40s.

    Donald W. Livingston, on his part, maintains in *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984) that Hume was 'one of the very first philosophers of history' (p. 212); nevertheless, he admits, many of the *Essays Moral and Political* and of the *Political Discourses* could be classed as works of history (pp. 212–3).
31. 'Of the Liberty of the Press', *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. E. F. Miller (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1985), p. 9.
32. Hume, 'That Politics may be reduced to a Science', *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, p. 31. According to Forbes, this essay was 'designed originally for the party strife engendered by the opposition to Walpole's administration'. *Hume's Philosophical Politics*, p. 285.
33. As for the problem of the 'almost complete invisibility of Scotland as a formal presence in the *Essay*', David Allan maintains that in the work there was in reality an 'unacknowledged Scottish context', D. Allan, 'Ferguson and Scottish History: Past and Present in

An Essay on the History of Civil Society', in Heath and Merolle (eds), *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human*, pp. 24–5. The Scottish present was in fact 'clearly very much in view ... [and] the *Essay* was certainly the product of distinctively Scottish intellectual traditions' (p. 36). Nevertheless, 'Ferguson's work ... was intended specifically as an intervention in an ongoing European debate about how and whether it was possible to investigate human nature and human society by properly empirical means' (pp. 36–7). Therefore it is 'the thoroughly international context to the *Essay* that best explains Ferguson's resolute refusal to fall into the trap of making his analysis lean overtly ... upon the experiences of one country in particular' (p. 37).

34. See Hume, *The History of England*, vol. 2, p. 518.
35. J. B. Stewart defines Hume's *History* as 'primarily a tract for the times'. *The Moral and Political Philosophy of David Hume* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 298–9. Quite different is the opinion of Nicholas Phillipson, who maintains that Hume is 'the most subtly and profoundly philosophical of historians ... Nor has any other historian been guided by a philosophy which is as nuanced and profound as Hume's'. He is, therefore, 'a philosophical historian, or a historian-philosopher'. N Phillipson, *Hume* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), p. 4. Nevertheless, the author adds, 'the last chapters of the *Treatise* make it clear that he was already applying his analysis to the problems of contemporary Britain, and writing so that citizens and legislators could apply his philosophy to their own conduct; it was a project which would occupy him for the rest of his career. In three short, elegant volumes of *Essays Moral and Political*, he provided a quite remarkable account of the constitution and political culture of Walpolian Britain ...' (Ibid., p. 9). For his part, D. Forbes maintains that the *History* was written 'to teach lessons directly relevant to contemporary politics ... It was an establishment history'. Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics*, p. 264. A fundamental point of the present author is that Hume 'deserted philosophical studies in favor of historical at about the age of thirty-five', at least according to R. G. Collingwood – *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 73 – as cited by D. W. Livingston, *Hume's Philosophy of Common Life*, p. 211. It must be pointed out, however, that Livingston challenges this 'prevailing attitude' (p. 211) and concludes that 'it is clear that Hume at no time abandoned philosophy for history' (p. 214).
36. Hume *The History of England,* vol. 2, p. 3. In this sense Sir Leslie Stephen, according to whom 'It is no wonder if history presented itself as a mere undecipherable maze to the eighteenth-century thinkers, of whom Hume is the most complete representative ... [T]hey saw nothing but a meaningless collection of facts, through which ran no connecting principle'. *History of English Thought*, vol. 2, ch. 10, p. 185.
37. On this subject see note 33 to this volume.
38. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. D. Forbes, p. 1.
39. Ibid., p. 2. He adds that 'general principles ... are useful only so far as they are founded on just observation' (p. 3).
40. Ferguson, *An Essay*, p. 2. On 'natural history' see C. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), particularly ch. 3, 'Science, Explanation, and History'.
41. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 3. Italics added.
42. Ibid., p. 4.
43. Ibid., pp. 4–5.
44. 'What [Hume] found alien and untenable [in *An Essay*] was surely the insistence upon the inevitability of progress, upon the principle of perfection. These doctrines Hume had repudiated in the *philosophes*; it is thus no coincidence that the *philosophes*, for their part,

approved of Ferguson.' E. C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1980), p. 543.

45. M. de Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un Tableau du Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*, ed. O.H. Prior and J. Vrin (Paris, 1970), pp. 9–10 (translation by author).
46. A. R. J. Turgot, *Tableau*, in *Oeuvres de Turgot*, 5 vols (Paris: F. Alcan, 1913-23), vol. 1, p. 219 (translation by author).
47. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, pp. 6–7. Italics mine. These concepts occur *verbatim* in Benedetto Croce, the philosopher of liberty, who writes that 'life is struggle and struggle is endless and the stasis of good is as absurd as the stasis of evil ... the ethics of liberty ... puts the end not in the incoherent concept of rest, of the end of sorrow, in happiness and beatitude, but in the concept coherent and clear and unambiguous of the work to be created ... the liberal conception is conscious that it brings not peace but war, not ease but suffering ... and prefers the achievements laborious and slow ...". B. Croce, 'Libertà e giustizia', in *Discorsi di Varia Filosofia*, 2 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1959), vol. 1, pp. 270–3 (translation by author). These words may serve to enlarge our understanding of the philosophy of Ferguson.
48. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, pp. 42, 44–5, 45, respectively. For the same concepts see also p. 206 and pp. 210–18.
49. Ibid., p. 218. These concepts are developed in chapters 7 and 9 of my book *Saggio su Ferguson. Con un Saggio su Millar* (Rome: Gangemi, 1994). For a discussion, see the review by D. D. Raphael, in *Eighteenth Century Scotland*, 9 (Spring 1995), pp. 24–5. See also G. L. McDowell, 'Commerce, Virtue and Politics: Adam Ferguson's Constitutionalism, in *Review of Politics*, 45 (Oct. 1983), pp. 536–52. McDowell writes that Ferguson's theory of politics and society 'was the precursor of Tocqueville's ... *Democracy in America*' (see p. 537 and pp. 545–6).
50. Ferguson, *An Essay*, p. 143. He adds that, 'in matters of particular profession, industry, and trade, the experienced practitioner is the master, and every general reasoner a novice. The object of commerce is to make the individual rich; the more he gains for himself, the more he augments the wealth of his country' (ibid. p.144).
51. To explain these problems more explicitly, another reference to the philosopher of liberty, Croce, seems essential. In his *Manifesto degli Intellettuali Antifascisti* (*Il Mondo*, 1 May 1925), in opposition to the praise of 'unanimity' of Gentile's *Manifesto degli Intellettuali Fascisti* (appearing in 'Il Popolo d'Italia', National Fascist Party, 21 April 1925), offering a specimen of his political philosophy, which was essentially a development of Hegelianism, Croce wrote, 'The essence of liberalism lies in an historical concept of free competition, including alternating parties in power, one consequence of which is that progress is realized through opposition and change'. Ideas such as these, along with that of the role of individuals in history, have always appeared to me as essential to understanding the European history of the last few centuries, especially the industrial period and the ensuing class struggles. I have been enthusiastic in tracing their history and theorized with plenty of imagination *An Essay*. They are developed in my *Saggio su Ferguson*; however, see also G. L. McDowell, 'Commerce, Virtue, and Politics'; F. A. Hayek, 'The Results of Human Action but not of Human Design', in *Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 96–105; E. Gellner, 'Adam Ferguson', in *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals* (London: Penguin, 1996), pp. 61–80; A. Kalyvas and I. Katznelson, 'Adam Ferguson's Returns: Liberalism through a Glass, Darkly', *Political Theory*, 26:2 (April, 1998), pp. 173–97, R. Hamowy, 'Progress and Commerce' in Anglo-American Thought, in *The Political Sociology of Freedom: Adam Ferguson and F. A. Hayek* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2005).

52. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 20.
53. Ibid., pp. 59–61.
54. Ibid., p. 128. Italics mine.
55. Ibid., pp. 162–3. Italics mine. On the same subject see above, n. 47 and n.51.
56. 'Of Parties in General', in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, p. 55.
57. 'Of the Parties of Great Britain', in ibid., p. 64 and 72.
58. For this subject see note 33 to this essay.
59. See F. Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus*, 2 vols (Berlin and Munich: Oldenbourg, 1936); published in English as *Historism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook,* trans. H. D. Schmidt (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), especially ch. 6, pp. 214–9. See furthermore D. Bresky, 'Schiller's Debt to Montesquieu and Adam Ferguson', in *Comparative Literature*, 13: 3 (1961), pp. 239–53, and R. Pascal, 'Herder and the Scottish Historical School', in *Publications of the English Goethe Society*, new series, 13 (1938), pp. 23–42.
60. See the letter of d'Holbach to Ferguson, 15 June 1767, in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. 77–8.
61. It would be misleading to interpret the *Essay* according to the so-called 'civic humanist paradigm' as indicated by Pocock in, for example, *The Machiavellian* Moment, p. 499. Stoic philosophy and 'civic moralism' cannot be confounded with 'civic humanism', a concept proper to the Early Renaissance and marginal to Machiavelli's thought. Ferguson knew well ancient philosophy, especially Stoicism, with its principle of commitment to political life, but scarcely knew the authors of the Italian Renaissance. On this subject see V. Merolle, 'Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Germany', in *Scottish Studies Newsletter*, 27 (Summer 1997), pp. 10–19. That said, it is nevertheless true that the reference to Machiavelli first occurs in Meinecke, who, in *Historismus*, fully analysed Ferguson's pre-Romanticism, noting how his notion of spiritual vigour bears comparison both to Machiavelli's concept of *virtù*, and Leopold von Ranke's understanding of the '*moral energies* of a nation'. Meinecke, *Historismus*, p. 217.
62. Lord Kames to Mrs Montague, Edinburgh, 6 March 1767, in Kanes, *Memoirs of Henry Home of Kames*, vol. 2, pp. 48–9.
63. Mrs Montague to Lord Kames, 2 March 1767, in ibid., vol. 2, pp. 50–1.
64. Lord Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: W. Creech; and London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1774), vol. 1, p. 445.
65. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 449.
66. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 433.
67. Ibid. pp. 457 and 446, respectively. On the luxury debate see C. J. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment*, especially ch. 6. According to Berry, Kames echoes Ferguson.
68. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, Part 6, Section 3, 'Of the Corruption incident to Polished Nations', p. 250; but see also Section 2 of Part 4, 'Of Luxury'.
69. As has been said in note 3, on its first publication this essay was entitled 'Of Luxury'.
70. Hume, 'Of Commerce', in *Essays Moral Political and Literary*, p. 259.
71. 'Of Refinement in the Arts', ibid., p. 269.
72. Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* Section 1 ('Of the Different Species of Philosophy'), pp. 5–6.
73. Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics*, pp. 224–5.

74. Hume to Henry Home, 13 June 1742, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, pp. 41–2. Quite different is the portrait of Cicero by Montesquieu, who considers the Roman orator and statesman 'de tous les anciens, celui ... à qui j'aimerois mieux rassembler ... On remarque, dans ses ouvrages de morale, un air de gaieté et un certain contentement d'esprit que les philosophes médiocres ne connoissent point ... N'est-il pas vrai que déclamer la *Seconde Philippique* devant Antoine, c'était courir à une mort certaine? ... dans un Sénat qui était entouré de ses soldats ...'. Montesquieu, *Discours sur Cicéron*, in *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. Roger Callois, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), vol. 1, pp. 93–8.
75. Hume, *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Section 1, p. 7.
76. Ibid., section 5, p. 40.
77. See V. Merolle, 'Introductory Essay: Ferguson's Political Philosophy', in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, especially pp. xi–xxi.
78. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 223.
79. Ibid., pp. 223–4.
80. Ibid., p. 225.
81. Ibid., pp. 263–6. Italics mine. For the same concept see Benjamin Constant: 'Le danger de la liberté moderne, c'est que nous ne renoncions trop facilement à notre droit de partage dans le pouvoir politique. Les dépositaires de l'autorité ne manquent pas de nous y exhorter. Ils sont si disposés à nous épargner toute espèce de peine, excepté celle d'obéir et de payer ... Non, messieurs, ne laissons pas faire. Quelque touchant que soit un intérêt si tendre, prions l'autorité de rester dans ses limites. Qu'elle se borne à être juste; nous nous chargerons d'être heureux". Constant, 'De la liberté des anciens comparée à celle des modernes', in M. E. Laboulaye (ed.), *Cours de Politique Constitutionnelle*, 2 vols (Paris: 1861), vol. 2, p. 558.
82. On this subject see V. Merolle, 'Adam Ferguson, a Man of the Scottish Enlightenment, or a European Figure?', in *2000: The European Journal*, 8:2 (December 2007), pp. 3–5.
83. See in particular *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*. See also the essay of D. Raynor, 'Ferguson's *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia*', in Heath and Merolle (eds), *Adam Ferguson*, pp. 65–72.
84. 'Of Statesmen and Warriours,' in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson,* pp. 33–46.
85. To understand Ferguson's theorizing one must consider the Scottish history of his years, in particular, the contests of parties so well described by John Millar of Glasgow in his *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1771) and *An Historical View of the English Government* (1787). Millar was defined by John Rae as 'the most effective and influential apostle of Liberalism in Scotland in that age'. See Rae, *Life of Adam Smith* (London, 1895), pp. 53–4.
86. Hume to Blair, 1 April 1767, Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 2, p. 133.
87. This statement could appear contradictory, at least if we consider Hume's own words in a letter to Turgot: 'I know you are one of those, who entertain the agreeable and laudable, if not too sanguine hope, that human Society is capable of perpetual Progress towards Perfection ... Pray, do not the late Events in this Country appear a little contrary to your System? Here is a people thrown into Disorders ... merely from the Abuse of Liberty, chiefly the Liberty of the Press ...' Letter of 16 June 1768, in ibid., vol. 2, p. 180. Apart from the tone of raillery in Hume's words, and not forgetting his political positions (having turned conservative), one must consider that here we deal with the man, not the philosopher. Of Hume's philosophy one may well say, as Ferguson did, that it rather tried 'to pull down other Peoples Doctrines than Establish any of [his] own' (Ferguson,

'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation', *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 207). In considering Hume's scepticism, if the search for evidence means empirical method, and if that empiricism leads to some version of Enlightenment, then the idea of progress is an implicit, although undeveloped, consequence of these premises.

5 Weinstein, 'The Two Adams: Ferguson and Smith on Sympathy and Sentiment'

1. Smith references advert *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondences of Adam Smith*, in particular, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), ed. A. L. Macfie and D. D. Raphael (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976; Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1982); and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), ed. R. H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976; Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1981).
2. Smith's library held all three of Ferguson's published volumes plus 'History of Peg, only lawful Sister to John Bull Esqr'. See H. Mizuta, *Adam Smith's Library: A Catalogue* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 92.
3. Hume wrote, 'Ferguson has very much polished and improved his Treatise on Refinement; and with some amendments it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and singular genius', 12 April 1759, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol. 1, p. 304. There is no evidence that Smith challenged Hume's conclusion.
4. Fagg, 'Biographical Introduction', *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. xxvi, xliv.
5. Ibid., vol. 1, p. xlv.
6. Ibid., vol. 1, p. xxx.
7. A. Carlyle, *Autobiography*, p. 229. The draft in question was probably written before April 1763 and can be found under the title 'Early Draft of Part of *The Wealth of Nations*', in A. Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, ed. R.L. Meek, D. D. Raphael, and P. G. Stein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978; Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1982), pp. 561–86.
8. Carlyle, *Autobiography*, p. 231. David Kettler lists Montesquieu as the likely writer in question. See his *Adam Ferguson: His Social and Political Thought* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2005), p. 74, n. 35.
9. A. Ferguson, 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation: A Discourse between David Hume, Robert Clerk, and Adam Smith', in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 207–15. Eugene Heath argues that Clerk is likely speaking for Ferguson, but Mossner has suggested that the dialogue is a report of an actual conversation and thus the General does not represent the author's views. See Heath, 'Introductory Essay: Ferguson's Moral Philosophy', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, pp. lxiv, lxviii, lxxv n. 86.
10. Carlyle, *Autobiography,* p. 229.
11. Ferguson to Sir John Macpherson, 31 July 1790, in Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, p. 341.
12. K. Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1, *The Process of Capitalist Production*, ed. F. Engel, rev. E. Untermann according to 4th German edn, trans. S. Moore and E. Aveling from 3rd German edn (Chicago, IL: Charles H. Kerr and Co., 1906), I.III.62 n 87. On Ferguson and Marx, see J. D. Brewer, 'Adam Ferguson and the Theme of Exploitation', *The British Journal of Sociology* 37:4 (December 1986), pp. 461–78.
13. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 140, footnote 'o'.

14. A. Oncken. 'Adam Smith *und* Adam Ferguson' *Zeitschrift für Sozialwissenschaft* 12 (1909), pp. 129 – 137; R. Hamowy 'Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and the Division of Labour', *Economica* 35:139 (August 1968), p. 249. Specifically, the issue for Smith was Ferguson's account of the division of labor and not any of the similarities I cite in this discussion.
15. Smith and Ferguson shared many philosophical influences and goals. They both had strong stoic influences and sought to challenge Hobbes and Mandeville's pictures of human nature. The overlap between Smith's work and Ferguson's *Essay* is striking at times. For example, in discussing differences in customs, both use exposure of children as an instance of cultural difference, and both employ similar terminology for their discussions of charity, occurring within their larger investigation of the role of specialization.

    Regarding the exposure of children, Smith cites its occurrence in classical Greece to show that since 'the imagination of men had been first made familiar with it in that earliest period of society', its common practice 'hindered them afterwards from perceiving its enormity' (*Theory of the Moral Sentiments*, V.2.15). Ferguson justifies its use in China by suggesting that it 'was probably meant as a relief from the burden of numerous offspring' (*An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 135). Ultimately, however, both argue that infanticide is untenable. Ferguson explains that it is 'repugnant to the human heart', and Smith concludes that is a 'dreadful violation of humanity'. And, in the end, both also conclude that the practice fails to achieve what is hoped.

    Regarding charity, in the course of discussing the human desire for dignity, Ferguson lists as one of the 'sordid' states the fact that the beggar 'depends upon charity' (*An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 176). Smith, of course, famously remarks that 'the beggar chuses to depend chiefly upon the benevolence of his fellow citizens' (*Wealth of Nations,* I.ii). Ferguson's chapter is concerned with 'the Separation of Arts & Professions' and Smith's with the division of labor. But the similarity becomes more telling when one notices that in Smith's original discussion of the topic – in his 1762–3 *Lectures on Jurisprudence* – he is reported as having said 'You do not address [the butcher or brewer's] humanity, but his self love. – Beggars are the only persons who *depend on charity* for their subsistence'. See 'Report of 1762–3', *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, p. 348, emphasis added.

    Smith's comments on the impact of the division of labor are well known – specialization improves products and efficiency. Yet Ferguson too comes to this conclusion: 'By the separation of arts and professions, the sources of wealth are laid open and every species of material is wrought up to the greatest perfection, and every commodity is produced in the greatest abundance' (*An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 173). Ferguson adds that 'mankind, in their rude state' saw 'a great uniformity of manners', but in civilized society, individuals 'are engaged in a variety of pursuits; they tread on a larger field, and separate to a greater distance' (Ibid., p. 179). Correspondingly, Smith also recognizes that the progression of history creates more diversity of occupation (see *Wealth of Nations,* i.f.52).

    In the *Essay*, Ferguson explains that commercial society, 'and the prospect of being able to exchange one commodity for another, turns, by degrees, the hunter and the warrior into a tradesman and a merchant' (*An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 180). Smith, again, famously declares that in a commercial society 'every man thus lives by exchanging, or becomes in some measure a merchant' (*Wealth of Nations,* I.iv.1). They are also both concerned with the tensions inherent in commercial society, especially the moral consequences of the desire for wealth.
16. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 16–20.

17. *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* I.i.1.1.
18. Ibid., I.i.1.3.
19. Ibid., I.i.1.3–5. For a more detailed account of sympathy and its role in overcoming social difference, particularly gender, race, and class, see J. R. Weinstein 'Sympathy, Difference, and Education: Social Unity in the Work of Adam Smith', *Economics and Philosophy*, 22:1 (April 2006), pp. 79–111.
20. P. Fontaine, 'Identification and Economic Behavior: Sympathy and Empathy in Historic Perspective', *Economics and Philosophy*, 13:2 (1997), pp. 261–80, p. 264.
21. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, I.i.4.8. I cite only the first mention of this term; Smith uses it nine times in this work.
22. Ibid., III.i.3.
23. Ibid., III.1.5.
24. H. J. Bitterman, 'Adam Smith's Empiricism and the Law of Nature I,' *The Journal of Political Economy*, 48:4 (1940), p. 510.
25. Smith *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, I.i.1.2, I.i.3.10.
26. Ibid., III.1.6.
27. Ibid., I.i.5.4.
28. Ibid., III.2.6.
29. Ibid., III.ii.I.10, III.2.6.
30. Ibid., VI.ii.1.17.
31. Here I am taking a position against the famous 'Adam Smith Problem', the argument that *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations* are incompatible because one depends on altruism while the other is built on self-interest. For a full defence of the problem's rejection, see J. R. Weinstein, *On Adam Smith* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2001); and for elaborations, see 'Review: James W. Otteson's Adam Smith's Marketplace of Life', *Mind* 113:449 (January 2004), pp. 202–7, as well as 'A Response to Lauren Brubaker', *The Adam Smith Review* 1 (2004), pp. 194–6.
32. Fagg, 'Biographical Introduction', *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol. 1, p. xxiv.
33. Mossner, 'Of The Principle of Moral Estimation: A Discourse between David Hume, Robert Clerk, and Adam Smith: An Unpublished MS by Adam Ferguson.' *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 21:2 (April-June 1960), pp. 222–242, pp. 222–3.
34. I. S. Ross, *The Life of Adam Smith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995) p. 188.
35. Again, we have a difference of opinion here; or, rather, a disagreement regarding the scope of the debate. Mossner accurately reports that Clerk's views are not representative of Ferguson's objections to Hume in either the *Essay* or *Institutes.* But Heath points out that Ferguson does offer such rejoinders in *Principles.* See Heath, 'Ferguson's Moral Philosophy', notes 106, 108, 109.
36. As a personal comment, I find it puzzling that Mossner suggests Ferguson, a man of great philosophical and literary aspiration, would spend time either transcribing or reconstructing a debate between others when he himself had much to say on the topic. There is every reason to think that Ferguson was exploring his thoughts using a literary device (dialogue) that so many of his influences had been drawn to previously; there is no biographical precedent to suggest that he had an interest in simply recording the discussions of those around him.
37. Ferguson, 'Of Statesmen and Warriours', p. 41.
38. Mossner, 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation', p. 223.
39. Heath, 'Ferguson's Moral Philosophy', p. lxiv.

40. I am inclined to think that the actual Smith could dispose of them easily. For example, one must agree with Clerk that Smith has offered a theory of conscience, but this scratches only the surface of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments.* Smith's account offers a presentation of the psychology and genesis of conscience, not just an assertion of its existence under a different name. This is no mean feat. Smith's genius in both his published books is his capacity for systemization. Schumpeter famously claimed that there was nothing original in *The Wealth of Nations*. Even if true, what makes Smith's political economy groundbreaking is its holistic picture, as well as its successful and sophisticated integration of countless elements into one theory. The same is true of the *Moral Sentiments*.
41. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 174.
42. Recall the full title of M. de Voltaire's *Candide, ou l'Optimisme* (Candide, or the Optimist).
43. Ferguson, *An Essay*, p. 9. The tension between friendship and enmity is found in the principles or dispositions that motivate Smith's agents; I have alluded to some of these already. For example, Smith writes of the 'natural preference which every man has for his own happiness above that of other people', and that each person is 'by nature, first and principally recommended to his own care' (*Theory of Moral Sentiments,* III.ii.I.10). Thus, humans have a natural tendency both to prioritize their own needs and to be the ones who are most aware of and the most capable of achieving their own needs. Second, and in tension with those principles, Smith writes, 'nature, when she formed man for society, endowed him with an original desire to please, and an original aversion to offend his brethren. She taught him to feel pleasure in their favourable, and pain in their unfavourable regard' (Ibid., III.2.6). He also argued that people are 'naturally endowed with a desire for the welfare and preservation of society' (Ibid.). Thus, people care about others by design and are inclined to cater to their needs. This tension, I would argue, are resolved by what has been called the familiarity principle. See, J. R. Weinstein, 'Sympathy, Difference, and Education: Social Unity in the Work of Adam Smith', pp. 87–90.
44. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 12.
45. Ibid., pp. 9 – 10.
46. Craig Smith argues that for Ferguson, the desire for a social contract lures us to unnecessary abstractions in scientific thought; Smith usefully parallels Ferguson's suspicions on this matter to Smith's critique of those who love the beauty of scientific systems more than the truth they hinder. See C. Smith, 'Adam Ferguson and the Danger of Books', *Journal of Scottish Philosophy* 4:2 (Autumn 2006), p. 96.
47. Ferguson writes (*An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 15), 'Of all the terms that we employ in treating of human affairs, those of *natural* and *unnatural* are the least determinate in their meaning. Opposed to affectation, forwardness, or any other defect of the temper of character, the natural is an epithet of praise; but employed to specify a conduct which proceeds from the nature of man, can serve to distinguish nothing: for all the actions of men are equally the result of their nature'.
48. Ibid., p. 14.
49. Ibid., p. 10.
50. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 123
51. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 124.
52. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 125.
53. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 126.
54. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 134.

55. Ibid.
56. As to Ferguson's realism in general and the role of God in the workings of normative moral adjudication, see J.-G. S. Chen, 'Providence and Progress: The Religious Dimensions in Ferguson's Discussion of Civil Society', in Heath and Merolle (eds), *Adam Ferguson: History Progress and Human Nature*, pp. 171–86.
57. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 14, 174.
58. Ibid., p. 77.
59. See my, 'Adam Smith's *Ad Hominem*: Eighteenth Century Insight on the role of Character in Argument', *Proceedings of the Sixth Conference of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation* (Amsterdam: Sic Sat, 2007), pp.1461–6; and, 'Emotion, Context and Rhetoric: Adam Smith's Informal Argumentation', *Proceedings of the Fifth Conference of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation* (Amsterdam: Sic Sat, 2003), pp. 1065–70.
60. Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, ed. J. C. Bryce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983; Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), Lecture 11, i.144 (p 58).
61. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 22.
62. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 71.
63. Ferguson, 'Of Liberty and Necessity', in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson,* p. 218.
64. Ibid.
65. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 9.
66. Ibid., p. 34.
67. Ibid., p. 77.
68. Ibid., pp. 78, 112, 170.
69. Ibid., p. 243–4.
70. Ibid., pp. 46, 59.
71. Ferguson, 'An Excursion in the Highlands: Discourse on Various Subjects', in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson,* p. 64.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* VI.ii.1.22, III.3.4, I.i.1.5.
75. Reason here should not be confused with conscious reflection. Ferguson is clear that all individuals have reason – the intellect allows for progress of the species and the individual. But he is more critical of the use of reflection to consider reason in itself. In the *Principles*, he writes:

    > the mind is qualified by nature to recognize itself; but, on account of the little use which is commonly made of this qualification, it is aptly enough compared to the eye, that perceived every object besides itself. In most men, indeed, intelligence appears to be little more than a principle of life, or a species of organ employed in the perception of external things, but incapable of stating itself as a subject of reflection or study. It is thus that the vulgar, by disuse, or by the habit of attending only to what is presented to their senses, lose or impair the powers of reflection; and even men of science, excited by the desire of knowledge, become intimate with the laws of every nature but their own (*Principles*, vol. 1, p. 4).
76. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 1.
77. Ibid., p. 66.
78. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 16.
79. Ibid.

80. Ibid., pp. 22–3.
81. Ibid., pp. 23–4.
82. Ibid., p. 24.
83. Ibid. This is not to suggest that Ferguson is opposed to competition. As Lisa Hill writes, '[Ferguson] confronts the Aristotelian (and later Hobbesian) premise that the key purpose of society is stability and social harmony. Ferguson lays great stress on the positive benefits of competition and conflict in our social development and in the maintenance of the community. Conflict is just as natural as repose and may even be equally desirous' ('Eighteenth-Century Anticipation of the Sociology of Conflict: The Case of Adam Ferguson', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62:2 (2001), p. 282).
84. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 18, emphasis in original.
85. Ibid., p. 19.
86. Ibid., pp. 19–20.
87. Ibid., pp. 36–7.
88. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* I.i.1.1.
89. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 35.
90. Ferguson does not mean egoism here. He is simply mired in the complex relationship between self-preservation and benevolence that he is so reluctant to map.
91. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 35.
92. Ibid., p. 39.
93. Ibid., p. 36.
94. Ibid., p. 47.
95. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, II.iii.3.3.
96. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 199. For more concerning Ferguson's theory of human action see F. Oz-Salzberger, 'Ferguson's Politics of Action,' and C. Smith, 'Ferguson and the Active Genius of Mankind', both in *Adam Ferguson: History Progress and Human Nature,* pp. 147–156, and 157–170, respectively.
97. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 36.
98. Ibid., p. 36.
99. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* II.ii.1.9.
100. The full passage reads:

> Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of justice, is left perfectly free to pursue his own interest his own way, and to bring both his *industry* and *capital* into competition with those of any other man, or order of men. The sovereign is completely discharged from a duty, in the attempting to perform which he must always be exposed to innumerable delusions, and for the proper performance of which no human wisdom or knowledge could ever be sufficient; the duty of superintending the industry of private people, and of directing it towards the employments most suitable to the interest of the society (*The Wealth of Nations,* IV.ix.51, emphasis added).

101. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, III.ii.4.
102. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 41.
103. Ibid., p. 38.
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid., p. 42.
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid., p. 65.
108. Ibid., pp. 64–5.
109. Ibid., p. 59.

110. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, VII.iv.37.
111. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 43.
112. Ibid., pp. 46–7.
113. Ibid., pp. 17, 140–1, 235. Brewer writes,

> Ferguson attacks both the cultural value system in commercial society, whereby riches are made the standard against which to judge people and by which to estimate what is good, and the economic reward system in commercialism, where fortune is allowed to bestow character and rank (Brewer, 'Adam Ferguson and the Theme of Exploitation', p. 466).

114. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 251–2.
115. Ibid., pp. 132–3.
116. Ibid., pp. 42–3.
117. Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments,* III.2.4.
118. Ibid., VI.iii.46. For more on Smith's theory of education, see my: 'Adam Smith's Philosophy of Education', *The Adam Smith Review* 3 (2007), pp. 51–74.
119. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 174.
120. Smith, *Wealth of Nations,* V.i.f.50.
121. Hamowy, 'Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and the Division of Labour', p. 247. See also Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 183.
122. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 50–1.
123. Ibid., p. 56.
124. Ibid., p. 42.
125. Ibid.
126. Ibid.
127. Ibid., p. 226.

6 Hill, 'A Complicated Vision: The Good Polity in Adam Ferguson's Thought'

1. J. A. Bernstein, 'Adam Ferguson and the Idea of Progress', *Studies in Burke and His Time*, 19:2 (1978) p. 100. David Kettler, with specific reference to the progress/decline issue, argues that Ferguson's response 'could in no way be seen to form part of a coherent pattern of ideas'. D. Kettler, *Social and Political Thought*, p. 222.
2. For further discussion of 'man' as essentially political and active, see F. Oz-Salzberger, 'Ferguson's Politics of Action', and C. Smith, 'Adam Ferguson and the Active Genius of Mankind'.
3. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, pp. 47, 269 and vol. 2, p. 244; Aristotle, *Politics: The Athenian Constitution,* ed. J. Warrington (London: Heron Books, 1959), 1.1.1253a (p. 7).
4. A. Ferguson, *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (1769, New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1978), p. 44; Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 1, pp. 40–1.
5. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 9.
6. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 411–12.
7. Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 38–9 and n. 9; 'Principles of Moral Estimation' in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 209.
8. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 21.
9. See L. Hill, *The Passionate Society*, ch. 6 passim.

10. Ibid., pp. 34–8.
11. An order that is achieved via secondary causes, that is, the laws of nature, including those that inhere in the human constitution. See, for example, Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, pp. 190, 313.
12. For example, John Robertson, Richard Sher, Fania Oz-Salzberger and John Pocock put Ferguson in the republican or civic humanist camp while Ronald Hamowy, Andreas Kalyvas and Ira Katznelson, Vincenzo Merolle and Gary McDowell place him in the liberal.
13. Adam Ferguson, *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia*, (London: R and J. Dodsley, 1756), p. 3.
14. See Hill, *The Passionate Society*, ch. 10, passim.
15. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 141. The eighteenth century wealth/virtue debate was concerned with whether private wealth, personal liberty, national aggrandizement and material progress would lead to a loss of public virtue and civic spirit. For further discussion, see I. Hont, I. and M. Ignatieff, (eds), *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
16. As also noted by R. Sher, ('From Troglodytes to Americans: Montesquieu and the Scottish Enlightenment on Liberty, Virtue, and Commerce', in D. Wootton (ed.), *Republicanism, Liberty and Commercial Society, 1649–1776* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 394-5), and Gellner, 'Adam Ferguson', p. 68.
17. See Hill, *The Passionate Society*, ch. 6.
18. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 274, and *Principles,* vol. 2, pp. 291, 496–7. See also, Ferguson, *Remarks on a Pamphlet*, pp. 23–4.
19. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 120.
20. Ibid., pp. 10–14; *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 181.
21. Effected as it is by divinely endued drives, see Ferguson, *An Essay*, p. 14; *Principles* vol. 1, pp. 190, 313, 199.
22. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 1, p. 183.
23. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 162.
24. Ibid., p. 121.
25. Ibid., pp. 7, 10–11.
26. Ibid., pp. 80–105.
27. 'The seeds of every form are lodged in human nature; they spring up and ripen with the season', Ibid., p. 120.
28. Ibid., p. 215.
29. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 243.
30. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 254, n. 97.
31. Ibid., pp. 214–15.
32. Ibid., pp. 206–7.
33. Ibid., p. 231.
34. Ibid., p. 208.
35. Ibid., p. 120; *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 244.
36. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 81, 95–8.
37. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 23.
38. For a fuller discussion of this point see Hill, *The Passionate Society*, pp. 25, 54–5, 65 with 100–3, 118–20, 201–4.

39. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 63; see also his *Institutes*, pp. 268–9 and his *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (1783; London: Jones and Company, 1834), p. 235
40. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 496–8.
41. A. Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, p. 230.
42. See, for example, Ferguson, *Remarks*, pp. 9, 13; *Roman Republic*, p. 407; *An Essay*, p. 252.
43. Ferguson, *Institutes*, pp. 272–3. In some cases, monarchies may be appropriate, but only among a populace with a rigid class structure and where distinctions are maintained purely out of a sense of 'vanity and ... personal importance', Ibid., pp. 274–5.
44. Ferguson, *Remarks*, pp. 9, 11.
45. V. Merolle, *Saggio su Fergsuon con un Saggio su Millar* (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 1994), pp. 192–3; Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 263, and vol. 2, p. 465.
46. *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, p. 292.
47. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 158; *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 497, 489.
48. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 252; *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 492.
49. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 124–5, 497.
50. F. Oz-Salzberger, 'The Political Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment', p.167.
51. Merolle, *Saggio su Ferguson*, p. 189.
52. Oz-Salzberger, 'Political Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment', p. 168.
53. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 130.
54. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 244.
55. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 263.
56. D. Winch, *Adam Smith's Politics: An Essay in Historiographic Revision* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 25–6.
57. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 206.
58. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 261.
59. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 251.
60. Ibid., p. 160.
61. Ibid., p. 249.
62. Ibid., p. 160.
63. Ferguson, *Institutes*, pp. 293–4.
64. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 132–3.
65. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 510.
66. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 160.
67. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 508–10.
68. Ferguson, *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 252.
69. Ibid., pp. 62–3
70. Ibid., p. 252.
71. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 2, pp. 510–11. See also *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 209–10. And in his *Principles* (vol. 1, p. 219), Ferguson writes: 'The use of force in particular, to dictate opinion, is preposterous and ineffectual'. Ferguson also cautions against the popular but misplaced belief that the 'silence' of the people denotes consent (*An Essay*, p. 260).
72. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 510–11; *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 209–10; *Remarks*, p. 5.
73. Oz-Salzberger, 'Political Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment', p.158.

74. N. Phillipson, 'Culture and Society in the Eighteenth-Century Province: The Case of Edinburgh and the Scottish Enlightenment' in L. Stone (ed.), *The University in Society*, 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), vol. 2, pp. 407–48.
75. D. Kettler, 'The Political Vision of Adam Ferguson', pp. 775–6.
76. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 2, pp. 290, 245, 233. See also, 'Of the Separations of Departments Professons and Tasks Resulting from the Progress of Arts in Society', *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 149.
77. These 'original rights' are basically derived from the natural law of self-preservation (Ferguson, *Institutes,* pp. 172–4, 168).
78. Though Ferguson does allude to the existence of an '*equal* right' to self-defence' (*Principles*, vol. 2, p. 463). Emphasis added.
79. Ferguson, *Institutes*, pp. 178–9.
80. Ibid., p. 174.
81. Ibid., p. 291.
82. Ibid., p. 412.
83. Kettler, 'Political Vision of Adam Ferguson', pp. 775–6.
84. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 266.
85. See, for example, Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 206–213.
86. Ferguson, *Institutes*, pp. 272–3.
87. Ferguson objected to the fact that some Scottish counties operated as rotten boroughs and wrote to William Pulteney on the subject. See two letters to William Pulteney and letter to Christopher Wyvill, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 87–93 and 291–2, respectively.
88. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 471.
89. Ferguson, *Remarks*, pp. 9, 11, 15 (emphasis added).
90. Ferguson, *Roman Republic*, pp. 108–22.
91. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 262.
92. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p. 14.
93. Ibid., p. 52; Ferguson, *Roman Republic*, p. 407.
94. *Roman Republic*, pp. 108–22.
95. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 467–8
96. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 471–2.
97. M. Philp, 'English Republicanism in the 1790s', *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 6:30 (1998), p. 270
98. Ferguson wrote,

    > I sincerely believe that to preserve the rights of the people the Vigour of the Crown is not less necessary than their own. To make us happy, as our Constitution woud admit of, requires indeed many other considerations, which I hope we shall long improve or retain (*The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, pp. 291–2). For Ferguson's distaste for the suffragists (Ibid., vol. 1, p. 233).

99. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 172–5.
100. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 2, p. 492.
101. 'Separation of Departments', *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p.144.
102. F. Oz-Salzberger, 'Introduction' to Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. xii.
103. R. Hamowy, 'Progress and Commerce', p. 85.
104. R. B. Sher, *Church and University*, p. 221. In 1756, alarmed at this possibility and mindful of a shortage of regular soldiers stationed in Great Britain the English government brought over '8,600 Hanoverian and 6,500 Hessian solders'. The exercise was not only

extremely expensive but a matter of shame to '[m]any Englishmen'. D. Raynor, 'Ferguson's *Reflections*', p. 65.

105 Quoted in Sher, 'Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, and the Problem of National Defense', p. 252.

106. Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol. 1, p. 228; ibid, vol. 1, p. 231, note 'h'.

107. Raynor, 'Ferguson's *Reflections*', p. 72.

108. 'Separation of Departments', *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 148–9.

109. Ibid., p. 149.

110. P. Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands* (Basingstoke: Macmillan 1989), pp. 43–4.

111. But as Forbes rightly notes,

> [t]here is no direct mention of the Highland clan in the *Essay* ... The Highland inspiration is clothed in the fashionable garb; admiration of Sparta, the contrast between classical public spirit and modern selfishness, the appeal to the classics of modern anthropology, the manners of the American Indian, and so on (Forbes, 'Introduction' to *An Essay*, p. xxxix)

Ferguson's avoidance of references to Highland culture is likely traceable to a desire to forestall any interpretation of his nostalgia as harbouring Jacobite sympathies.

112. L. Gibbons, 'The Sympathetic Bond: Ossian, Celticism and Colonialism' in T. Brown (ed.), *Celticism* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996), p. 284. According to Nicholas Phillipson,

> Ossian was the creation of a young, unscrupulous man, James Macpherson, who was sent to the highlanders by Alexander Carlyle, Adam Ferguson and their friends to discover the epic by a Celtic Homer that they were sure must exist. No such epic existed, but Macpherson was perfectly content to construct one out of the fragments of Celtic verse he had been able to find. His patrons provided him with money, a publisher and editorial assistance, and Hugh Blair wrote a brilliant, subtle and influential essay on Ossian which was to present the fictitious bard in the guise in which he was to appear to his readers on the Continent and in the Anglo-Saxon world for the next century (Phillipson, 'The Scottish Enlightenment', p.34).

For Ferguson's denial of any involvement in a 'cheat' regarding the authorship of the material, see *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol. 2, p. 288.

113. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 179; pp. 63–4. Yet Ferguson does show signs of real sympathy for the lower orders (e.g. 'Separation of Departments', *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson,* pp. 144–5)

114. For example, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 256–7.

115. Ibid., pp. 256–7. For a fuller discussion of Ferguson's attitude here see Hill, *The Passionate Society*, pp. 167–73.

116. Indeed, in 1778 he acted as secretary to the Carlisle Commission sent to Philadelphia to effect conciliation. Following General Burgoyne's surrender to the Americans at Saratoga in October 1777, the Commission was instructed to 'offer everything short of independence if the colonies would remain loyal' (Fagg, 'Biographical Introduction', pp. xlviii, li). Ferguson was thwarted by his refusal of a passport to the capital.

117. Ferguson, *Remarks*, pp. 10–11.

118. *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. 223, 230–1.

119. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p. 59.

120. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 499.
121. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 274.
122. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 2, p. 498.
123. For example, Ferguson, *Institutes*, pp. 293–4. See also Hill, *The Passionate Society*, passim.
124. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 467. Emphasis in original.
125. Ferguson, *Remarks,* p. 22.
126. Ibid., p. 59; pp. 23–4.
127. Ibid., p. 59. Ferguson's emphasis.
128. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, pp. 498–9.
129. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 496–8.
130. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 497.
131. On this basis Edmund Burke made a distinction between the terms 'reform' and 'innovation'. He wrote: 'It was then not my love, but my hatred to innovation, that produced my Plan of Reform. Without troubling myself with the exactness of the logical diagram, I considered them as things substantially opposite. It was to prevent that evil, that I proposed the measures' (E. Burke, 'A Letter to a Noble Lord', in *Further Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. D. E. Ritchie (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1992), p. 292).
132. See, for example, Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 2, p. 27; Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 53, 180; *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 89–90.
133. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 496.
134. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 499. Yet, Ferguson sometimes seems unsure about how much responsibility individual agents should bear in the story of their own progress. He wrote, for example, that

    > [m]en are carried along in the progress of establishments and arts as vessels afloat in the water are carried along by the torrents to which it is subject. And it is uncertain how far information respecting the direction of their movements may enable them in any degree to change that direction or modify the result ('Separation of Departments', *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 145).

135. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 158–9. See also *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 61.

7 Kugler, 'Adam Ferguson and Enlightened Provincial Ideology in Scotland'

1. W. Bagehot, 'Adam Smith as a Person', in R. Barrington (ed.), *The Works and Life of Walter Bagehot*, 10 vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1915), vol. 8, p.8.
2. A. Wedderburn, 'Preface', *The Edinburgh Review*, 1: 1 (January–July, 1755), pp. i –v.
3. B. Constant, 'Ancient and Modern Liberty Compared', trans. K. Wright and K. M. Baker, in Baker (ed.) *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 452–61.
4. For instance, Forbes, *Hume's Philosophical Politics*; Pocock, 'Cambridge Paradigms and Scotch Philosophers'; R. Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: the Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), particularly pp. 242–57; and the essays by R. Emerson, F. Oz-Salzberger and M. G. H. Pittock in A. Broadie (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

5. Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World,* pp. xx–xxi. For scholarly discussion on persons and themes outside Scotland, see Andrea Baumeister, 'Kant: the Arch-enlightener', in N. Geras and R. Wokler (eds) *The Enlightenment and Modernity* (London: Macmillan and St. Martin's, 2000), pp. 50–65; and J. K. Wright, '"A Bright Clear Mirror": Cassirer's *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*', in K. M. Baker and P. H. Reill (eds) *What's Left of Enlightenment? A Postmodern Question* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 71–101.
6. F. Oz-Salzberger, *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); N. Waszek, *The Scottish Enlightenment and Hegel's Account of Civil Society* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Press, 1988); L. Dickey, *Hegel: Religion, Economics, and the Politics of the Spirit, 1770–1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
7. On the character and significance of Christian orthodoxy in the Scottish Enlightenment, see A. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), chh. 12–16; R. Wokler's response 'Projecting the Enlightenment', in J. Horton and S. Mendus (eds) *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1994), pp. 108–26; R. Sher, *Church and University*; J. R. McIntosh, *Church and Theology in Enlightenment Scotland: the Popular Party, 1740–1800* (Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Review Monograph Series, 1998).
8. Pocock, 'Clergy and Commerce'; R. Hamowy, *The Political Sociology of Freedom: Adam Ferguson and F.A. Hayek* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2005).
9. For Ferguson's zeal for the active civic life, see Pocock's *The Machiavellian Moment*, pp. 499–501, and D. Forbes, 'Introduction', to Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), pp. xiii–xli. On the Christian Stoic side of his civic outlook, see L. Hill, *The Passionate Society*, chh. 3, 7.
10. David Allan offers a good brief overview in his *Adam Ferguson*, ch. 6.
11. Two scholars stand out for their careful and thoughtful accounts of the Scottish provincial thesis. N. Phillipson emphasized the creative role played by Scottish cultural self-consciousness in an Anglophone print culture. See 'Culture and Society in the Eighteenth-Century Province'; and 'The Scottish Enlightenment', in R. Porter and M. Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 19–40. N. Landsman has narrated a British/Atlantic provincialism, particularly the cultural interactions of Scots and Americans, emphasizing their assertion of local privileges as members of an expanding British empire. Among his works see 'The Provinces and the Empire: Scotland, the American Colonies and the Development of British Provincial Identity', in L. Stone (ed.), *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 258–87; and *From Colonials to Provincials: American Thought and Culture, 1680–1760* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).
12. My more detailed and comparative European account of provincialism and provincial ideology can be found in M. Kugler, 'Provincial Intellectuals: Identity, Patriotism, and Enlightened Peripheries', *The Eighteenth-Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 37 (Summer 1996), pp. 156–73.
13. My understanding of the relationship between community, identity and social action has developed from the theories of Alfred Schutz, 'The Social World and the Theory of Social Action', in A. Brodersen (ed), *Alfred Schutz, Collected Papers*, 3 vols (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), vol. 2: *Studies in Social Theory*, p. 13.

14. Perhaps this moral recipe is 'modern' in Marshall Berman's sense: the condition of making oneself at home in a world characterized by rapid change. See M. Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), p. 11.
15. For examples of this use of 'provincial', see the letter of Hume to John Clephane, 20 April 1756, in Hume, *The Letters of David Hume*, vol 1, p. 229; Smith to Lord Fitzmaurice, 21 February 1759, in E. C. Mossner and I. S. Ross (eds) *The Correspondence of Adam Smith*, p. 28; Robertson to Hume, 27 March 1767, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, 3942, ff. 56, 57. During a threatened invasion by France, Alexander Carlyle denounced English barriers against the raising of a Scottish citizen militia: 'Are we then a province and a conquered Kingdom? ... What avails it that we are free and independent, while we create ourselves racks and bowstrings in the fear of offending, and wear chains and fetters in servility of mind?' Carlyle protested his loyalty to Britain but asserted that without the expression of independence that came with having its own citizen militia, Scotland's honour was so insulted that it would have been better had the Union never occurred. *The Question Relating to a Scots Militia* (1759–60), quoted in Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment*, p. 226. Concerning provincialism as a form of independent disloyalty, in a letter discussing the civilization of the Highlands, Lord Hopeton claimed to Lord Findlater that he was 'no provincial', for 'I have always been for the Union'. 23 January 1754, MS, Scottish Record Office, GD248/1071/16/27, 28x. In his *Essay*, Ferguson himself used 'province' to mean a conquered region: *An Essay,* ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 148, 257.
16. In another context A. MacKillop has put my point well: '... various metropolitan and provincial ideologies promoted their own particular vision of what the [British] empire was and should be all about. Imperialism [was more often] an interactive process in which peripheries constructed their own particular agendas and links with the metropolitan core, while being both influenced by and, in turn, influencing the empire's development'. '*More Fruitful than the Soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands, 1715-1815* (Edinburgh: Tuckwell Press, 2000), p. 10. N. Landsman offers a similar sense of the provincial 'point of view' in 'The Provinces and the Empire', p. 259.
17. For 'imagined community' see B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York and London: Verso, 1991).
18. D. Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994). On the widespread phenomenon of the European Enlightenment with attention to its local settings, see the essays in Porter and Teich (eds), *The Enlightenment in National Context,* and J. Robertson, 'Reaffirming the Enlightenment', *Historically Speaking*, 8 (January–February, 2007), pp. 5–7.
19. Oz-Salzberger, 'The Political Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment', p. 157. See also, J. Robertson (ed.), *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the British Union of 1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); C. Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity 1689–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Kidd, 'North Britishness and the Nature of Eighteenth-century British Patriotisms', *The Historical Journal*, 39: 2 (June 1996), pp. 361–82.
20. N. O. Keohane, *Philosophy and the State in France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980); A. Levy, *French Moralists: The Theory of the Passions 1585–1659* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964). For a European context, see Q. Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1978); G. Oestereich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State*, B. Oestereich and H.G. Koenigsberger (eds), (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). My sense of these circumstances as a European-wide moral and religious 'crisis' is best explained in W. Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance, 1550–1640* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

21. R. Emerson has posed this, asking simply if eighteenth-century Scotland, like the American colonies, were 'cultural provinces' of England? 'Did the Scottish Enlightenment Emerge in an English Cultural Province?', *Lumen*, 14 (1995), pp. 1–24. Emerson counters the influential essay by J. Clive and B. Bailyn, 'England's Cultural Provinces: Scotland and America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 2 (1954), pp. 200–13. See also, D. Daiches, *The Paradox of Scottish Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964); K. Simpson, *The Protean Scot: The Crisis of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Scottish Literature* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988); E. Richards, 'Scotland and the Uses of the Atlantic Empire', in B. Bailyn and P. D. Morgan (eds), *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).
22. In Emerson's argument, centre and periphery are not particularly useful historical concepts for understanding eighteenth-century life; in this sense, it remains unclear who exercises cultural leadership and who follows. The Enlightenment was not so much the age of 'national' enlightenments as the last great cosmopolitan and secularizing age. Finally, eighteenth-century Scottish identity had multiple reference points. Scots not only identified themselves against London's metropolitan culture, but against that of Dutch, French, even Irish culture. According to Emerson, Americans and the Scots did not see themselves as similar co-provincials. In contrasting American and Scottish experiences of London as the metropolitan centre, the Scots increasingly identified the capital as their own by century's end, but the Americans did not. The Reverend Robert Wodrow represents the Scottish experience of national independence as located in the metropolis of Glasgow, a profile difficult to explain under the provincialism thesis. He never saw himself as a provincial, but like other Scots he considered himself Scottish in national and in religious outlook. See Emerson, 'Did the Scottish Enlightenment Emerge in an English Cultural Province?'
23. Emerson, 'Did the Scottish Enlightenment Emerge in an English Cultural Province?', pp. 4–5, 13, and 21, n. 14.
24. See note 15 to this essay.
25. Wedderburn, 'Preface', *The Edinburgh Review*, pp. i–v.
26. Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*.
27. A thoughtful, well-known example is Wallace, *Characteristics of the Present State of Great Britain*, particularly Parts 3 and 5.
28. F. Venturi, *Utopia and Reform in the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 133.
29. This chronology is a bit different from that of Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 1, p. 300.
30. While stationed in Ireland with his regiment, Ferguson wrote to Lord Seafield and Findlater, a member of the Forfeited Estates commission, to answer his request for a description of local charter schools among the native Irish. See his letter of Galway 25 May 1753, in Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, pp. 9–10.
31. John Small, 'Biographical Sketch of Adam Ferguson, LL.D, F.R.S.E., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh', *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edin-*

burgh, Part 2 (1862–3), p. 602, discussed in Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol 2, pp. 528–9.

32. On this topic, see J. Moore and M. Silverthorne, 'Gershom Carmichael and the Natural Jurisprudence Tradition in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', in Hont and Ignatieff (eds), *Wealth and Virtue in the Scottish Enlightenment*, pp. 73–88; I. Hont, 'The Language of Sociability and Commerce: Samuel Pufendorf and the Theoretical Foundations of the "Four-Stages Theory"', in A. Pagden (ed.) *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 253–76; and K. Haakonssen, 'Natural Jurisprudence and the Theory of Justice', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment*, pp. 205–21.
33. See Hill, *The Passionate Society*, ch. 3.
34. M. Ingram, 'Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England', in P. Griffiths, A. Fox and S. Hindle (eds), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (London: St Martin's Press, 1996), pp. 47–88; R. B. Shoemaker, 'Reforming the City: The Reformation of Manners Campaign in London, 1690–1738', in L. Davison (ed.), *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: the Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689–1750* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 99–120.
35. Some went so far as to wonder if distinctively Scottish weapons and apparel began as imitation of imperial Roman troops. In 1742 a William Maitland wrote to Sir John Clerk, the Scottish antiquary, about his recent visit to the Roman military road along the River Tay. Maitland then posed the question of a possible cultural link between Highland culture and the ancient Romans in Britain. 'Sir, Being at a loss concerning some parts of the Highland Dress and Arms, I humbly entreat you'd be pleas'd to favour me with your opinion, which of them you take to be Roman.' MS, Scottish Record Office, GD 18/5058 (8 October 1742).
36. For Homer and Enlightened speculation about primitive society, see M. M. Rubel, *Savage and Barbarian: Historical Attitudes in the Criticism of Homer and Ossian in Britain, 1760-1800* (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing, 1978); K. Simonsuuri, *Homer's Original Genius: Eighteenth-Century Notions of the Early Greek Epic, 1688–1798* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
37. Reconciling martial and polite commitments in a single personality was a central problem of the British Enlightenment; see Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol 2, pp. 268–9.
38. These sermons include Robert Wallace, *Ignorance and Superstition a Source of Violence and Cruelty; and, in particular, the Cause of the present Rebellion* (Edinburgh, 1745); Hugh Blair, *The Importance of Religious Knowledge to the Happiness of Mankind* (Edinburgh, 1750); John Bonar, *The Nature and Necessity of a Religious Education* (Edinburgh, 1752); and William Robertson, *The Situation of the World at the Time of Christ's Appearance, and its Connection with the Success of his Religion Considered* (Edinburgh, 1755).
39. For a taste of such diagnoses and plans, see the manuscript proposals in the Seafield Muniments and the Forfeited Estates Papers, held in the Scottish Record Office.
40. Minutes of the Select Society, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates mss. 23.1.1. The sale of entailed land, a topic of major interest to the Commission for the Annexed Estates, was debated at three meetings (8 and 15 March, 14 June 1757); the relative happiness of barbarous and refined peoples was debated twice (22 and 29 June 1757), and after the last William Robertson, the presiding officer, moved successfully to have the topic (barbarism versus a modern, luxury-inclined people) debated again on 6 July. James Burnett (later Lord Monboddo), presiding on 27 July, moved that the topic be debated again on 3 August. The topic was again debated 10 August but under the

restriction that the debate confine itself to 'the comparison of the ancient pastoral state with the state of modern refined nations'. Thus this same topic was debated at least five times in 1757. When in 1758 Adam Ferguson was a member of the committee selecting topics, eight of the nine chosen dealt specifically with the comparison of the ethical character of a simple virtuous people versus a modern commercial people, the supposed superiority of the ancients over the moderns, the relative merits of agricultural improvement, science, the arts, the contrast of a people's manners to their form of government, and whether a landed or commercial interest contributes most to the liberty and peace of a state. Ibid., pp. 100–2, 103–16.

41. Considering his somewhat later role in judging the authenticity of Macpherson's poems, it is reasonable to speculate that for some time Ferguson had performed such a task for his Lowland friends. R. Sher, 'Percy, Shaw, and the Ferguson "Cheat": National Prejudice in the Ossian Wars', in H. Gaskill, (ed.) *Ossian Revisited* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1991), pp. 207–45.
42. Ferguson wrote to Gilbert Elliot, 'I have begun to revise the Paper you saw, and am changing it to a Dissertation on the Vicissitudes incident to Human Society, and propose when that is done to write two more on the History of Manners, and on the History of Literature, and to satisfy myself with what may be done in a reasonable time without planning out works for a Lifetime.' Ferguson to Sir Gilbert Elliot, Harrow, 19 March, 1758, in Ferguson, *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson,* vol 1, p. 27. Not long after Hume reported to Adam Smith that Ferguson had shown him an impressive 'Treatise on Refinement'; see the letter of 12 April 1759, in Klibansky and Mossner (eds), *New Letters of David Hume*, p. 54.
43. Ferguson, *On the Morality of Stage Plays Seriously Considered* (Edinburgh, 1757).
44. For Scottish theoretical and political speculation on the effects of empire and wealth, see I. Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: MA, Harvard University Press, 2005), and the essays in Stone (ed.), *An Imperial State at War*.
45. J. Dwyer, 'The Melancholy Savage: Text and Context in the Poems of Ossian', in *Ossian Revisited*, pp. 164–206.
46. On Ferguson's and Macpherson's relationship surrounding Gaelic poetry, see Sher, 'Percy, Shaw, and the Ferguson "Cheat"'.
47. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 191.
48. Ibid., pp. 186–9.
49. Ibid, p. 189. For Hume's attack on the characters of Brutus and Cato the Younger, see Hume 'That Politics May Be Reduced to a Science', in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 14–31. Ferguson's praise for these Stoics and the role their strict morals played to underwrite their character as true friends, can be found in his moral philosophy lectures of 28 February 1776 and 1 March 1776, MS, Edinburgh University Library, Dc.1.85, ff. 205, 208–9; and in his *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*, (1783; New York: Derby & Jackson; Cincinnati: H.W. Derby, 1858), pp. 179–81, 308, 404–5.
50. On the seventeenth-century interplay of Augustinian and neo-Stoic moral philosophies, see Bouwsma, *The Waning of the Renaissance*, pp. 21–8.
51. *An Essay*, Part II, 'Of the Temporary Efforts and Relaxations of the National Spirit', in Part Fifth, 'Of the Decline of Nations', especially p. 206.
52. Hamowy suggests in 'Progress and Commerce', pp. 1–27) that there was no problem – Ferguson was an apologist for modern commercial civilization. However, David Allan

responds that on this subject Ferguson was 'blissfully inconsistent'; see *Adam Ferguson*, p. 118. Lisa Hill has argued that Ferguson boldly tried to create a theoretical and moral space between republicanism and commercial society, one she calls 'liberal-Stoicism': *The Passionate Society*, pp. 26, 85, 236.

53. It is reasonable to imagine that in the midst of a war with Revolutionary France Ferguson used the *Principles* to highlight the differences between a Great Britain whose constitutional monarchy ruled a commercial empire and enjoyed what to Ferguson was an unprecedented level of liberty joined to widespread prosperity, and a Republican France that seemed to him a throwback to ancient Rome. Ferguson carefully revised his lectures for publication to speak more specifically to events in France.
54. 'And if our rule in measuring degrees of politeness and civilization is to be taken from hence [i.e. chivalric manners], or from the advancement of commercial arts, we shall be found to have greatly excelled any of the celebrated nations of antiquity.' Ferguson *An Essay*, ed. Oz-Salzberger p. 193. A lot hinges on the interpretation of Ferguson's meaning of 'if'. Much of Part 4, Section 4 treats ancient versus chivalric manners. For William Robertson, Ferguson and Burke on chivalric manners, see Pocock, 'Introduction', in Burke, *Reflections*, pp. xxxii–xxxiii.
55. An argument portraying Ferguson's praise of modern 'polite' warfare can be found in B. Buchan, 'Enlightened Histories: Civilization, War and the Scottish Enlightenment', *The European Legacy*, 10:2 (2005), pp. 177–92.
56. Brewer, 'The Eighteenth-Century British State: Contexts and issues', in Stone (ed), *An Imperial State at War*, pp. 52–71.
57. There existed a substantial and diverse tradition of reflection on confederated states. See O. Gierke, *Natural Law and the Theory of Society, 1500 to 1800,* E. Baker (trans.) (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1960), pp. 196–8; J. Robertson, 'Andrew Fletcher's Vision of Union', in R. A. Mason (ed.) *Scotland and England, 1286–1815* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1987), p. 217. For Montesquieu's account of confederated states in his *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur decadence* and *De l'esprit des lois*, see S. Goyard-Fabre, *La Philosophie du droit de Montesquieu* (Paris: Librairie c. Klunckseick, 1979), p. 363.
58. In Sher, *Church and University*, p. 226. See Ferguson, *Reflections*. As Ned Landsman has argued, the provincial assertion of local privilege was the means of asserting full membership in the Empire. 'Nation, Migration, and the Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600–1800', *The American Historical Review*, 104: 2 (April 1999), p. 470. On the Scottish militia movement in that enlightened context, see J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue*. David Raynor offers a subtle and slightly different explanation of Ferguson's goals in the militia debate in Raynor, 'Ferguson's *Reflections*'.
59. Ferguson, *An Essay*, pp. 7–12, especially p. 12. On Rousseau's ideal of the moral transparency possible in small face-to-face communities, see J. Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Transparency and the Obstacle*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988).
60. S. Johnson, *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775) and J. Boswell, *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (1786), ed. P. Levi (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), p. 73; C. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: The Transformation of a Cultural Region* (London: Routledge, 1988).

61. 'An Excursion in the Highlands: Discourse on Various Subjects', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, see in particular pp. 47–9; this essay may also be found in *Collection of Essays*, ed.Y. Amoh (Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co, 1996), esp. pp. 39–41.
62. For the Pitt government's image of the Highlands and Highlanders as a military resource, see L. Leneman, *Living in Atholl: A Social History of the Estates, 1685–1785* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), pp. 130, 141. On the recruitment of Highlanders in the broader context of the British Empire, see MacKillop, *'More Fruitful than the Soil'*.
63. That Ferguson's concern was not simply imagined, see J. Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).
64. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. Oz-Salzberger, Part Six, offers Ferguson's extended discussion of the dangers of modern despotism. See pp. 257–64 for his portrait of the loss of civic nerve among a sophisticated provincial citizenry.
65. Enlightened historical writing in Britain, imitating the theatrical arts, encouraged the reader to conduct an introspective journey of self-scrutiny into moral improvement. See M. S. Phillips, *Society and Sentiment: Genres of Historical Writing in Britain, 1740-1820* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). Ferguson seems to have promoted the same kind of moral provocation and encouragement; Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2, p. 352. The quotation is Ferguson's; see *An Essay*, ed. Oz-Salzberger, p. 217.
66. On this point, and for a challenge to my provincial reading of Ferguson's moral philosophy, see J. D. Brewer, 'Ferguson's Epistolary Self'.
67. At one moment during the war with the Americans, Ferguson even gave in to the Highland legend and seriously proposed that if France invaded Britain the clans should be called out to fight; see Ferguson's letter to John Macpherson, 27 July 1779, in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 1, p. 218.
68. Ferguson, *An Essay*, pp. 216–20.
69. Ferguson laid out much of his argument on behalf of the British government in his debate with the Rev. Richard Price. The range of possible interpretations of Ferguson's specific claims can be found in Hamowy, 'Two Whig Views of the American Revolution: Adam Ferguson's Response to Richard Price', in *The Political Sociology of Freedom*, pp. 159–82; Hill, *The Passionate Society*, pp. 222–7; and Y. Amoh, 'Ferguson's Views on the American and French Revolution', in Heath and Merolle (eds) *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), vol 1, pp. 73–86.
70. Ferguson, *An Essay*, pp. 61–2.
71. Ferguson to James Macpherson, undated, in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol 1, p. 96. This was consistent with his earlier position in the *Essay*, ed. Oz-Salzberger, p. 257.
72. Lecture 30, 24 December 1779, MS, Edinburgh University Lecture, Dc.1.84, pp. 289–90.
73. Ferguson to Lord Auckland, Edinburgh 2 January 1780, in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol 1, pp. 226–31. In his 1776 response to Price, *Remarks on a Pamphlet lately published by Dr. Price*..., Ferguson made it plain that Britain was a 'kingdom', not an empire, for the American colonists owed the state the duty of citizens; these words are cited in Hill, *The Passionate Society*, p. 224. Generally Ferguson seemed to have used 'kingdom' and 'empire' synonymously.
74. Kettler, 'Political Education for Empire and Revolution', in *Adam Ferguson: History, Progress and Human Nature* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), pp. 87–114.
75. Ferguson, *Roman Republic*, p. 59; see also, pp. 85–97. Ferguson also continued his arguments with friends such as Hume and Smith over (as Ferguson saw it) Stoicism versus

Epicureanism, and with other thinkers such as Mandeville over the supposed moral benefits of selfishness. Ferguson is probably thinking of Rousseau when he discusses the virtues of the small, face-to-face republic. For his attack on Epicureanism, see Ferguson, *Roman Republic*, pp. 179–180.

76. In a mixed state, combining any two political forms of democracy, monarchy, or aristocracy, transitions from one power to the other would be gradual. On the other hand the introduction of the republican form into a monarchy or vice versa would be violent. Ferguson's Lecture Notes, Lecture 30, 24 December 1779, MS, Edinburgh University Library, Dc.1.84, pp. 289–90. For Kettler's exposition of this lecture (he dates it 23 December 1779), see 'Political Education for Empire and Revolution', pp. 100–3.
77. The following letters in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, from Ferguson to Macpherson, record these observations: 25 September 1793, p. 354; 19 October 1793, p. 358; 23 March 1795, p. 361; 17 September 1795, p. 370; 26 September 1797, pp. 419–20; 31 December 1798, pp. 447–8; 15 July 1799, pp. 415-6; 29 December 1806, pp. 502–3. See also the letter from Ferguson to Alexander Carlyle, 2 October 1797, Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 423–4.
78. For the original lectures, see MS, Edinburgh University Library, Dc.1.86, ch. 6, sect. 2, and ch. 4, sect. 13. For Ferguson's revisions, see *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1792; New York: Garland, 1978), vol 1, pp. 263; vol 2, pp. 194, 462–3 (rights and natural equality), 380–1, 457–8, 464, 468–75 (liberty), 472–3, 483 (the reform of suffrage), 235, 246, 290–2, 417, 496–9 (revolt and revolution). For his explanation of the Revolution based upon France's dependence upon professional armies, see the *Principles*, vol 2, pp. 492–3. His consideration that dependence upon professional armies was the cause of 'revolutionary' political transformation seemed to follow his account of the American Revolution. See Ferguson, Substitute for lecture 100, 24 April 1783, Dc.1.85, fol 524; Substitute for lecture 100, 21 April 1785, Dc.1.85, ff. 532–3.
79. Ferguson to Macpherson, 2 June 1796, in *The Correspondence of Adam Ferguson*, vol. 2, pp. 393–4.
80. Ferguson to Macpherson, probably March 1796, in Ibid., vol. 2, p. 384.
81. Ferguson to Macpherson, 9 February 1797, in Ibid., vol. 2, p. 411.
82. To Macpherson, Hallyards 26 June, 1796, in Ibid., vol. 2, 399; 22 September, 1796, pp. 405–6. He also worried deeply about his four sons in the various services through the later 1790s.
83. In his unpublished essay (probably written sometime between 1799 and 1802), 'Of the French Revolution with its Actual and still impending consequences in Europe', Ferguson declared the Revolution the worst and most bloody tyranny in human history: Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 135; see also, Amoh, *Collection of Essays*, p. 134.
84. R. Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 333–4; F. M. Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 189; 'British Politics and the Demise of the Roman Republic: 1700–1939', *The Historical Journal*, 29: 3 (1986), pp. 577–99 p. 587; and 'Why the Greeks and Not the Romans in Victorian Britain?' in G.W. Clarke (ed.), *Rediscovering Hellenism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 61, 69. Sales of Ferguson's *History* picked up in the nineteenth-century, particularly in America; it seems likely that the value of a Scottish moralist's account of Rome for an advancing American empire help explain that interest. See R. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish*

Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), ch. 8.

8 Berry, '"But Art Itself is Natural to Man": Ferguson and the Principle of Simultaneity'

1. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 82. C. Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois* (1748), ed. G. Truc (Paris: Garnier, 1961), book 18, ch. 11.
2. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 82.
3. Ferguson was explicit in his lectures, 'ages are said to be savage, barbarian or polished' *Analysis of Pneumatics and Moral Philosophy, for students at the College of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1765), p 11. For a discussion of stadialism in Ferguson, see L. Hill, *The Passionate Society*, pp.64–9, M. Wences Simon, *Sociedad Civil y Virtud Cívica en Adam Ferguson* (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Politicos y Constitucionales, 2006), pp.143–6.
4. C. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment*, ch. 5.
5. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 82.
6. Ferguson, *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (Edinburgh, 1769), 1.1.9, pp. 28, 32.
7. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 2.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., p. 3.
10. Ibid., pp. 3–4.
11. Ibid., p. 6. See also 'Of Nature and Art', in Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 243–7; and Ferguson's *Analysis of Pneumatics*, p.12.
12. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 8.
13. Ibid., p. 210.
14. Ferguson, *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, vol.1, p. 199, and compare 193.
15. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 6.
16. Ibid., p. 8.
17. Ibid.
18. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol 1, pp. 239–40.
19. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 239; see also vol. 2, p. 37.
20. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 242. Compare Hume's similar account of the mis-match in humans between 'numberless wants' and 'slender means' to satisfy them. D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739/40), ed. D. F. Norton and M. J. Norton (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 3.2.2.2 (p. 311).
21. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 239.
22. Ibid., vol.1, p. 240.
23. Ibid.., vol. 1, p. 242. See also, vol. 2, p. 325.
24. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 205.
25. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 243.
26. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 286. See also *Principles* (2000), vol. 1, p. 59.
27. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 242.
28. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 13.
29. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 175.
30. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 245.
31. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 251.

32. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, pp. 181–2. See also 'Of the Separation of Departments Professions and Tasks Resulting from the Progress of Arts in Society', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, pp. 143–52.
33. Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, V.i.f 50 (p. 782).
34. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, pp. 247–8.
35. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 251.
36. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 256.
37. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 257.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 268.
40. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 325.
41. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 264. See also, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 123.
42. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 262.
43. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 236. See also Ibid., vol. 2, p. 414.
44. Ferguson, *Institutes,* p. 41.
45. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 2, p. 286.
46. See among others F. Oz-Salzburger, 'Civil Society in the Scottish Enlightenment', in K. Kaviraj & S. Khilnani (eds), *Civil Society: History and Possibilities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 58–83; J. Varty, 'Civic or Commercial? Adam Ferguson's concept of Civil Society' in R. Fine & S.Rai (eds), *Civil Society: Democratic Perspectives* (London: Cass, 1997), pp. 29–48; Kettler, 'History and Theory in Ferguson's Essay on the History of Civil Society'; McDowell, 'Commerce, Virtue and Politics: Adam Ferguson's Constitutionalism' *Review of Politics*; M. Geuna, 'Republicanism and Commercial Society in the Scottish Enlightenment: The case of Adam Ferguson' in M. van Gelderen and Q. Skinner (eds), *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage,* 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), vol. 2, pp. 177–95; C. Finlay, 'Rhetoric and Citizenship in Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society*', *History of Political Thought,* 27:1 (Spring 2006), pp. 27–49; H. Medick and A. Leppert-Fögen, *Einleitung: A Ferguson Versuch über die Geschichte der Bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), pp.76–80. I don't exempt myself from this, see C. Berry, 'The Scottish Enlightenment and the Idea of Civil Society' in A. Martins (ed.), *Sociedad Civil: Entre Miragem e Oportunidade* (Coimbra: Faculdade des Letras, 2003), pp. 99–115.
47. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 262.
48. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 261. See also Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p.133.
49. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 263.
50. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 265.
51. Ibid., vol 1, p.122.
52. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 285.
53. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 286.
54. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 269.
55. Ferguson, *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson.* p. 244.
56. Ferguson, *Institutes*, p. 31.
57. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 1, p. 299. See also *Institutes*, vol. 1, p.200.
58. In *Analysis of Pneumatics* Ferguson's consistent tripartite division was 'commercial, literary and political arts' (p.11).
59. Ferguson, *An Essay* p. 171.

60. C. Berry, 'Approaches to the Origin of Metaphor in the Eighteenth Century', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen,* 74 (1973), pp. 690–173.
61. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 172.
62. Ibid., Part 4, Section 3.
63. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 206.
64. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 207. See also in vol. 1, p. 56, and in vol. 2, pp. 94 and 423.
65. Ferguson *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 235.
66. *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 200.
67. Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, II.iii.28 (p. 341).
68. J. Millar, *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1779, 3rd edn) in *John Millar of Glasgow*, ed. W. Lehmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), p. 176.
69. Millar, *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, p. 176.
70. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 239. But see *Principles,* vol. 2, p. 39 for one occasion where Ferguson's subscription to the principle seemingly slips.
71. Millar, *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, Ch. 3.
72. C. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment*, Ch. 5.
73. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 196. See also Ibid., vol. 1, p. 44.
74. This is given a chronological dimension in *Analysis of Pneumatics,* p. 11.
75. David Kettler judges that 'in the final analysis ... Ferguson's position eventuated in a vindication of commercial society'. *The Social and Political Thought of Adam Ferguson* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1965), p. 236. See also Merolle, *Saggio su Ferguson*, especially pp. 79–80 and for general context C. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Ch. 6.
76. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 144.
77. See for example *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, pp. 250, 255–6, 258, 263.
78. Ferguson, *Institutes* p. 65. See further on this theme C. Smith, 'Adam Ferguson and the Danger of Books', *Scottish Journal of Philosophy*, 4 (2006), pp. 93–109.
79. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, pp.156–61.
80. Ibid., p. 93.
81. Ibid., p. 245, and *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 252.
82. *Principles* (1995), vol. 2, pp. 402, 422.
83. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 505.
84. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p.185; *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 472.
85. Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois,* book 20, chh. 1–2. Even in his history of Rome Ferguson while comparing commercial Carthage unfavourably with Rome's public virtue still says their commercial interests 'should have inculcated the desire of peace'. *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (1783), 5 vols (Edinburgh, 1813), vol 1, p. 110.
86. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 463. The link between civil liberty and security is the central theme of his polemic against Richard Price, see A. Ferguson, *Remarks Upon a Pamphlet*. Yet even in his earlier most 'republican' pamphlet on militias Ferguson refers, among the circumstances to 'boast of', to 'the Perfection to which our Arts are arrived; the Extent of our Commerce ...' *Reflections*, p.11.
87. Ferguson *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, p. 294.
88. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 296.
89. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 299.
90. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. D. Forbes, p. 270.
91. Ferguson, *Principles* (1995), vol. 1, pp. 251, 254.

92. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 298.
93. See C. Smith, 'Adam Ferguson and the Active Genius of Mankind'.
94. This is perhaps signalled by his choice of 'ambition' to capture the generic desire to improve since that term had long had a political resonance and is how, indeed, he employs it in the *Institutes* (p.78).

9 Heath, 'Ferguson on the Unintended Emergence of Social Order'

1. F. A. Hayek, 'The Results of Human Action but not of Human Design', in *Studies in Philosophy*, pp. 96–105.
2. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 119.
3. For brief remarks on Ferguson's citation of De Retz, see Kettler, 'Afterword: Civil Society and Politics', in *Adam Ferguson: His Social and Political Thought*, p. 318, and Smith, 'Ferguson and the Active Genius of Mankind', pp. 158–9.
4. G. Bryson, *Man and Society: the Scottish Inquiry of the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), p. 43.
5. H. H. Höpfl, 'From Savage to Scotsman: Conjectural History in the Scottish Enlightenment', *Journal of British Studies*, 17: 2 (1978), p. 31.
6. Hamowy, 'Progress and Commerce', p. 76. See also R. Hamowy, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Theory of Spontaneous Order*.
7. Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment*, especially pp. 39–47; Hill, *The Passionate Society,* especially ch. 6, 'Ferguson's "Invisible Hand"', pp. 101–21; Allan, *Adam Ferguson*, pp. 85–91; Smith, 'Ferguson and the Active Genius of Mankind'. One scholar who doubts the centrality of the concept of 'spontaneous order' to Ferguson is D. Kettler, 'Political Education for Empire and Revolution', especially pp. 93–4, 96, 102.
8. Allan, 'Ferguson and Scottish History', especially pp. 26–31.
9. B. Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, ed. F. B. Kaye (1924; Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1988).
10. The evolutionary account is elaborated primarily in the dialogues of volume 2 of the *Fable of the Bees*. For a consideration of this account, see E. Heath, 'Mandeville's Bewitching Engine of Praise', *History of Philosophy Quarterly,* 15:2 (April 1998), pp. 205–26.
11. For example, K. Haakonssen, *The Science of a Legislator: The Natural Jurisprudence of David Hume and Adam Smith* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). A more recent consideration, taking into account Adam Smith's criticisms, may be found in S. J. Pack and E. Schliesser, 'Smith's Humean Criticism of Hume's Account of the Origin of Justice', *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* 44:1 (2006), pp. 47–63.
12. This is Hume's description of the structure of moral judgment. See Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, III.ii.ii (p. 601).
13. Ibid., II.ii.xi, pp. 316–7.
14. Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, pp. 197–215.
15. Ibid., p. 202. The distinction between 'moral causes' and 'physical causes' may be found on p. 198.
16. *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 115. For a discussion of Hume and Ferguson on the influence of climate, see Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment*, pp. 82–5
17. Kames, 'Preliminary Discourse: An Investigation of the Moral Laws of Society', *Principles of Equity,* 2nd edn, corrected and enlarged (Edinburgh, 1767), p. 8. See also his *Historical Law-Tracts,* the first edition of which was published in 1758, with a third some

eighteen years later (Edinburgh: T Cadell, 1776). The relevance of Lord Kames was suggested to me by David Raynor.

18. 'And if we consider all the different passions of human nature, we shall find that they are regarded as decent, or indecent, just in proportion as mankind are more or less disposed to sympathize with them.' Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments,* ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), I.ii.introduction.2. For a reconstruction and assessment of Smith's account, see E. Heath, 'The Commerce of Sympathy: Adam Smith on the Emergence of Morals', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 33:3 (July 1995), pp. 447–66.
19. '... the progress of civilization is not the result of any single scheme or plan, a refinement of the principle of the heterogeneity of purposes...' D. Forbes, 'Introduction', *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), p. xxiii.
20. L. Hill, 'The Puzzle of Adam Ferguson's Conservatism,' *Eighteenth Century Scotland*, 15 (Spring 2001), pp. 12–17.
21. Hill, *The Passionate Society*, p. 101. Sometimes the phenomena of spontaneous order are discussed in terms of the 'invisible hand'. Emma Rothschild notes that Smith's use of the idea of the invisible hand contains three concepts: that the actions of individuals have unintended consequences, that there is order or coherence in events, and that the unintended consequences of individual actions sometimes promote the interests of societies. *Economic Sentiments*: *Adam Smith, Condorcet, and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 121.
22. E. Ullmann-Margalit, 'Invisible-Hand Explanations', *Synthese*, 39 (1978), pp. 266–7. Raimo Tuomela remarks that a necessary condition for an invisible-hand explanation of some pattern R is that it must have been 'initially plausible' to believe that R was the result of actions the intention of which were to bring about R. See Tuomela, *A Theory of Social Action* (Dordrecht: Springer, 1984), p. 452.
23. R. Vernon, 'Unintended Consequences', *Political Theory*, 7:1 (February 1979), p. 59.
24. The quotations can be found in *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 118. See Berry's discussion on p. 41, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment.*
25. *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 81.
26. Ibid., p. 74.
27. Ibid., p. 126.
28. Ibid., pp. 120–1.
29. Ibid., p. 120.
30. 'But he does not propose to make rapid and hasty transitions; his steps are progressive and slow; and his force, like the power of a spring, silently presses on every resistance; an effect is sometimes produced before the cause is perceived; and with all his talent for projects, his work is often accomplished before the plan is devised.' Ibid., pp. 12–13.
31. Ibid., p. 119.
32. Ibid., p. 95.
33. Ibid., p. 138.
34. Ibid., p. 156. In this last statement Ferguson suggests that what may emerge is not simply a norm of praise but a norm of praise-worthiness. In this sense, Ferguson's account may differ from that of Adam Smith who delineates a theory that distinguishes between norms of praise and what is praise-worthy. This point was suggested to me by Eric Schliesser.
35. Ibid., p. 163.
36. F. Oz-Salzberger, *Translating the Enlightenment*, p. 118.

37. She also maintains that 'Ferguson's analysis was more detailed and more penetrating than Smith's'. Hill, 'The Invisible Hand of Adam Ferguson', *The European Legacy*, 3:6 (1998), p. 42. She writes, similarly, 'his analysis was arguably the most sophisticated and well developed formulation to date of the way in which social arrangements emerge spontaneously from the seemingly random private actions of individuals through time'. 'Anticipations of Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Social Thought in the Work of Adam Ferguson,' *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 37: 1 (1996), p. 207.
38. Ibid., p. 211. In the later interpretation, she mentions that moral progress is also among the features of human history that occurs because of natural laws of equilibrium (Hill, *The Passionate Society*, p. 121) .
39. Hill, *The Passionate Society*, p. 102,
40. Ibid., p. 105.
41. See, for example, *An Essay,* pp. 74–6.
42. Ferguson, 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 211; see also, *Principles of Moral and Political Science,* 2 vols (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1885), vol. 1, p. 161
43. In the *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (New York: Garland, 1978), Ferguson states that 'The object of moral approbation, is either some disposition of the mind, or some external action' (p. 111); however, an external action is not judged *apart* from an intention (p. 176).
44. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 127.
45. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 128.
46. 'This sentiment, therefore, is of a peculiar nature, not a specimen of mere desire and aversion, directed to a particular object; but a censorial act in the mind of man, having cognizance of a *right* or a *wrong* in the measure of tendency of his own desires or aversions, even when they have most entirely determined his will.' Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 116–7.
47. Ferguson, 'An Excursion in the Highlands', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 58.
48. That is to say, the difficulty arises in judging the conduct of another; Ferguson is less willing to admit the difficulty in the case of a judgment of oneself: 'An Excursion in the Highlands', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 64. Adam Smith makes a similar sort of claim: An individual's knowledge of self implies an access to information not otherwise available to others but relevant to the judgment of an 'impartial spectator'. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 3.2.5.
49. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 2, p. 3.
50. 'A moral law is any general expression of what is good; and therefore fit to determine the choice of intelligent beings.' (*Institutes*, p. 5) And moral laws are 'collected' from 'the sentiments and actions of intelligent natures' (*Institutes*, p. 6).
51. 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson,* p. 31.
52. At the close of the essay, 'An Excursion in the Highlands', Ferguson remarks that, in considering moral questions, too many have confused two questions that should be kept distinct: 'From what Principle may we Safely & truly decide of Action and Character. On what Principle do men actually decide or entertain Sentiments of Praise or Blame' (p. 56). The differentiation between the descriptive and the normative reflects the distinct volumes of the *Principles,* one referring to 'description, and statement' the other referring to 'Principles of Right.' *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 9.
53. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 35.
54. 'It is pleasant to find men, who, in their speculations, deny the reality of moral distinctions, forget in detail the general positions they maintain, and give loose to ridicule,

indignation, and scorn, as if any of these sentiments could have place, were the actions of men indifferent…' Ibid., p. 36.

55. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 38.
56. Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 38.
57. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 39.
58. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 43.
59. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 159.
60. 'In learned societies, they admire knowledge and ingenuity. In trading nations, they admire industry, punctuality, and fair dealing' (*Institutes,* p. 39).
61. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 10
62. Principles, vol. 1, p. 27.
63. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, pp. 108–10
64. Ibid., p. 172. See also, 'But the establishments of men, like those of every animal, are suggested by nature, and are the result of instinct, directed by a variety of situations in which mankind are placed. Those establishments arose from successive improvements that were made without any sense of their general effect; and they bring human affairs to a state of complication, which the greatest reach of capacity with which human nature was ever adorned, could not have projected'. Ibid., p. 174.
65. Ibid., p. 177.
66. Ibid., p. 207.
67. 'He has one set of dispositions which refer to his animal preservation, and to the continuance of his race; another which lead to society, and by enlisting him on the side of one tribe or community, frequently engage him in war and contention with the rest of mankind.' Ibid., p. 16; see also p. 23.
68. 'Passions are thus communicated from one person to another by contagion, without any communication of thought, or knowledge of the cause; and the person, to whom a passion is so communicated, may mistake for the object of it some trifling incident or circumstance, which happens to accompany the emotion' (Ferguson, *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 143).
69. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 162.
70. See his discussion of probity and composure, wherein he asks, 'In what situation, or by what instruction, is this wonderful character to be formed?' Rejecting both the 'opulent cities' and the 'admired precincts of court' Ferguson adduces that it is formed 'in a situation where the great sentiments of the heart are awakened; where the characters of men, not their situations and fortunes, are the principal distinction; where the anxieties of interest, or vanity, perish in the blaze of more vigorous emotions….' Ibid., pp. 42-3.
71. Ibid., p. 162.
72. Ibid., p. 132.
73. Ibid., p. 23.
74. Ibid., p. 124–5.
75. Ibid., p. 25.
76. Ibid., p. 26.
77. *Principles,* vol. 1, p. 220.
78. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 223. Habit, as Lisa Hill points out, serves to conserve or maintain structures. An excellent account of the role of habit may be found in her essay, 'Anticipations,' pp. 210–15.
79. Ferguson, *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (1978), p. 77.
80. 'Of Good and Evil Perfection and Defect', in *The Manuscripts of Adam Ferguson*, p. 200.

81. *Principles*, vol. 1, p. 235.
82. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 200.
83. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 236.
84. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 239.
85. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 174.
86. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 1, p. 205; see also, vol. 1, p. 232.
87. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 22.
88. Ibid., pp. 31, 119.
89. Ibid., p. 7.
90. Ibid., pp. 12–13.
91. Given that there is also a tendency of conflict and opposition, we may see how Ferguson's view offers a social account that bears analogy to J. S. Mill's discussion of liberty of thought, in particular the way in which the emergence and meaningfulness of truth requires the 'collision of adverse opinions.' John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty,* ed. Elizabeth Rapaport (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1978), 50.
92. Ferguson, *An Essay*, ed. F. Oz-Salzberger, p. 242.
93. Ferguson, *Principles,* vol. 1, p. 208.

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INDEX

Note: AF in the index refers to Adam Ferguson; *EHCS* to his book, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*

absolutism 113
Act / Treaty of Union, *1707* 11, 31, 115, 118, 119
Adam, Robert 14
Adrien, Claude (Helvétius) 61, 74
Allan, David 156, 189n
ambition / betterment 149–50, 151–2, 165–6
American Indians 59
American Revolution / War of Independence 33, 39–40, 117, 120–1, 138–9, 140, 178n
  Carlisle Commission 40, 139
Annual Register ... 1767 51–2, 180
anthropology 81, 83
Arbuthnot, John 62
Aristotle 85, 107, 110, 113
armies 6, 13, 28, 30, 33, 41, 43, 64, 93
  British 33
  chaplains 33
  see also militias; *names of battles*
art 56, 144
arts 8, 102, 103, 144–53
  commercial / mechanical 144, 145–7, 148–9, 151–2
  fine / literary 144, 148–9, 150–2
  political 144, 147–8, 151, 153
  savage 8, 20–1, 54, 55–6, 59–60, 110, 134, 137, 143, 144
artifice 55–6, 144–5
Atholl 10, 11, 13, 23
Atholl, Duchess of 13
Atholl, Duke of 11, 13, 34
authority 115, 130

Bagehot, Walter 125
barbarous societies 23, 59–60, 110, 134–5, 137, 143
battles *see names of battles*
benevolence 55, 56, 57–8, 91, 97, 101, 108
Berry, Christopher J. vi, 156, 159
Black Watch, 43rd Highland Regiment 2, 3, 12–13, 21, 26, 30–1, 33–4, 35–8, 130
Blackwell, Thomas 132, 134
Blair, Hugh 12, 15–16, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 60, 70, 72, 73, 74, 87, 132, 133
Blair Castle 11
Bonar, James 132
Boswell, James 128, 130, 137, 138
Brewer, John 20, 26, 136
British Empire 39–40, 125, 129, 130, 133, 137, 139
Brown, John: *Estimate of the Manners ...* 69, 151
Bryson, Gladys 155
bureaucracy 110–11, 120, 127, 137
Burke, Edmund 109, 121, 126, 180n, 205n
  reviews *EHCS* 51–2
Butler 57

Cadell, Thomas 74
Camberwell 13
Carlisle Commission 40, 139

Carlyle, Alexander 12, 14, 90, 128, 137, 138
cause / causality 68, 156–7, 159, 164
Cedd, St 11
charity 195n
Chesterfield, Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl 70, 74
Chesterfield, Charles Stanhope, 5th Earl 70, 90
children, exposure of 195n
China 111, 195n
Christianity 28, 126, 129, 130, 131, 135
  SSPG 31, 132
  Stoic Christianity 126, 129, 142
Cicero 3, 53, 71, 85, 113
citizens 6, 115–16, 128, 138
citizenship 6, 7, 115
  education programme 118–19
civic humanist 6, 7
civil liberty 63–5
civil war 39
civility 26–7
  in warfare 25, 35–8
civilization 3, 25–30, 31, 39–41, 42–3, 125
  AF's ambivalent 29–30
  civilized war 3, 25, 34–7, 38–9, 41, 42–3
  Scottish Enlightenment conceptions 26–9
class 82, 103–4, 116
Clerk, Robert 46–7, 90, 92–4
  in AF's 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation' 90, 92–5, 96, 98, 105
Cockburn, Henry 21
commerce 8, 27, 29–30, 84–5, 108–9, 111, 151–2, 153
commercial arts 144, 145–6, 151, 153
commercial societies 8, 30, 100, 135–6, 137–8, 146–7, 164
Condorcet, Marquis de 80
conflict / enmity / opposition 57–8, 82–6, 95, 108, 165, 166–7, 197n, 199n, 221n
  see also warfare
conscience 91, 98
conservatism 108, 109, 120–2, 126
Constant, Benjamin 82, 86, 125, 142, 193n
convention 115
corruption 42, 66, 69, 85, 104, 127, 167
Cousin, Victor 74
Craddock, Patricia 70
Craufurd, Earl of 36
Critical Review 48,49–50
Croce, Benedetto 191n
Culloden, battle 39
Cumberland, William Augustus, Duke of 25, 34, 35, 37, 39

Davie, George 20
De Retz, Cardinal: *Memoirs* 66, 155
Descartes, René 4, 80
Dettingen, battle 34, 35, 39
Deyverdun, Georges 5, 48–9, 69–71
d'Holbach, Baron 84, 128
Dilworth, W. H. 36
division of labour 21, 30, 41, 103, 117–18, 136, 164, 195n
Dodwell, Mr 74
Drummond, George 12
Dubos, Abbé 62
Dwyer, John 133–4

Eden, William 40
Edinburgh 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 50
  see also University of Edinburgh
Edinburgh Review 125, 130
education 18, 103–4, 119
  for citizenship 118–19
Elibank, Lord 50
Elliot, Sir Gilbert 47
Emerson, Roger 129–30, 208n
empires and imperialism 22, 42, 120, 122, 127, 128–9, 130
  see also British Empire
empiricism 4, 15, 75–6, 79–81, 91, 144
Enlightenment 5, 14–15, 19, 28, 75, 76, 80, 83, 87
  see also Scottish Enlightenment
Ferguson, Adam
  biography 2–3, 4–5, 10–16, 26 30–1, 34, 39, 40, 130–1, 139
  chaplain to Black Watch 2, 3, 12–13, 26, 30–1, 34, 37–8, 92, 130
  Edinburgh University 4–5, 12, 14, 90
  relations with Adam Smith 4, 5, 89–90
  An Essay on the History of Civil Society 4, 5, 6, 14, 134, 143, 144–8, 151, 155, 162, 163, 167
  'The History of Subordination' 66–7

Hume's criticism of 73–87
Hume's reaction to 5, 45–72
'Of Civil Liberty' 63
on literature 18–19, 148
'Of Luxury' 45, 65, 66, 67
'Of Moral Sentiment' 56, 100–5
reviews 48–50, 51–2, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62–3, 64, 66, 67–8
style 46–8, 74
'An Excursion in the Highlands' 23, 98, 105, 137
The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic 135, 139–40, 141
Institutes of Moral Philosophy 40, 97, 99, 116, 144, 161, 163
The Morality of Stage Plays Seriously Considered 46
'Of Liberty and Necessity' 97
'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation' 90, 92–5, 96, 98, 105
'Of Statesmen and Warriours' 86
Principles of Moral and Political Science 6, 8, 85, 86, 94, 96, 98, 105, 136, 141, 145, 149–50, 161, 165–6
Reflections Previous to ... 46, 64–5
on sentiment and sympathy, compared with Adam Smith 89–106
A Sermon Preached in the Ersh Language ... 13–14, 175n
Sister Peg 20
A Treatise on Refinement 45, 66–7, 73, 90
Fergusson, Adam (father of AF) 10, 11, 13
Fianna, the 15
fiction 25–6, 43
Fingal 16–17, 24
Fleming, John 32
Fontenoy, Flanders, battle 3, 13, 25, 26, 34–9, 42–3
Forbes, Duncan 64, 69, 74–5, 85
France 19, 22, 31
Dettingen, battle 34, 35, 39
Fontenoy, battle 3, 13, 25, 26, 34–9, 42–3
Port l'Orient 34
franchise 116–17
French Revolution 7, 82, 117, 125, 140, 211n
Gaelic 10–11, 14, 15–17, 22, 32–3, 130, 133
Panegyric Code 32
see also Ossian
genius 19, 25, 28
Gentleman's Magazine 36
Gibbon, Edward
Mémoires littéraires de La Grande Bretagne 5, 48–9, 69–70, 71
Memoirs of My Life 65, 185n
Gilbert, Felix 27
Goguet, Antoine Yves 52
good polity 107–23
Gordon, Mary (later Fergusson; mother of AF) 10
Gordon, Sir Robert 156
Gordon of Cluny, Cosmo 14
government 58, 59, 63, 64, 68–9, 103, 111, 112–14, 115–16, 117, 160
bureaucracy 110–11, 120, 127, 137
constitution 112–13, 117, 123
Gray, Thomas 74
Great Britain 128–30, 136, 138–9
Greece, ancient 21, 25, 50–1, 52, 97, 110, 135, 137, 141
Gregory, John: *Comparative View 151*
Grotius, Hugo 3

Hamowy, Ronald 90–1, 104, 156, 177n
happiness (felicity) 2, 58, 104, 107–8
Hay, Lord Charles 35, 36
Hayek, F. A. 155
Hegelianism 82, 83
Highland Regiment *see* Black Watch
Highlands, Scottish 2–3, 9–16, 19–20, 23–4, 26, 31–3, 119, 131, 132–4, 137
clan system 9, 31–2
Panegyric Code 32
Hill, Lisa vi, 156, 160, 199n, 211n
historicism 76, 83–4, 86, 87
historiography 109–11, 112, 156
history 6, 29, 77–9, 82, 104, 110, 114, 116
Hobbes, Thomas 3, 100, 132, 144
Home, John 12, 15, 17, 133
Douglas 133
Homer 17, 18, 24, 132, 134
Iliad 131, 132
Höpfl, H. H. 155–6

human nature 3–4, 57–8, 75–6, 78–9, 80–1, 87, 101–2, 110, 145, 148, 162, 164–5, 168
humanism 6
Hume, David 4–5, 17, 20, 22, 23, 27, 69–71, 72, 90, 129, 156, 157, 158
  criticism of AF's *EHCS* 73–87
  in AF's 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation' 90, 92–4
  opinion of AF's *EHCS* 45–72
  scepticism 75–8
  Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion 4, 68
  Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding 68, 71–2, 85
  Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals 52, 61
  Essays Moral, Political and Literary 77
    'Of the Liberty of the Press' 77
    'Of National Characters' 61–2, 157
    'That Politics may be reduced to a Science' 77
  History of England ... 27, 28–9, 49, 76–8
  'Of Civil Liberty' 63
  'Of Commerce' 85
  'Of Parties in General' 83
  'Of the Parties of Great Britain' 77, 83
  'Of Refinement in the Arts' (Luxury) 45–6, 65–6, 84, 85
  Political Discourse 143
  A Treatise of Human Nature 4, 47, 54–5, 55–6, 57, 58, 66–7, 75– 91, 157
Hutcheson, Francis 3, 47, 53, 55, 56
  Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas ... 53
  Philosophiae Moralis ... 57

Iliad 131, 132
imagination 91, 97, 98, 144
imperialism and empires 22, 42, 120, 122, 127, 128–9, 130
  see also British Empire
individualism 81–3, 87, 132
individuals 29–30, 85, 95–6, 102–4, 138, 155, 156, 157–8
intelligence 4, 98, 149
Ireland 120, 122, 139, 208n
irony 23

Jacobite rebellions
  1715 9, 31, 41
  1745 9, 12, 31, 39, 41, 118, 132
Jacobites / Jacobitism 31, 32, 33, 34, 113
Jardine, John 12
Johnson, Samuel 18, 137, 166
justice 54–7, 59, 102, 157

Kames, Henry Home, Lord 50, 53, 71, 74, 157
  Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion 53, 57
  Sketches on the History of Man 84–5, 151
Kant, Immanuel 28, 76
Kettler, David 139
knowledge 4, 99, 144, 149, 162
Knox, John 49, 50
labour 146
  division of 21, 30, 41, 103, 117–18, 136, 164, 195n
Landsman, N. 206n, 211n
language 8, 54, 91, 107, 148, 160, 162–3
Laski, Harold 67
laws
  of government 27, 28, 63–4, 82, 86, 117, 119, 150, 160
  of nature (rules) 4, 99
  of spontaneous order 108, 121
  of war 38, 40
  of the will 164–6
liberalism 6, 7, 86, 126
liberty 6, 82, 103, 109, 113, 114, 115, 116–17, 142, 152, 165
literature 19, 24, 148–9, 150
  Gaelic 15–18, 22, 24, 32–3
  Panegyric Code 32
Livingstone, D. W. 189n
Locke, John 4
Logan, John 74
Logierait, Perthshire 9, 10, 11, 14, 15
Lowlands, Scottish 9, 11, 14, 23, 130, 132–3
Lowth, Robert 47
luxury 65–6, 84–5, 131
Lyttelton, Lord 74

MacAlpine, Kenneth 11
Machiavelli, Niccolò 6, 113, 155
Maclaggan, James 32

Macpherson, James 139
Ossian literature 15–17, 22–3, 32, 119, 133–4, 137
Maitland, William 209n
Mandeville, Bernard 100, 101, 132, 155, 156–7, 158, 162
Fable of the Bees 67
Mansfield, Lord 47, 73–4
Marriott, James 172n
Marx, Karl 90
Meinecke, F.
Die Entstehung ... 84
Mémoires littéraires de La Grande Bretagne 5, 70
review of AF's *EHCS* 5, 48–9, 52, 54, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62–3, 64, 66, 67–8, 70–1
Militia Bill, *1757* 41, 64–5
militias 20, 30, 41–3, 64–5, 86, 93, 136–7, 138
AF's scheme 117–19
see also armies
Mill, J. S. 115
Millar, John 8, 143
The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks 149–50
Mirabeau, Victor Riqueti, Marquis de 26
modernity 2, 3, 7, 21, 82, 87, 108, 110, 111, 116, 125, 127, 130, 136–8, 142
Moffat, Dumfriesshire 15
monarchies 112–13, 140
Monod, P. K. 31
Montagu, Mrs Edward (Elizabeth Robertson) 47, 50–1, 52, 74, 84
Montesquieu, C. Secondat, Baron de 28–9, 38–9, 54, 59, 67, 74, 103, 112, 113, 140, 143, 152, 157
Esprit des Lois 3, 60–2
Monthly Review 48, 62
moral philosophy 14, 85, 90, 125, 126–9
moral sense / standards 4, 92, 96–7, 99, 100–4, 156–7
moral theory 160–4, 166, 168
moralism / morality / morals 53–7, 85–6, 107, 156–7
Mossner, E. C. 93, 196n
Murray, Lord John 13, 34

national character / identity 20, 61–3, 64, 157
nations *see* states
nature 109–10
state of 55–6, 76, 95–6, 144–5, 163
needs 145–6
norms 156–8, 160–4, 165, 167

Oncken, August 90
Ossian 2, 15–19, 22, 32–3, 59, 119, 133–4
Oz-Salzberger, Fania 113, 129, 160

Panegyric Code 32
Pass of Killiecrankie 9–10
passions 29, 55, 165
perception 4
Percy, Thomas 32
Perth Grammar School 10
Perthshire 131
Petty, William, 3rd Earl of Shelburne 46–7
Phillipson, Nicholas 190n, 204n, 206n
Pitt, William, 1st Earl of Chatham 136
Pocock, J. G. A. 42, 59, 142, 192n
politeness 25, 27, 30
political
arts 144, 147–8, 151, 153
constitution 112–13, 117, 123
parties 82–3, 87
thought 6–7, 107–23, 144
polity, good 107–23
possession 29, 115, 144
Presbyterians 12, 31, 32, 49–50
Prestonpans, battle 12
Price, Richard 39
progress / progressivism 29, 80, 83, 87, 108–9, 110, 117, 120, 143–5, 149, 151, 152, 165, 167–8
property 21, 29, 54–5, 57, 59, 115, 143–4, 157, 160
Protestantism 31, 33, 128, 130, 132
provincial ideology 126–40, 142
and confederated states 136–40
early development 130–4
in rude societies 134–6
Pufendorf, Samuel 3

Raynal, G. T. F. 172n
reason (theory) 76, 84, 97, 99, 167, 198n

rebellion / revolutions 39, 120–1
see also American Revolution ; French Revolution; Jacobite rebellions
Reformation 49
Reid, Thomas 4
religion 4, 5, 27, 28
and civil society 48–50
see also Christianity
Renaissance 127, 129
revisionism 111, 118, 121
rights 86, 114–15, 116
Robertson, John 65
Robertson, William 12, 27, 46, 47, 72, 73, 74, 132
History of the Reign of Charles the Fifth 28, 29
History of Scotland 49–50
Roman Catholicism 28, 31, 130
Roman Empire 130
romanticism 87
Rome, ancient 84, 110, 117, 131, 135, 137, 139–40, 141, 151–2
Rose, William 48, 62
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques 3, 69, 144, 153

Sarsfield, Count de 52
Saurin, Joseph 74
savage states 8, 20–1, 54, 59–60, 110, 134–5, 137, 143, 144, 146–7, 148, 150
Saxe, Maurice, Marshal de 25, 34, 35, 36
scepticism 71, 75–8
Scotland
history 21, 22–3
18c. transformation 125–30
Union of Scotland, *843* 11
Union of Scotland and England, *1707* 22, 33, 128–9, 130, 138, 139
Act of Union 31, 115, 118, 119
see also Gaelic; Highlands; Lowlands; *place names*
Scots Magazine 48
Scott, George Lewis 70
Scott, Sir Walter 37, 38
Scotticism 20
Scottish Enlightenment 4, 12, 14, 17–18, 19, 20, 26, 27, 28, 125–6, 143, 156
Select Society 90, 118, 132, 209–10n
self–interest / self–love 29, 55, 57, 58, 97, 100, 101
Sempill, Lord 34
sentiment 4, 92, 96, 97, 98, 99–100, 167
passions 29, 55, 165
Seven Years' War 33, 38
Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of 3, 161
Sher, Richard 32
simultaneity 144, 145–53
slavery 152
Smith, Adam 4, 5–6, 20, 27, 29, 45, 49, 53, 57, 82, 89–105, 109, 113, 119, 161
in AF's 'Of the Principle of Moral Estimation' 90, 92–5
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations 41, 89, 90, 92, 95, 102, 103, 104, 146, 149, 151
Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres 97
The Theory of Moral Sentiments 4, 45, 56, 73, 89, 91, 157
Smith, Craig 156
sociability 3
social contract 4, 95
social science / sociology 7–8, 14–15, 79, 109, 111, 126
society / societies 7–8, 20–1, 29, 79, 83–4
barbarous 23, 59–60, 110, 134–5, 137, 143
commercial 8, 29, 30, 100, 135–6, 137–8, 146–7, 164
development / order 1–2, 7, 87, 95, 104–5, 108, 109, 112
stages 110, 143–4, 149–50, 164
laws of 164–5
savage 8, 20–1, 54, 59–60, 110, 134–5, 137, 143, 144, 146–7, 148, 150
unintended emergence 155–68
Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge 31, 132
Spain 22
Sparta 5, 50–2, 63–4, 85, 110, 135, 151–2, 153
specialization 6, 104, 110–11, 117–18, 120
Starobinski, Jean 27
states (nations) 21–2, 27–9, 110, 115
balance of power 28–9
confederated 136–40

development 112
size 22, 110
Stewart, David: *Sketches of the Character, Manners ...* 37–8
Stoics and Stoicism 5, 7, 53, 71, 85–6, 108, 129, 131, 135
Stoic Christianity 126, 129, 142
see also Sparta
Strathspey 16
Stuart, Charles Edward , Prince 12, 13, 31, 39
Stuart, James Francis Edward 31
Suard, Jean 59
sympathy 4, 5–6, 56–7, 89, 91–2, 94, 96, 98, 99, 105, 157–8, 161, 168

Tacitus 142
Temora 133
Thomson, James 63
Tocqueville, Alexis de 82, 86, 142
Treaty / Act of Union, *1707* 11, 31, 115, 118, 119
Turgot, A. R. J. 80

unintended consequences 67, 95, 101, 112, 155–68
Union of Scotland, *843* 11
Union of Scotland and England, *1707* 22, 33, 128–9, 130, 138, 139
Act of Union 31, 115, 118, 119
University of Edinburgh 5, 12, 14, 37, 46, 90, 133
Advocates Library 4, 14
University of St Andrews 10, 131

Venturi, Franco 130
vigour 2, 7, 86
virtue 2, 6, 30, 42, 43, 86, 96, 102–3, 108–9, 132
civic / national 64, 110, 114, 117, 118, 119
natural or artificial 55–6
Voltaire 134
History of the War of 1741 36

Wallace, Robert 69, 132, 151
Walpole, Horace
Historic Doubtson the Reign ... 70
War of the Austrian Succession 12, 33, 34–6
warfare 21, 27–8, 30, 33, 39–40, 42, 58
civil war 39
civilized / civility in 3, 25, 34–7, 38–9, 41, 42–3
see also armies; militias; *names of battles and wars*
Wedderburn, Alexander 125, 130
whisky 20
Winch, Donald 113
Wyvill, Christopher 117