THE CONTRIBUTION OF

ADAM FERGUSON

to

SOCIAL-SCIENCE

submitted

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy of the University of Surrey

by

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CONTENTS

1. Title and Summary of Thesis ........................................ ii - v

2. Acknowledgements .................................................. vi

3. Chapter One: Ferguson's Ethic & Social-Science ................. 1 - 40
   Chapter Two: Portrait of the Man .................................. 41 - 62
   Chapter Three: Some reasons for Ferguson's eclipse .......... 63 - 83
   Chapter Four: Ferguson's Method .................................. 94 - 107
   Chapter Five: The Development of Ferguson's Stoic Ethic ...... 108 - 130
   Chapter Seven: -ditto- Part Two ................................. 161 - 198
   Conclusion .................................................................. 199 - 206

4. Notes .................................................................. 207 - 227

5. Bibliography .................................................. 228 - 234
SUMMARY OF THESIS:

Convinced as we are that social-science has failed to develop in a manner satisfying either to its practitioners or to the society with which it is concerned, we have turned with others such as MacRae(1) to the so-called "Founding Fathers" of our science to seek elements in its earlier development which may have been lost, undervalued, misrepresented or even falsified.

Aware too, that Economics has played a major part in the development of social-science to which it is importantly contributory, it might have been thought profitable to turn to the offerings of Adam Smith, who played so dominant a part in the direction of Economics in the 19th century, for further searches for such possibly under-valued or lost elements.(2)

However, recognising the large amount of work that has been concentrated on the economic/utilitarian themes so strongly associated with Smith, and sensing in those very themes the possible seeds of misdirection or oversight, we have preferred to turn to this relatively neglected contemporary of Smith.

We propose therefore to explore the works and themes of ADAM FERGUSON for possible pointers, fragments and turns of
thought that may have been under-valued or indeed lost to the
detriment of modern social-science.

Although there has been some revival of the earlier
Continental interest in the works of Ferguson, apart from MacRae's
well-voiced though brief concern, and largely in works to which we
shall make full reference \((3) (4) (5) (6)\), we suggest that the
fundamental elements of the contribution of Adam Ferguson to social-
science, which it is our purpose to explore, have not been fully
developed nor correctly interpreted. \((7)\)

For our part, we locate special interest in the work of the
Philosopher Adam Ferguson in the following areas -

First, in his life style and environment which in Ferguson's
case, seem to have been even more relevant to his
approaches than is the case with many thinkers, which
element of subjectivism is a lively matter of
discussion today. \((8)\)

Second, in the Stoic-Naturalistic element of his Ethic
which he propounds as a science underlying the whole
of what we today call social-science.

Third, in his expressions of the relationship between the
Individual and Society which offer a moderating
approach both to social-scientists and to
individualists.
So, we state our thesis thus -

Were the Ethic of the Philosopher Adam Ferguson seen, in company with his exploration of the relationship between Individual and Society, against the background of Ferguson's life style and time, as a crucial and lasting contribution to Social-science that has been neglected or under-valued, then our main aim which is the improvement of that science, would have been enhanced by this thesis on his work.
Title and Summary

(1) The Founding Fathers of Social Science ed.
   Reason from articles in "New Society" Penguin 1969

(2) NOTE A concerning Adam Smith's "Theory of Moral Sentiments"
   1759 ed. Raphael & McFie, Glasgow 1976

(3) Kettler "The Social & Political Thought of Adam Ferguson"
   Ohio 1965

(4) Lehmann WC Adam Ferguson & the Beginnings of Modern Sociology
   Columbia Univ. & London 1930

(5) Forbes D intro. to Ferguson's "Essay on the History of Civil
    Society" 1767 Edinburgh Univ. 1966 (hereinafter referred to as The Essay)

(6) Jogland HH "Ursprünge und Gründlagen der Soziologie bei
    Adam Ferguson" Berlin 1959

(7) NOTE B concerning Lehmann's interpretation of Ferguson and
    his references to Sorokin & Huth

(8) Putnam H in conversation with McGee "Men of Ideas" BBC 1983
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CHAPTER ONE

FERGUSON'S ETHIC AND SOCIAL-SCIENCE

What is Social-science and what is its relationship to the Philosophy of Adam Ferguson and he to it?

It is interesting to note that Raison in editing his volume(1) on the Founding Fathers of Social-science, decides to commence with Ferguson, as presented by MacRae. Had Ferguson been aware of the development of what came to be termed social-science, he would, good classical scholar that he was as well as natural scientist, have cited Aristotle as among the first propounders of these themes and worthy of inclusion in, if not commencement of, a compilation claiming to represent the foundations of our science. We might conclude from such omission some indication of the reasons for failures of emphasis in the development of Social-science that it is part of the purpose of this thesis to explore.

Even if Warrington(2) may have taken broad liberty in translating the opening sections of Aristotle's Ethics as being concerned with "social science", which could indeed be seen as liberty by some classicists, yet it is transparently clear that the matters which Aristotle there purveys, are the very same that the modern social scientist would wish to be admitted to his territory and which Ferguson himself considers in such balanced manner.

One does not consider Ferguson as conscious reviver of Aristotelian leads in this respect, although he frequently defers to the Greek Philosopher(3) But one notes the emphasis and precedence
with which both the greater and the lesser philosopher approach the place of the ethical in considering things social.

It could be argued that there is no need for such an emphasis on ethics as to elevate it into a discrete department of social-science, since all social-scientists will be grounded in ethical attitudes, ethical theories and in ethical and moral applications of such theories. On this argument they will be in no need of specific ethical support or guidance. Experience in the development of social-science would argue otherwise. With all the protestations of a subsumed ethic, the thinkers and activists of the era of the Industrial Revolution and the philosophies guiding or stemming therefrom, would seem to have neglected a critical debate of what is most clearly ethical, through the pursuit of processes of utilitarian maximisation. This is most clearly seen in the case of economics, and the political sciences associated therewith which we suggest have held dominant sway over the other contributory disciplines of social-science and led to the neglect of profounder ethical debate and argument.

Aristotle's headings in the Ethics, of Science, Good, Happiness, Moral Virtue, Mean, Choice, Courage, Temperance, Wealth, Shame, Justice, Wisdom, Judgment, Friendship, Self Love, Goodwill, Activity, Harmony and Anger,\(^4\) are very close to those of Ferguson in the Principles,\(^5\) of Moral Science, Habit, Ambition, Pleasure, Virtue, Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, Felicity, Activity, Jurisprudence. While we admit that any approach to ethics or morals in Western cultures will produce such close similarities, yet a seeming basic need to rest the edifice of social-science on such individual virtues and vices
so abundantly shown in the Aristotelian Ethic, is clearly reflected in Ferguson and more so than in mere chapter headings. That this is evidence of a naïveté which suggests that every social-scientist has already made such an ethic the pre-supposition of his further venture, is not convincing. We think it essential to resurrect and to reinforce the ethical foundations of our science before developing it further and that such foundation be seen as a crucial element in a science which, through limiting the role of its ethic to one of pre-supposition, has led to the submergence, dilution and even debasement of the primary ethic to what follows.

We find that both Aristotle and Ferguson as social-scientists did not see it as necessary even to argue the rectitude of the inclusion of an ethic in their social science, but gave it prime and fundamental position.

We defer for the present, argument as to whether or not, as Ferguson so strongly asserts, an ethic can be considered in terms of science. This would lead to further argument as to whether or not the social sciences can be admitted to those areas which are seen as "scientific". Suffice it for the present here to press our argument that the ethical element in social-science is indispensable, has been under-developed, and might possibly be reinforced in the terms of a Ferguson working against the background of the 18th C Scottish Enlightenment.

Although we have sometimes taken care to demote History from an assumed place of overriding importance in philosophy and social-science, we do not do this recklessly and totally but in an attempt to redress an imbalance among the participants in social-science with the overwhelming of scientific by humanistic approaches.
Indeed, we gladly admit, in the good company of such as MacRae that there is importance in looking back to social-scientists whose every contribution forms a "document of and a clue to the structural and cultural situations of the time and place."

We do not invoke the repetitious or cyclical theories of historians. In turning back to the approaches of an Aristotle or a Ferguson, we seem to find their bases and conclusions, if not eternal or universal, at least as largely relevant to our human condition as when they wrote. If certain of those bases and conclusions which seem paramount have failed to come forward in time, have been lost, deliberately rejected or merely ignored, our re-examination of their purpose and their value should be seen not as historicism but as attempt to strengthen our science through its fundamentals.

The content of social-science and possible approaches thereto seem not to have altered significantly. While the environments in which both Aristotle and Ferguson were working may seem superficially as so different from ours, the very nature of our science is grounded in the individuals through whose efforts and for whose sakes it has developed. In those individuals are elements which surmount the temporary and ephemeral.

Ferguson could not have claimed himself to be either sociologist nor social-scientist although his Germanic sociological commentators, especially Jogland\(^{(8)}\) claim him as of their camp. Fortunately perhaps those misused nomenclatures were not of his day. Ferguson wishes, and clearly expresses that wish, to establish
a science of an ethic which is directed towards the social, if not embedded in it.

All Ferguson's work is grounded in clear and well ordered prose, in the logic of classical tradition. He gives few grounds for verbal confusion, in spite of 18th century elaborations. He is very conscious of the confusion in communication attributable to the use or misuse of words and is quick to reiterate his meanings as if to assure himself, or his audience, of his intended meaning.

All this has led to criticism of him as "wordy". However, it is certain that had he used such terms as "sociology" or "social-science", he would have left us in no doubt as to their ramifications in his presentation. There would have arisen none of the confusions that were to emerge from the interpretations of those words by modern writers such as Winch (9) and which the German words "soziologie" and "gewissenschaft" in the wake of Comte's "sociologie" (9a) in translation have done little to assuage.

Here we are not only exposing the thorny territory of linguistic analysis of terms and concepts but are into the even more complex area of the very content of our science as named. For, even though Popper and others in the aftermath of Wittgenstein and the linguistic schools of philosophy, have come to feel that word discussion is boring or even harmful, we venture to suggest that an investigation of what is intended by our science and what part "social-science" will play, tends to slip through the nets of debate. If, as we suggest, Aristotle and Ferguson are representative of social-science as it should be seen, then Ferguson's relative eclipse (10) with his emphasis on ethic as socially
scientific, and the current discomforture of social-science, might prove to be related. Do we really know what our matter is, let alone our purpose in pursuing it? What to we wish to include or to exclude from its domain? Are there to be ethical criteria of our approaches? It is most needful that social-science more than any other should look to the tools of its vocabulary, its conceptual patterns, its contributory disciplines and above all to the delimitation and balance of the very areas crystallized in its title, if it is to be seriously worthy of the high claims it makes to attention. Ferguson's strong advocacy of the discussion of language as aid or hindrance to the communication of ideas is perennial and of striking need in this particular titular matter.

It would be possible to devote tomes to such social-science terms as anomie, alienation, risk and, above all, democracy, with something of the profundity that Austin for example, brings to his terms. It so frequently seems that such terms of social-science, particularly the last, are used like "God" as end-stop to discussion rather than essential premises to be explored profoundly. Even such detailed discussion of the tool words "social" and "science as engaged on in harness by Winch in philosophical fashion, has brought little determination; this augurs poorly for minor terms.

Unlike the vocabularies and symbolizations of the so-called natural sciences, the vocabulary of social-science is drawn from everyday, literary and even theatrical discourse. This need pose no insuperable difficulties as the work of Strawson and others, in tackling the application of modern logic to ordinary
language shows. Ferguson, grounded in the clarity and simplicity of the classical languages, uses his words and his periods with such painstaking care that intention is not in doubt, even if the premises and conclusions be challenged. This has given rise to the criticism of Ferguson's style as "wordy" when he is at pains to make his already clear statements more abundantly and beyond peradventure clear. Ferguson was well versed in the ancient Gaelic intended for spoken rather than written discourse. Such leads to economical and terse phrasing in the style of Tacitus. Ferguson, possibly conscious of this, might have thought repetition necessary for emphasis for his students.

We may recall that Ferguson, Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart, all philosophers at Edinburgh, termed themselves the Common Sense School. While their developments were profounder than the term might seem to suggest and possibly nearer to that of Moore, they stressed the need to use clear and unambiguous terms. They were not formal logicians but stressed that logical truth is concord of signs with things signified and all in sympathy with the testimony of consciousness and natural instinct.

Even where Ferguson's sentences become parenthetical and approaching a Germanic involvement and length, by careful punctuation, clarity of clause incidence and the use of capital letters for the emphasis of important nouns, he avoids confusion. He does not manufacture in the manner of Kant, a complex & specialist vocabulary. Common sense speaks to hoped for common sense (sens commun) in the manner of Lock's dictum - "Unless a man's words excite the same ideas in the hearer which he makes them stand for in speaking, he does not speak intelligibly." Ferguson sustains such an approach. A similar care with words might reduce some of the
contempt in which some modern sociology is held.

Ferguson cannot subscribe then to being either "sociologist" nor "social-scientist" in name, since such was not the vocabulary of his time, nor does he attempt to delineate in portmanteau terms his field of concern. However, even a cursory examination of the Principles (18a) reveals that political science, anthropology, economic and sociology as they are termed in modern guises, are the stuff of his work, in balanced harness and ever subject to the natural human condition and ethic of the individual which was his initial and prime concern. Such balance and restraint offer lessons to the social-scientist of today.

Modern social-scientists have available to them tools not possessed by Ferguson and his contemporaries. Such tools create further territories of own right such as "systematic analysis" or "cybernetics" within the field of social-science. These are still frequently overlooked. It is to accord little blame that Ferguson, philosophising in the late 18th century, made small account of quantification processes such as nineteenth century utilitarians were to engage on.

Ferguson might have been more interested in the nearer approach to quality through quantity that modern methods allow (19). He had the capacity to approach in such a manner, as he was reputed to have been "perhaps the best mathematician of his time in Edinburgh." (20) He makes one obvious approach to statistics in his section on population (21) but the projection of mathematics into the social-science arena was yet to come.
Even so dedicated a systems analyst and cybernetician as Rose\(^{(22)}\) after full investigation of modern data collection, selection and handling through the techniques of so-called "soft" and "hard" wares, stresses that in all systematisation "the final word rests with the systematiser". Had Ferguson been in possession of such techniques he would surely have subjected them as all other areas of his science, to his overriding ethical concern.

While we see this great revolution in data collection and handling with its reduction of quantities closer and closer to the qualities they attempt to represent, as of supreme importance to the social-scientist, we can only agree with Rose that the qualities of the investigator and handler cannot be ignored in the process. The natural sciences are facing up to the inescapable fact that the "objectivity" so ardently sought, is always constrained by the "subjectivity" inherent in the human quest. This makes it all the more important, as Ferguson's work proclaims, to investigate the qualities that inhere in individual "subjectivity". This will help such an exercise to rise, so far as is possible, beyond a mere personal moralising and approach what has come to be called "scientific objectivity" or "value free judgments."

That Ferguson would have been unable to term himself "sociologist" as that word has developed, may suggest a benefit. One of the gravest dangers for social-science today, as we see it, arises from the common equation of "social-science" with its minor participant "sociology". Such confusion originates in translations from the Germanic schools, where "soziologie" following Comte, might be thought to have profounder connotations than most schools of English sociology admit today.\(^{(23)}\)
"Sociology", in specialist parlance, might well be content with that vast and interesting field involved in the investigation of phenomena of aggregation, grouping, de-segregation and re-grouping, possibly including areas beyond the human, without attempting to represent (and so diluting and possibly falsifying) the whole field of social-science under the nomenclature of a part.

Ferguson's panoptic and Baconian training, was not to blind him to the growing advantages of the intellectual division of labour. Were he working in the social-science of today it is most likely that he would have emphasised and specialised in the ethic basic to his interpretation of that science, with the other areas in balanced array.

To equate "sociology" with "social-science" may be compared with attempts to equate say, "botany" or "chemistry" to "natural science". Perhaps even more dangerously it leads to the trap exposed in Winch, of viewing social-science from a humanistic/literary/historical viewpoint which has led to diffusion and dilution of the core. Ferguson is panoptically aware of humanistic/aesthetic strains but he does not depart from scientific ethical emphases to peripheries.

Where Ferguson yields ground from his main ethical and individualistic themes, he achieves a fine balance between the anthropological, juristic, political and economic aspects of his science. Within this balanced approach he indeed gives to grouping its due but not to make of him primarily "sociologist" in the
sense of giving priority to the group over the individual, as is suggested of him by those Continental and American commentators, examined herein, who cross-fertilised each other and tended to by-pass the British scene although ultimately influencing it too.

Ferguson's work is strikingly subject to the precedence of the quality of the individual and his ethic. He does not need persuading pace Homans "to bring the humans back in" for they have never been absent from nor undervalued in his scene; yet neither does he fall victim to the psychologism or psychological metaphysics of such Continental thinkers as Schütler. Although the early chapters of the Principles explore in considerable detail the development of animal and human physical and other characteristics, the approach is that of establishing a base in preliminary manner and Ferguson is not deflected into absorption in such matters as to make of him a forerunner of Darwin or Freud.

It was, after all, from being a scientist of physics and professor and lecturer therein in his philosophical remit, that Ferguson was to develop his later emphases. If in his 18th century approach he had to verbalise rather than symbolise and quantify, yet he proceeds with clear argument from his base, with conclusion consonant with premiss. If he is at times seen to be dogmatic rather than hypothetical it is through the Stoic influence of seeing an overriding cosmological necessity, yet within which choice will be free. He advances a pragmatic acceptance of the importance of trial and error emerging from corrected choice, which gives to the hypothesis in action some sway.
If of the three tools of social-science which we have argued elsewhere as fundamental\(^{(28)}\) viz:

The word in vocabulary and concept
The figure in data and methodological handling
The cybernetic processes of computation,

Ferguson was limited to the first alone, yet his own stylistic if piecemeal methods of systematisation, might prove to be worthy of modern analysis through word counts and contextual searches. For Ferguson uses his words and his concepts with the care of a classical logician if not in accepted processes.

We argue that the term social-science is applied to a science of the social aspects within which the individual finds himself; that those aspects should be regarded with "restraint, moderation and possible diminishment" rather than that the individual's power to choose in the light of his ethic be diminished. Such ethic of the individual we find fundamental and universal to the human scene. In this we ally ourself with Ferguson and see him as a powerful "Father" of our science.

Ferguson was of course partly historian, especially in his earlier manifestations, as Hume almost wholly was, and as many social scientists are and have been. Yet Ferguson's Stoic strands exempt him from over concern with the past for the Stoic love of the cosmic guides them towards a compacting of time into a unity of past present and future. Ferguson never allowed the historical past to intrude on his ethical science in its timelessness, in spite of his being steeped in classical history and its contemporary records to such an extent as to have made a major contribution to its literature by his "History of the Progress & Termination of the Roman Republic". He is scornful of contract theorists who may be claimed to have worked from a quasi-historical model, which seemed
in legalist terms to posit a moment in the past when certain socialising and perpetuating steps could have been held to have been taken. Ferguson works from an anthropological rather than an historical standpoint and pours scorn particularly on Hobbes' less flexible form of contract theory, while more sympathetic to Rousseau's vaguer interpretation of the origins of contract. (29)

It was particularly to counter the nasty, brutish and short interpretation of so-called "primitive" societies that the optimistic anthropologically oriented stance of Ferguson faces the typically pessimistic, critical view of the contract theorists in their historically legalistic assessments of societies in earlier times. For Ferguson was one of the first writers in the social sciences to anticipate the modern anthropological tendency to minimise the differences between "primitive" and modern man, as well as to point out some of the dangerous confusions implicit in the use of the vague concept "nature". (30)

It is for reasons such as these that we have drawn for the health of our science from philosopher/social-scientists such as Aristotle, Kant and Ferguson who, while completely cognisant of movements through human time, do not assign to studies of history, that increasing influence both in theory and practice, which was to develop during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Such influence seems to have culminated in the works of Croce and Collingwood and to have affected philosopher commentators on social-science such as Winch: it even goes so far as to assert that history is in control of philosophy or of anything else for that matter. (31)

The marxist schools are victim to such strictures.
Ferguson's early concentration on historical themes, as in the "Roman Republic" and the "History of Civil Society", stems from his interest then in the classical languages and cultures, so necessary to and so common among men of intellectual prowess in his time. His later and profounder interests in natural sciences, philosophy and ethics, are no longer subject to the historical strictures other than those vested in natural laws and tendencies.

So it is in a well-balanced anthropologically, politically, scientifically and economically as well as sociologically oriented approach, ever grounded in the ethical science stemming from and applied to the individual, that Ferguson gives to the modern social-scientist an example and a lesson in both the balance, the foundation and the restraint of his science.

That the lessons of such an example appear to have been negated by imbalance among the contributory areas of our science, by an emphasis on historical necessity, and, above all, by failure to give to ethic its due whether within the contributory areas or as a discrete participant in social-science, is what we maintain deserves reassessment. Study of Ferguson may yield rewards. His philosophy and his moral science we see as crucial to his and our social science.

Ferguson's contribution in the field of ethics may be seen to stray beyond the bounds of social-science to the entire territor;
of philosophers of ethics. It will usually be agreed that Ethics
is an independent field of study and not merely a concealed pre-
supposition of all attempts to philosophise.

It would be arrogant for the social-scientist to claim that
his interpretations of ethics were in no need of independent and
specialist guidance. We might claim Ferguson's contribution both as
beneficial to the wider and to the more specialist aspects of Ethics

Philosophers of Ethics today are often unhappy with the
trends of their pursuit. Geoffrey "arnock, in his exploration of
moral philosophy^{32} since the beginning of the 20th century, in the
light of three strands -

"intuitionism" of Moore and Ross^{33}
"emotivism" of Stevenson^{34}
"prescriptivism" of Hare^{35}

finds that in such meta-ethical approaches, all considered, "there
remains out of view or at least at the margin of attention, all that
is distinctively of moral interest." This because the moral
philosopher following such meta-ethical approaches, has been
concerned with epistemological problems connected with moral claims
rather than with issues of moral concern.

Bernard Williams too finds the philosophy of ethics
impoverished and "almost bankrupt",^{36} because of its obsession with
the distinction between fact and value, which could well be equated
with the is/ought debate stressed by Hume and of which Ferguson
would have been well aware. Williams finds this obsession of
contrasting fact with value, and morality with law, leads not only
to ideological cul-de-sacs but to banal and trivial exemplifications
of moral issues. Williams suggests that it is on the serious issues of life and death that the philosopher of ethics should concentrate if there is to be any valid debate of the individual's ultimate choices and not on a selection of processes of moral usage on which "no sane man would get too worked up about." (37) Ferguson certainly takes the stance of the "vital" issues seriously.

Hare, still "perplexed about what we ought to do" but still seeming to indicate that the philosophy of ethics should entail some guidance in this respect, rests on examples which seem to hover round such things as transport policies. (38)

Kant avoided such issues largely by saying that exemplification was merely for unitiates and rest on the generalities of his moral law. Ferguson, equally disinclined to enter into exemplification, closely follows this although he is less insistent on the term "law" He adheres to Epictetus' basic ethical tenet of the individual's ultimate, and waiting to be disclosed, choice of life or death, as the final touchstone in issues of vital moral instance. This might appeal to Williams.

It is in the nature of the individual, Ferguson argues throughout, choosing in the light of self-preservation enlightened by benevolence, to be capable of arriving at moral conclusions. Such choices may indeed prove to have been erroneous and needful of correction by the individual's remedied choice. Ferguson's optimistic strand suggests that such correction, whether within the individual's time span or that of the race, moves towards choices more and more consonant with the stoic cosmic unity and harmony.
The concept of self-preservation enlightened by benevolence forms the leit-motif\(^\text{(39)}\) of all Ferguson's work as the development of this thesis will be at pains to show. It is possibly on these grounds that Ferguson is accepted or rejected, since the concept of self-preservation contains in its linguistic assessments, which precede or accompany its philosophical evaluation, something pejorative which equates it with selfishness in its baser sense.

Yet through selfish-preservation Ferguson emphasises the need for species or race (human race) preservation which, so far as the animal characteristics of man are concerned, is hardly to be challenged. Ferguson's self-preservation moreover suggests an improvement of the qualities\(^\text{(40)}\) of participant individuals in the species through attention to self. This could be seen to parallel in more complex form, the grooming of animals to assist appearance and health and to prevent deterioration.

Ferguson regrets that the concerns of men tend to become involved with remoter matters\(^\text{(41)}\) to the exclusion of the study of the nearer self. In this he seems to be envisaging something that could be taken as an early venture into psycho-analysis, until we remind ourselves of the classical dictum of "man know thyself" as entrant to the portals of philosophy and of which Ferguson would have been well aware. Such a concern with self seems to be the essence of the concept of self in its preservation.

Furthermore, in all Ferguson's work the bodily or material\(^\text{(42)}\) self with its sundry needs is never detached or separated from
the self conscious of that self and of its power to choose freely. While such powers of choice can through that very freedom and human frailty lead to ill-chosen decisions, the light of experience in the manner of trial and error, makes possible the corrections of choice. The correct choice will lead to the happiness of the individual and of which he is the sole judge. Such happiness is the essential ingredient in self-preservation infused with its necessary concomitant, benevolence.

Benevolence indeed has secondary emphasis to the primary urge for self-preservation but were such self-preservation to result in harm or unhappiness of others, by so contributing to the harm of the species (mankind), the hurt would redound on the self. Benevolence and self-preservation are face and obverse of the same coin.

The social is often equated with other-regardingness and the individual with self-regardingness in pejorative sense. Ferguson's thesis seems to bridge such a divide and to offer a balance between these two aspects of humanity. If we can establish that this thesis is well sustained we can hope that a revival of Ferguson's work will lead to reassessment of the weights given to the two aspects, which seem to have tipped the scales heavily towards the social at the expense of the individual. Such imbalance is unhealthy for social-science which may itself through such emphases become unbalanced and rejected.

Such are the intimations of what most of our thesis purports to be an expansion.
Ferguson takes a basic stance on the stoic concept of the cosmos as all-embracing totality which has the capacity to make room for the freedoms of individual choice. The words "natural" & "universal" often act as synonyms for the concept "cosmic". These are all as elusive terms as is "god" as Ferguson has already stressed in The Essay. There he finds "natural" "the vaguest of terms." He suggests that it is into the what to him seems preciser term of "happiness" contrasted with wretchedness, that he would wish to resolve what is termed "natural".

In the all embracing totality of what he still refers to as the cosmos individuals through consciousness of their selves perceive and use their abilities to make choices. Such choices informed by the desire for self-preservation modified by benevolence can lead to happiness. The cosmos in its totality and universality seems to suggest a perfection wherein human happiness is enshrined. Yet the perfect system allows room for the errors of choice that may diminish that happiness so that in freedom and through trial and error individuals may come to correct their erroneous choices, and achieve the happiness, or come closer to such achievement, they had by previous choices failed to find.

The consciousness of self for the individual is basic to Ferguson's system. He accepts it as datum as we shall see and he might be censured for such unquestioning acceptance. We shall argue that this datum is as acceptable for the bedrock of a system, and possibly more so, as Descartes cogito. Consciousness of self seems to be a state more arguably in nature than cogitation and thence in less need of analysis and support. In any event this would appear to be Ferguson's position: he has read Descartes but does not refer to the cogito: he is more interested in Descartes scientific pronouncements.
Whatever is presented by or enshrined in the cosmos is "natural" which is a term of convenience more suited to a scientific age than "god-given" or "created". Ferguson would most probably have found Spinoza's equation of "natura" with "deus", which are both equally impenetrable, acceptable to his system whether that be found scientific or not. In his unease at their vaguenesses, he tends to avoid using the terms "nature" and "natural".

When the adjective "natural", itself vague, is allied to the term "law", confusion abounds. As Kant reminds us systems and our interpretations of them are made. We note Ferguson's unwillingness to use the term "law" which he constantly hedges about with qualification to slacken its seeming rigidities. The modern social-scientist is increasingly reluctant to invoke "laws" and is more content to evaluate "tendencies" with the flexibilities they offer in the short runs or even longer runs of human enquiry. Even the so-called "natural scientist" no longer thinks that he works with immutabilities in his science. Ferguson was showing wisdom in advance of his time in eschewing both terms.

The individual's awareness or consciousness of self must have as its concomitant awareness that there is other than self. This otherness will be of others of his species, other species and the totalities of environment i.e. his possibly limited appreciation of what we may call the cosmos in which he participates. In his essence or from his origins man senses selfhood; he is innately urged to the preservation of that self; self-preservation in its broadest sense is most truly assured through happiness; happiness will rest on the conviction of the correct choice having been made; the correct choice will have involved the respect for others which Ferguson terms "benevolence" and which is a sine qua non ingredient of self-preservation.
With "nature" set aside, with "law" diluted, with "conscience" offered as indubitable datum, Ferguson's reasoning may be thought ontologically insecure but he is not willing to impose a system on man but rather makes man the measure of all things, at least for the occasion of a philosophy or an ethic of and for man. The "beneficence" or "order" or "beauty" of the cosmos will provide parameters within which such a philosophy or ethic can be nourished with freedoms to try, to err, to change, to succeed, even possibly to contribute to cosmic enlargement or refinement in terms of what might be called continuous creation. As we shall see Ferguson holds out hope that man will discover other and better worlds in this process, yet unconceived, in the manner of a Teilhard de Chardin.

Such are the flights of fancy of the metaphysician but the pragmatist in Ferguson looks to the immediate or else the choice of the individual will find no criteria for present action. He proves himself willing to accept the services of the state for such choices as may be defined or constrained by mores. Constitutional or legalistic pronouncements by the sovereign are backed in the Hobbesean system by force. But Ferguson never visualises these as more than conveniences which the individual is prepared to accept until such time as they impinge on his vital choices. Vital, that is opposed to trivial. The state or sovereign in such terms resemble a major domo of the household.

By his nature Ferguson is no revolutionary, so ultimate or vital choice will not be invoked except as extreme ressort. If asked which State is best he replies "That which exists" but this is not to diminish his insistence on the freedom of the individual to choose.
Since the individual possesses such powers of choice, of rectified choice and the ability to drive such choices to conclusion, the prospect of perfect happiness however distant that view, whether for the individual or the human species, is never far from the philosopher's thinking. The movement towards perfection will rest on correct moral choices having been made, and built upon by further correct moral choices. Such correct choices yielding happiness in its most profound sense, suggest their movement from an apprehended moral sense to an even clearer vision of the moral sense, as "now we see in a glass darkly but then face to face." It may well be that "perfection" remains an ever receding goal and no immediately identifiable state. Such is what gives Ferguson's position the excitement in its development of a never completed satisfaction but of a journey as he terms it from "hope to hope".

It is such an ethic sensed by the individual as incipient in the totality of things, yielding, through his freedom to choose and to rectify his choices, with the vision of improvement that rectification may bring happiness not only for himself but for his species, that we would borrow from Ferguson for our science. He offered such an ethical foundation for what was to him social-scienc in all but name. His offering got lost to our loss.

Individual choices will be as variant as individuals in style and ramification. They may vary not only in terms of human misapprehension, error and frailty but also through the varying degrees of intensity and force with which the individuals assess the elements of self-preservation, benevolence and happiness. There is no imposition on them ab initio of unity, conformity or sameness although common humanity will move them within the parameters of that humanity.
There will be imposed on the individual in his choices, a self-limitation which, while not restricting his freedom to breach it, will constrain him to recognise "vital" from "trivial" issues, to use terms emphasised by such modern ethical philosophers as Williams. Vital for Ferguson seems to be identifiable, as one might expect, with its classical derivative connotation of being essential to life or self-preservation and thence "fitting" in cosmic terms and "productive of happiness."

Ferguson, with the Stoics, is prepared if need be to put every choice to the ultimate test of dying i.e. self-annihilation (the obverse of self-preservation) for the decision. However, in common sense and psychological health, such ultimate action will not be used in trivial manner. There will be points where the pragmatic will demand concession to circumstance.

Part of such circumstance will lie in the social structure of jurisprudence, politics and the habitual dispositions of the milieu, which the individual will have accepted as removing from his shoulders the burdens of "trivia". However he remains in control of his choices and can accept or reject such limitations were he to visualise them as vitally contrary to his interest of self-preservation in its profoundest sense of in and beyond the physical.

Ferguson was certainly no revolutionary nor nihilist to advocate dissent on "trivial" matters. Such would be anarchy. Yet the assessment of vital and trivial are for the individual to determine for himself and to act and die therefor if he is urged by his nature so to do.
Williams and others concerned with the impoverishment of the philosophy of ethics, might find with the social-scientist, interest in Ferguson's attempt to disentangle the institutional, cultural and habitual strands which could be identified as local and even ephemeral mores, from the profounder elements facing human choice. This would be a recognition of an attempt to separate the trivial from the vital which Williams thinks is a difficult task. Attempts to exemplify will prove unproductive since to the individual alone is given the power to determine what for him will be vital. He may err but the cosmic scene is capable of absorbing error, seemingly neutralising it in the long run, through the individual's corrective choices or those of his species.

Williams does indeed suggest three approaches to the problem:

a) a realistic treatment of moral conflict in relation to things that might really be vital options for somebody

b) a critique of utilitarianism

c) an exploration of the demands for consistency and coherency in moral thought.

It seems that Ferguson offers some contribution to these approaches.

Talk of "vital" options has led, pace Ferguson, to the willingness to die for one's options. Such options cannot priorly be determined by the observer but will ultimately rest on the urge of every human to self-preservation, as he sees and senses it.

Yet such willingness must be seen against Ferguson's grain of moderation and optimism. These are in striking contrast to, say, the gloomy pessimisms of the existentialists and the world-weariness of Schopenhauer who offer more jaundiced assessments of "vital".
Ferguson in his moderation and optimism addresses his theory and his analysis of practice to readily recognisable and realistically universalisable proclivities of man, the outcome of which, even in the varying circumstances of time and place give a consistent and coherent picture of emergence from the common root of the urge to self-preservation either for the individual or the species. These reveal to the individual his vital option which cannot be posited in advance but will be apparent in face of the circumstances in which he has to make his choice. (46a)

Ferguson is nowhere specific in discussion of coherency or consistency in his system but he does not find the existence of "irresistible conflicts" in moral thinking as emerging from differences in cultural patterns. Modern moral philosophers such as Williams and Strawson seem to suggest that variations give rise to "incompatible truths" which they cannot resolve. Such frustration possible stems from class and culture divides and clashes of recent times, the latter exacerbated by the spread and knowledge of other cultures seemingly so different from one another.

However it would be unwise to reject Ferguson's insistence on a basic unity for mankind through a universal acceptance of self-preservation. In such a universality of approach he not only echoes his stoic mentors but is in close and hopeful harmony with Kantian universalism. Mankind, however man may seem to differ in different cultures, in different places and at different times which emphasise differing mores, displays basic human characteristic. These lie in the fundamentals of consciousness of self; the urge
towards self-preservation; the recognition of the other beyond self which is a sine qua non of the recognition of self; the ability to choose and to project that choice into action; all these mask the differences that will arise inevitably from different environments. For Ferguson such anthropological differences are trivial relatively to his posited fundamentals for all men.

Williams' introduction of utilitarianism into his examination of the defects of the philosophy of ethics as he sees them, is a strong reflection of Ferguson's position. At a time of the emergence of the concept of "utilitarianism", Ferguson is moderate and linguistic in his rejection. He anticipates the defects of an emerging doctrine that he finds superfluous. Later it was to be attacked in no uncertain fashion. Williams calls it to some degree "horrible"\textsuperscript{(46b)} thus stopping just short of Nietzsche's categorisation of it as Mill's "pig philosophy".\textsuperscript{(46c)} Such possible exaggeration may have been caused by the century or more of the dominance of the theme with its increasing leaning towards an economic/commercial/materialistic position that was rarely subjected to critical debate in ethical terms.

The pleasure/pain of hedonistic or eudaemonistic utilitarianism are not necessarily to be equated with the happiness and its negation of Ferguson's ethic which is closer to what was to become Moore's "ideal utilitarianism". Ferguson however would have dissociated himself from either branch finding it unnecessary to use such a complicating and doubtful gloss on the concepts which he found more fundamental viz: self-preservation with benevolence.

It is most likely that Ferguson's resistance of the utilitarian theme is in part responsible for the bifurcation of approach which led to the successful development of the Glaswegian/
Smithsonian influence in social-science and the eclipse in Britain of Ferguson's more subtle ethic. For utilitarians began to try to quantify and summate individual pleasures and pains to underwrite the developing political goal of the greatest good of the greatest number, which seemed nearer attainment through the revolution of industry taking place around them.

Felicific calculi are notorious of ridicule. Lehmann quotes for example Hutcheson's attempt -

\[ M - \text{movement of good} \quad B - \text{benevolence} \]
\[ A - \text{abilities} \quad I - \text{interest} \]
\[ B - \text{self-love} \]

yielding such formulae as

\[ M = B \times A \quad I = B \times I \quad M = A \times I \]

Such are not in Ferguson's calendar.

Even the mathematical systematiser in Wicksell finds that utility defies measurement. While we have suggested that modern systems analysis in its handling of data, comes close to determining qualities from quantities in greater precision than Mill could foresee, we cannot yet accept this method as a faultlessly measurable ingredient of an ethic based on choice. (46d)

The greatest good of the greatest number which the legislator may seize upon from the utilitarian offering, seems to require a socially based ethic imposed on the citizenry and to be at odds with Ferguson's ethic emerging from the individual. This does not deny the social implications of individualistic ethic, if that ethic emphasises the element of benevolence as essential ingredient in all humanity.
The debate may possibly turn on whether an individual ethic emergent from a member of the species is closer to cosmic or natural sources ensuring the safety of the species, than a socially or externally devised and imposed ethic which may or may not have its roots in the nature of man. It would appear that a socially arisen ethic could be more encrusted with mores of time and place and less capable of flexible adjustment to the "nature" of man and the choices of individuals. This goes beyond Ferguson's thesis but can be seen as incipient within it.

It would seem a common aim of philosophers of ethics whether of utilitarian or other persuasion, to arrive at some clear understanding of the term "happiness", in a possibly minor approach to the major terms "good" and "evil". It would appear that the utilitarian largely because of his very choice of the term "utility" with its overtones of material use and possible quantification, stop short of a profounder investigation of "happiness" which requires qualitative assessment. Although "pleasure" has often been subjected to close examination by e.g. Bentham it seems to ring less profoundly than "happiness" on which Ferguson concentrates.

Ferguson does not evade the issue. Indeed he spends much of his argument in the Principles and unpublished Essays, in an endeavour to produce an interpretation of happiness which accords with his basic notions of self-preservation and benevolence. This proves a qualitative analysis based on individual choices, insisting that happiness is of the mind, for the pleasures of the senses are merely occasional and ephemeral and, by their very nature, alloyed with pain.

In stoic spirit Ferguson sees that what might be thought of as unpleasant, inconvenient, arousing animosity, positing hardship or danger, may be elements which whet man's spirit, increase his ardour
and lead to happiness. Adversity is no evil to those who suffer nothing from it. Felicity is a quality of the affections of the individual himself from his actions resultant from choices and corrections of such choices. Even commiseration and pity evoked by suffering are themselves productive of a muted felicity.

It is always from the "affections" and the "nature" of the individual that Ferguson takes his stance so avoiding the trap that engulfs those who seek refuge in the "greatest good of the greatest number" which is incalculable.

Stoic though he is, Ferguson is ever dominated by a feeling for "the just mean" or the middle path which eachews excess. So "happiness" cannot be gained as might be suggested through such stoicism as advocated by "superstitious asceticks" by withdrawing from the world and through mistaking abstinence and fasting, self-denial and corporal penance, for articles of merit. If such deprivations are deliberately sought they will only yield evidence of misapprehension and folly. "Nonetheless in a moderation of fortitude, the mind can rise above a mere possession of tranquillity and exemption from trouble."  

Importantly, as Ferguson stresses "men's conception of happiness stands as varied as their individuality, even though their sensations are taken to be the same." Human establishments aiming at procuring the happiness of their people can only provide the conditions in which it is possible for the individual to make his choices in freedom and in some assurance of the security and lastingness of such conditions. It would seem difficult although increasingly possible in the light of modern methods of data analysis, for there to be a social or totalising centralising assessment of such variant individual happinesses.
"as for riches, they are not a necessary ingredient of happiness for they are more a transient object of ostentation than enjoyment."(52) The fear of poverty as of sickness and of death, suggests that FEAR is what man should be afraid of and that he should be better apprised of this, the real enemy of happiness."(53)

"As for habit, this reconciles man to his bed of straw or his bed of down, to his peasant meal or to his banquet. Temperance as the economy of pleasure prevents the unhappiness of depending on pleasures that the individual cannot command.(54) So Ferguson speaks far from demands for equality and the monotonies of sameness but neither does he propose an abject acceptance of privation. "The natural flights of the human mind are not ultimately from pleasure to pleasure but from hope to hope."(55) This is a brilliant demotion of what was commonly intended by utilitarianism.

Yet concerned as ever, to leave no contra argument unfaced, "As for hope, it in no way precludes enjoyment of the present since "raillery and censure"(56) should be "levelled at those, who ever insistent on the future, are unable to find happiness in the present." This is the pragmatist and optimist in Ferguson rejecting utopian dreams but at the same time assuring himself of a provision by "Providence herself" of lessons for humanity, presumably through the rectification of erroneous choices, which permit progress to greater felicities. This we shall hope to bring out with greater emphasis when we turn to Ferguson's analysis of choice and corrected choice, as the catalyst of improvement.

Ferguson may be criticised for suggesting that his ethic is scientific. He worked in an age when the bifurcation of the so-called two cultures had not developed but he still sees need to invoke
scientific approbation for his enterprise. Perhaps in this he echoes the unity of the physical and metaphysical to be found in Kant(57).

"The arena of these endless contests (to find principles within which new questions can be subsumed) is called Metaphysics. Time was when she was queen of all sciences; and, if we take the will for the deed, she certainly deserves this title of honour. Now, it is the fashion of the time to heap contempt and scorn on her and the matron mourns, forlorn and forsaken, like Hecuba:

modo maxima, rerum
tot generis, natisque potens ..
nunc trahor exul, inops."

Whether or not this might lead us to term Ferguson metaphysician, it suggest that he is in good company in proposing a science of his ethic, and the future inept in establishing the dichotomy.

Ferguson indeed matches Kant's marriage of reason with practice (intended if not fulfilled in the latter's case(58)) if at a less profound level, by his insistence on the partnership of intelligent mind "conscious of itself" with the practical choices the individual will have to make.

We have endeavoured to explore the value of the concept of "mind conscious of itself" but are bound to admit that Ferguson offers it to us as indubitable datum deriving from the very nature of the species as he sees it in cosmic or "natural" terms. For our part we suggest that "consciousness of self" is an improvement on "cogito" offered as equally indubitable datum, since consciousness seems a more basic term than thought, which it may encompass. Consciousness of self seems more clearly to lead to action than cogitation which seems more concerned with the nurturing of ideas.
We reserve for our later critique of Ferguson's methodology arguments in support of his claim to being "scientific" in the presentation of his ethic. For the moment we are content to accept his ethic as an improving ingredient in a currently degenerating social-science and as a potentially valuable contribution to the total ethic within philosophy today. These may prove to be convergent worths.

Even if there is dispute as to the rectitude and value of Ferguson's methods and findings, the very intensity of his insistence on the importance of an ethical basis for the study of the individual in society and his emphasis on its scientific grounding, can open up a fresh and fundamental debate on such an ethic and its place in social-science.
Chapter One

(1) Raison ed. op.cit.

(2) Aristotle's Ethics as translated by Warrington London 1963

(3) Adam Ferguson "Principles of Moral & Political Science" Edinburgh 1792 (hereinafter referred to as PMPS)
    e.g. Vol.ip21

(4) Aristotle Ethics op.cit. Chapter headings.

(5) PMPS vols.i and ii Chapter headings.

(6) Philip W M.Phil thesis Surrey 1980

(7) MacRae op.cit.

(8) Jogland H H op.cit.

(9) Winch P "The Idea of a Social Science" London 1977 ppl21,103,40

(9a) Note C

(10) Note D and Chapter 3 herein

(11) PMPS ch.i Sect iv and Ferguson's Unpublished Essay No.11
    Edinburgh University Library Archives (hereinafter referred to as Unpub.Ess)

(12) Austin e.g. William James Lectures at Harvard 1955

(13) Spinoza: "The will of God is the asylum of ignorance"
    Appendix to The Ethics Bk.1 trans.White NY 1949
    Note this in spite of Spinoza's being termed the God intoxicated philosopher.

(14) Strawson P "Introduction to Logical Theory" London 1952
    Ch.8 Sect.8.

(15) Hayek F in correspondence with London "Times" draws attention to this semantic problem 1984

(16) MacRae in conversation London 1981

(17) Letter to writer from An Comann Gaidhealach, Aug.1982

(18) Locke Essay Book III Ch.II final para & Ch.X para 5 & Ch.XI Sec.26

(19) "Quantity and Quality" ed. Lerner Glencoe 1961
Small J. Biographical Sketch of Adam Ferguson in Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh 1864

PMPS ii pp409/412 also Ferguson's Essay on the History of Civil Society, Edinburgh 1767

Rose The Cybernetic Revolution Elek 1974

I have deliberately used "English" and not "British" here. Many Scots resent to use of "English" when it is mistakenly used for the whole viz: "British".

We cannot emphasise too much the importance we attach to our introduction of the hyphenated presentation of the words "social" and "science". In this we hope to present the overview as distinct from the participant social sciences, in the same way that "science" has been taken to be inclusive of and possibly overriding physics, biology, chemistry etc. and has been able to develop a philosophy of science as we hope to offer a philosophy of social-science.


PMPS i ch i sects. 1-5

PMPS ip 199

Philip W M. Phil Thesis Surrey 1980 pp89/90

Frequent adverse references to Hobbes in PMPS e.g. iip221

e.g. Becker H "Social Thought from Lore to Science" Washington 1952

e.g. Croce "Theory and Practice of Historiography" 1917 Collingwood "New Leviathan" 1942

Warnock G "Contemporary Moral Philosophy" London 1968

Moore G "Principia Ethica" 1903 Ross WD "Right & Good" 1930 and "Foundations of Ethics" 1939
(34) Stevenson C L "Ethics and Language" 1944

(35) Hare R M "The Language of Morals" 1962 and "Freedom & Reason" 1963

(36) Williams B "Modern British Philosophers" (conversation with McGee BBC 1971

(37) -do- -do-

(38) Hare R M -do-

(39) From page 122 of PMPS i throughout the whole work

"Man is disposed to preserve himself"

(40) PMPS ii p403 "Perfection is no where to be found short of the infinite mind but progression is the gift of god to all his intelligent creatures."

(41) Unpublished Essay No.29 "The Different aspects of Moral Science

"Men are solicitous about what concerns them least. .... Curiosity which fixes on what is strange in preference to what is familiar however important.. as in the condition of every Individual to himself" pp 1/2

(42) Unpublished Essay No.24 p2 "Self is not Belly and four Quarters

(43) Cosmos; the stoic term which might be equated with the whole of creation

(43a) Unpublished Essay No.29

(43b) "That Universal Principle of self preservation on which Providence seems to rely for the safety and advancement of her works. Benevolence no doubt tends to make man the safeguard & keeper of his fellow creatures but its effects are feeble and occasional compared to the Constant and unremitting care which everyone entertains for himself" p.4

(44) Ferguson A "Essay on the History of Civil Society"

Edinburgh 1767 p.10

45) PMPS ip48 and many times thereafter
Some philosophers - Stoics and Kantians - have thought that ideally the moral law should give us in all circumstances entirely specific guidance what to do: but, quite apart from the impracticability of this ideal, it is undesirable. Not only must we leave it to each individual to decide what to do, but it is eminently desirable that we should, so as to enhance each man's individuality and enable each to be an autonomous agent and discover himself in his own authentic action. Hence contrary to the Stoic ideal of a completely determinate law, we want the law not to lay down exactly what to do but to take into account what people actually want or actually decide, and tell us how to assess it. This quote shows limitations. It misreads stoic and kantian precepts. It is much poorer than Ferguson's careful exposition. However it shows a trend towards an individualistic ethic in recent times.

The felicific calculus may prove more approachable through modern methods of systematic analysis.

I have not done a close semantic study of the word "cosmos" so constantly used by the stoics and, in his turn, by Ferguson. Most words may be considered as terms of convenience and if they go out of usage may need a special reminder of their seeming intent. Sometimes
a term may be found so useful and acceptable that it
resurrection, as in this thesis, will not smack of
pedanticism. However it might be thought necessary
here to refer to its origin from the greek and its
interpretation by one standard reference as "The
universe regarded as an ordered system; order, as
opposed to chaos." This is our reading for present
purposes. We think it close to a concept of
universal totality not necessarily a static creation
The word is short, pungent and encapsulates "all"
whether phenomenal or noumenal. It has a seeming
scientific identity and validity that elude "god"
and "nature". We offer developments of the concept
in the progress of this thesis, especially in the
chapter devoted to the stoic influences on Ferguson.

(43b) Repetition is often tedious and we may need to make apology
for insistence on the partnership of benevolence with
self-preservation that is the bedrock of Ferguson's
ethic. He himself, aware of the pejorative flavour
of the term self-preservation, repeats over and over,
lest his readers or hearers fall victim to the
pejorative sense, the partnership of the two terms.
We have followed this lead believing such insistence
necessary. We apologise if readers are already seized
of the significance of such partnership. One caveat:
Benevolence, however participant, is secondary to
self-preservation: in conflict, the prime would prevail
but possibly, in Ferguson's calendar, such conflict
would arise only out of corrigible error.
While we suggest that "the greatest good of the greatest number" as a political aim thought to be based on utilitarian ethic or philosophy, is difficult if not impossible to calculate in quantitative let alone qualitative terms, yet we envisage progress towards such calculation.

Modern methods of data collection and analysis and systematic handling, based on individual input into some electronic system on the horizons of invention, may make it ever more possible to identify and register choices and even determine their intensities.

This might seem to resemble a glorified version of opinion poll or referenda.

It would be a much purer approach to what is termed the democratic process in large societies than the occasional vote for a programme and a delegate or representative.

This does indeed develop the method of the agora and stone dropping of the Greek city states. Using the possibilities that modern technology offers may save or enhance the democratic system.
(46e) For Bentham "pleasure is in itself a good: nay, even
setting aside immunity from pain, the only good;
pain is in itself an evil; and, indeed, without
exception the only evil; or else the words good and
evil have no meaning. And this is alike true of
every sort of pain, and of every sort of pleasure.
It follows therefore immediately and incontestably
that there is no such thing as any sort of motive
that is in itself a bad one."
Ferguson might have found two faults here. First
that pain is always and necessarily an evil.
Second, that while motives may indeed always be good,
the logic of "follows therefore......" in no way
follows from the above premiss.

(Bentham J A Fragment of Government edited Harrison, Oxfor
1948 Ch.X p.218)
(49) PMPS iip16 PMPS iip385
(50) PMPS iip505
(51) PMPS iip83
(52) PMPS iip51
(53) PMPS iip49
(54) PMPS iipp67 & 93
(55) PMPS iip95
(56) PMPS iip96
(57) Kant Critique of Pure Reason - introduction to first ed.
(58) -do- - final sentence: Kant's hope to publish a Metaphysics of Nature (unfulfilled).
CHAPTER TWO

PORTRAIT OF THE MAN
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The thinker can often be known by his life style as well as by his dicta. This accords with the growing certainty recently re-voiced by such as Putnam that a subjective element is inescapable. Life-styles are circumscribed by environment, zeitgeist and by companion thinkers and workers, quite apart from the constraints of historical residues.

Ferguson's milieu was that of the Scottish Enlightenment and his Highland origins. It is however, the hallmark of the finer thinkers and workers, among whom one might wish to reckon philosophers and among them Ferguson, that they are able to contain their circumstance and, while accepting, rejecting or adapting approaches close to those of predecessors or contemporaries, to rise above a plagiarism to unique presentation stamped by their individuality. In Ferguson's ethical debate, the subjective element are inevitably tamed by the universalities of human nature which he sets out so carefully to explore.

So Leibniz: "He who knows me only from published works does not know me." In Ferguson's case we would reinforce this dictum by his constant rejection of ready-made systems and by the content of his unpublished essays. Already in The Essay he has lamented the use of books and even a just admiration of ancient literature leading to estimates of intelligence alien to performance, skill and vigour which are the "excellence of intelligence." Such misguidance Ferguson finds "peculiar to modern Europe". This is indeed interesting coming from one so steeped in the classics; it accords with the Bergsonian streak in Ferguson which sees man as sapiens in order to be faber.
Although it is inappropriate here to attempt to develop a detailed biography of Adam Ferguson, for the reasons suggested above it cannot be entirely neglected. The factual aspects have been fully explored by David Kettler among others (4) most of whom admit that their "general material" has been drawn from John Small's biographical sketch of Adam Ferguson (5). That all such matter accord also with that succinctly presented by Lehmann (6) suggests that there is little more to be gleaned about the basic facts of Ferguson's life. However, viewing him as Father of social-science, various glosses and emphases on it seem worthy of reflection here.

Ferguson insists again and again that his ethic must conform to the example of the way of life of the advocate (7). The elements in his profile that we single out as of special interest in this sense are —

- His training for the clerical profession
- His early love of and proficiency in the classics
- His military involvement as Chaplain to the troops (a common extension of clericalism in Scotland) in action at Fontenoy and elsewhere
- His tutorship (common to indigent intellectuals of his day) of young aristocrats and travels with them in Europe
- His participation in The Carlisle Government Commission to negotiate with the American Colonists 1778
- His adroitness in preparing lectures for his appointment in natural philosophy between July 4 & October 1 1759 of which subject he "heretofore must have literally known nothing." (8)
- His Highland interests and origins (9)
- His farming interests in retirement
and all this apart from, but possibly crucial to, his work in philosophy during his Edinburgh Professorship and in the company of "some of the best minds in Europe", in a movement now heralded as the era of The Scottish Enlightenment.

Ferguson's preparation for HOLY ORDERS was typical of the destined calling for the youngest son of a large family raised in a Scottish Highland manse. His grounding for a clerical career laid the basis of his future ethical interest. Yet an account of his early profanation of the strict Sabbath observances expected of him, reveals a youthful objection, with the seed of a later liberalism in relation to orthodoxy.

The popular picture of an eighteenth century Scottish Parish given in Galt's Annals\(^1\) gives some idea of what would have been Ferguson's childhood situation and environment. The lack of deference shown therein to the Scottish cleric might seem to account for Ferguson's lacklustre attitude to such a calling. Admittedly Galt's account is of a lowland parish but the difference between that and Logieriat could not have been very great.

It seems in character with a man who placed action even higher than contemplation\(^1\) that he should have turned from the clerical career embarked upon, when he was baulked of its earlier promise by his failure to obtain a hoped for living. Then the death of his father released him from some obligation to seek a future in the church.
Ferguson's vision was much wider than that of a Scottish Parish, witness his willing participation in the army, in continental travel both with the charges to whom he acted as tutor and on his own account in 1793 when he toured Italy and Germany and was made an honorary member of the Berlin Academy of Science. His pamphlet to the Government on the American colonial issue and his consequent appointment to the diplomatic mission to America are further witness to that wider vision. The translation of his works into French, German and Russian, while he was still relatively unknown in his own islands, stem from and enlarge the vision which was at the same time being nourished by the spirit of Enlightenment in Scotland. He was to become a prophet with greater honour both on the Continent of Europe and later in America, than in Britain.

His considerable erudition in and love for the classics, both Greek and Roman, such as led to his early work on the "History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic (Edin.1783); his researches into the manners and customs of so-called "primitive" peoples for his Essay which made of him an anthropologist with an approach acceptable to modern anthropologists; his open lifestyle; all combined to inject into a dogmatism he might otherwise have derived from the Highland approach to religion, an element of softening although not of outright rejection.

Ferguson's was an open mind; some object too open for decisiveness. It is certain that such openness would not have commended itself to a Highland congregation. Moreover, he was ever fearful of his finances and much of his correspondence and his actions are concerned in his earlier days with assuring assistance for his sons.
The stipend of a country minister was unlikely to satisfy.

He was certainly no godless man and his own epitaph (in contrast with that devised for him by Scott) shows this: "I have seen the works of God; it is now your turn. Do you behold them and rejoice." This seems to echo the "natura" rather than the "deus".

Although one can see in Ferguson the influences of the French school, remembering that he calls President Montesquieu his master (17), that he visited Voltaire (18), that he was fully conversant with the works of Rousseau whose contract theory he refutes less vehemently than that of Hobbes both in The Essay and in the Principles (19) there is in him no hint of revolutionary paganism.

His approach is reminiscent of that of Malebranche "seeing all things in God" and with that of Spinoza in equating God with Nature: deus sive natura. For Ferguson, although he respects the formal religion of his place and time, God, like society, is implicit in the manhood of man and the totality of the cosmos, and is not invoked to explain but tacitly to underly all things and most often in the guise of "nature" and "natural".

It is clear that his early clericalism informs his writings and his lectures in ethics where he does sometimes seem to slip into sermonising his students. However, the revised approaches of his lectures, as they appear in the Principles (20) and the unpublished essays, are shorn of much of didactive moralising and seem to emulate the Kantian form of religion in the light of experience and pure reason alone.
So we find in Ferguson an ethic developed and matured from an early clericalism which had been put to the fire of combat. He works in a spirit of universalism and with an all pervading emphasis on rational individual responsibility which is remarkably modern in tone. His ethic accords with Moore's "organic whole"(21) and his approach to choice with Kant's categorical imperative.

Ferguson would have been in sympathy with Moore's indefinability of the good although he takes great pains to analyse pleasure which he sees as the reflection of good, although never in terms of hedonistic utilitarianism.

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Although Ferguson never became as proficient in Greek as in Latin, his work for his Edinburgh MA gave him the reputation of being "the best CLASSICAL SCHOLAR and perhaps the ablest mathematician and metaphysician of his time at the University."(23) Profoundly versed in the history of the Romans, he quotes repeatedly from those sources in the Principles and used all in his History of the Roman Republic. But this latter was an early work and his developing interest was to be in the field of ethics rather than history. He drew largely from the works of the classical stoics for his ethic, even though he firmly and repeatedly rejects allegiance to any "school" as such. It was not his style to subscribe to conceptual packages, and set theories.(24) He was ever his own man in true Highland fashion and as concerned for his own, as well as for all individuals' outcome through free choice, a main plank in his structure.
Following the position of the stoic Epictetus, who seems at times to ally himself with "the philosophers" and at others to stand aside from their circles and their strictures, Ferguson is intent on maintaining his independence of the schools while proclaiming himself as at one with the aims of theoretical philosophers. (25)

Military interests, sustained by an ingrained pragmatism and emphasised by his Roman studies and his participation in battle, are a clear strand in the refinements he introduces into stoicism. However we suggest that Lehmann (26) places too much emphasis on this early militarism as does Jogland. (27)

Latin quotations, frequently untranslated in the manner of 18th century writers, abound in the Principles but refer there less to military than to ethical, political and constitutional matters. (28) Noting that the Principles are groomed lecture notes, we may well see in these interpositions, shows of erudition underwriting the authority of the lecturer.

For our present purposes it is the quotations from and translations of or reference to the repeated sayings of Epictetus, that attract our attention on page after page of the Principles, thus reinforcing the stoic element we find in Ferguson's philosophy.
Certainly his upbringing in the Highland tradition of loyal service within the clan, gave him a special lead in deciding to serve as CHAPLAIN attached to the famous BLACK WATCH REGIMENT. This appointment he retained for nine years and is a career still sought by young Scottish clerics. (29)

In spite of records that he showed an aggressive stance at Fontenoy, it is also reported that his succour of his men both there and later in Ireland and in Brittany, was conducted in a spirit of sympathetic bonhomie which led to his General saying of him that he had an "unbounded ascendancy of the men of his regiment." So was practised what Ferguson was later to formulate into the theory of exercising benevolence alongside the self-preservation which it is the first duty of man's instinct to observe. His accord with his men "would have been aided by his fluency in the Gaelic tongue. (30)

Certainly this experience on the fields of battle would have given him special discernment in matters of war and defence which he briefly touches on in the Principles. (31) But it would certainly be gross exaggeration, following Lehmann's lead, to see in Ferguson origins of what has come to be called "modern conflict theory." (32)

As to conflict in its more general sense, Ferguson brings conciliatory notes. Yet he always approaches associationism with its obverse, stressing the distinction and antagonisms that human association inevitably extends to those outside the tribe or circle, quite apart from internal dissolutions. "The human species though disposed to associate is disposed to separate also." (33)

In terms of cosmic peace, Ferguson constantly refers to mankind as the touchstone of possible future accord, too far in advance of a time when internationalisms might hold out such promise, yet ever stressing the common strands of humanity across all boundaries in the vision of a peaceful man.
After involvement in battle, Ferguson found income and interest in travel as TUTOR to young aristocrats. This was an age of patronage and Ferguson's posts probably mellowed his thinking on class structure. Initially and at a time of desperate financial stringency following the abandonment of his clerical training and his chaplaincy and his pitiful stipend as librarian in succession to Hume, Ferguson tutored the young sons of the Earl of Bute. He was generally referred to as "Bute's Ferguson" to distinguish him from the many others of that name with whom he has been subsequently confused. Such confusion has been increased by the various spellings of the patronymic. He also acted as secretary to Lord Milton and as factor to Lord Islay.

Later, in 1773, when his reputation had already invaded the Continent of Europe, he tutored the young Earl of Chesterfield at a noble salary and with the promise of a pension. The acceptance of this position understandably jeopardised his professorship at Edinburgh University by temporary absence without leave. Ferguson must have felt it well worth the risk to further his continental links and influence; in any event he succeeded in being reinstated.

His close rapport with the French schools, his growing familiarity with philosophical movements in Switzerland, Germany and Italy, all in their several ways attempting to reconcile the position of individual vis-à-vis society, were certainly sustained by these tutoring tours and almost certainly instrumental in moving Ferguson to accept their offers. (34)
That he is much quoted as being an acknowledged mentor of Marx is overplayed by those who wish to see in Ferguson a founding father of what was to become a Marxist type of sociology. But his very quotation by Marx, whatever interpretations that commonly misused philosopher may have put on the Scot's works, must have extended his influence developed by journeyings, encounters and translations of his writings into the languages of the continental schools.

Ferguson's association with the aristocratic world and his wish to help to prevent any upsurge of revolutionary fervour such as was developing in Europe, led him to a position clearly alien to those who were advocating dramatic changes. Indeed his deep advocacy, in the revised edition of his lectures, of a political status quo was almost to the point of seeing in his present the "best of all possible worlds." While this is witness to a very restrained approach both to the logic and politics of change, he continues to reserve for the individual his ultimate choice, to the death if need be. Yet he is no prophet of self-annihilation and the circumstances that might lead to such an ultimate choice would, one is assured, have to be "ultimate" indeed to lead to such dissent. Here it is the individual who is stressed so that the discussion does not lead us into what has come to be known as "pressure group" dissent and campaigning against prevailing institutions. Nor is the sullenness of anomie or alienation suggested, conceived as building up towards revolt.

Ferguson's moderation of approach reflects the mean of
Aristotle and this together with the doctrine of the amended choice, leads to a suggestion of progress for mankind far from revolutionary. The latent utopianism of the dialectic with its emphasis on thesis and antithesis in opposition leading to a forwarding synthesis, suggests a clash of radical and corporate choices. Ferguson's ultimate happiness seems to be envisaged in gentler, distant and ever removing goals to be sought by the natural processes of individual human choices rather than by corporate cataclysms.

That Ferguson was invited to take part in the CARLISLE COMMISSION to negotiate with the American colonists in 1778 as Secretary to the Commission, sprang from his spontaneous correspondence with the Government following a critical pamphlet published by Dr. Richard Price siding with the colonists against the Government. Ferguson's letter\(^{(38)}\), later expanded into a pamphlet published at government expense, is an indication of his wish to take part in affairs, beyond the influence of the lecture room or his study.

On this occasion it is natural to find that he was given willing leave of absence from professorial duties. However, the whole venture proved abortive. After much argument on both negotiating sides, Ferguson was sent as placatory emissary but failed to get passage through the American lines to Washington.\(^{(39)}\) Whether or not the Commission might have achieved some success had Ferguson met Washington or if the preliminaries had been less acrimonious, is of course a matter for conjecture. There is no doubt that Ferguson's participation left him disillusioned and much concerned with his emoluments for the mission.\(^{(40)}\)
This American fiasco is probably the reason that Ferguson seems never to have sought nor been asked again to take an active part in Government business. But this did not diminish his insistence on an active rather than a passive or purely theoretical role for philosophy and for ethics. He continued to show a lively if remote interest in political matters throughout his retirement and until his death. It has ever been the aim of the stoic philosopher to participate in public affairs.

The loss of papers and records of the expedition at sea on the return of the Carlisle Commission leaves a gap in the archives of that venture.

To expatiate on the speedy preparation of a series of lecture in a subject relatively unexplored by Ferguson, when he was first called to lecture in the natural sciences at Edinburgh, may seem a relatively trivial matter which has faced many young dons. However, recalling it might lead to some conclusions as to Ferguson's authority.

While we may marvel with Small at such a tour de force it could indicate a superficiality of a more general character in Ferguson's work. It might also account for the almost text-book like character of the early chapters of the Principles where Ferguson might be seen as instructing himself methodically in the first principles of naturalism as well as his audience. On the
other hand one can see in this effort an extension of a panoptic vision in the Baconian tradition which had not yet quite disappeared. Such totality was giving way, partly at Ferguson's instance, to an intellectual division of labour which he considered as of important philosophical necessity, greater than its economic-commercial offshoot.

His rapid venture indicates a readiness to participate in the natural sciences which he sees as parallel to his ethical science. It is important to stress that Ferguson's approach to his ethic is always conceived as scientific, whatever glosses may be given to that term. His approach however was not without aesthetic consideration although not in the literary and historical terms that one associates with the humanistic tendencies in Hume and Smith.

Ferguson would have come into close contact with, for example the chemistry of Priestley during his doctorate at Edinburgh, a Priestley who had no narrow vision of his science since it was he who first formulated the concept of utilitarianism taken up later and possibly mishandled by Bentham. That Ferguson was fully aware of developments in chemistry is underlined by the finding of Black's papers among Ferguson's effects. This celebrated chemist was his close friend and relative by marriage.

In writing his biographical account of the "late Dr. Joseph Black" Ferguson does indeed disclaim expertise in chemistry for himself in his growing acknowledgement of the necessity for the intellectual division of labour in an epoch of revolutionary scientific expansion. While he "fondly embraces any doctrine as it seemed to connect with the system of nature" yet "his own studies
have been so different that he would not, if he could, charge his mind with any of its practical details."

So we assess Ferguson's "tour de force" as evidence of his closeness to and knowledge of the ramifications of the burdgingeoning natural sciences, along side his willingness to accept the increasing need for specialisation not only in material processes, as emphasised by the followers of Smith, but in the field of academic learning and philosophy where his deliberate choice for specialisation was to be the field of ethics. His use of the term "science" of ethics might be challenged in terms of its scientific character by later generations unused to the Baconian and classical tradition of "scientia". He himself may have been a little confused about the use of the term, standing as he did on the threshold of the bifurcation of "science" from "arts".

MacRae stresses the importance of Ferguson's HIGHLAND ORIGINS and that although these were not in the remote fastnesses of the north and west, his whole upbringing rested on family and clan at the heart of a free Gaelic society. His participation in military pursuits was an extension of that background. His clerical training as the youngest son of a rural minister is typical of many Highland families. His memories of his grandparent blacksmith contain no manner of class humility but of Highland pride in craft and the practical: this is indicative of an attitude to class so different from that which was to develop in divisive fashion by many sociologists of marxist schools.

Ferguson's professorship at Edinburgh, centre of culture
and letters as well as of academics of specialist callings, might well be seen as an extension of Highland influence. This too could be contrasted with the environment of Glaswegian academics, among them latterly Smith, in their growing milieu of manufacturing and commerce around the Clyde and its attendant coal and iron mines. These came to resemble two worlds with the latter developing apace. It is very possibly that from these different environments and their influences, there stemmed such projections as were to promote the Glaswegian and Smithsonian and eclipse that of Ferguson from Edinburgh. Ferguson was to be honoured on two Continents, where industrialisation followed that of Britain, more than in his native islands. Economic creeds were more consonant with the rapid industrialisation that Britain was undergoing, than a profounder concentration on a science of ethics.

It is very likely that from his Highland origins, there arose Ferguson's controlled disdain for sybaritic values and possibly thence, of such of the utilitarian themes he could see developing. He would have moved for years with troops able to sleep at night in the tartan and draw a meagre sustenance from a bag of oatmeal at the saddle.

Admittedly with his characteristic ability to tread a via media, Ferguson did not scorn comfort when it was available and his heart attack in middle life is attributed by Small to good living, with his enforced later abstinence and vegetarianism contributing to his longevity. Here indeed is evidence of popular form stoicism moderated to a sensible and reasonable contribution, but nonetheless to pervade the Principles and the early statements therein.
There is more evidence of Highland influence, close to the earth which nurtures it, in Ferguson's retirement in 1785 to a farm at Hallyards near Currie, with the help of monies given him by a generous former student, then Governor of India. In such retirement from University studies, he was able to combine the two basic strands of his being. Here he could meditate at leisure philosophically on the science of his ethic, revising his writings and lecture notes and most probably writing the undated unpublished essays. He also contributed letters and papers on the growing continental tumult. At the same time as he was meditating, writing and taking a pragmatic if remote interest in public affairs, he was turning his "barren heath into beauty and fertility."(46) In this he resembles a contemporary moral philosopher Kames, who was a noted agriculturalist whose greatest practical achievement was to float a stratum of peat covering 1,500 acres off his estate.(47)

Through such brief assessments of aspects of Ferguson's life and style, we hope to offer a picture of a man of broad vision whose work in the social-science of his day was based not on scholarship alone but on a diversity of interest and practical achievement. He was never "sociologist" in the narrower specialist meaning that has come to be equated with that term. Although not so self-dubbed he was to be a social-scientist in the Aristotelian sense of that term, which we take as paradigm for today. He showed
unswervingly that balanced involvement in ethics, anthropology, political science, political affairs, economics and jurisprudence with restrained sociology, both theoretically and practically, which makes of him a true propagator of our science. His pains to emphasise the ethical contribution, in possible foresight of its coming submergence in the plethora of commercial and economic considerations which was the anathema of his classical stoic substratum, tended to crowd him out of British nineteenth century scholarship.

Social-science is the relative generaliser of its constituents and in that guise might be paralleled with the strongly established philosophy of "science". Ferguson was beginning to break from the polymath tradition of Bacon with its wider generalities. He was more profound than either Thomas Reid or Dugald Stewart with whom he is associated in the so-called "philosophy of common sense". (48)

He was clear and decisive in the underlying ethic of his works and emphatic on the to him "scientific" nature of his venture. Such unity of insistence, seen against the diversity of his experience may offer something in the nature of the "speculative synthesis" advocated by Hampshire as the possible need of our time. (49) Gellner reinforces this with his emphasis on the need to keep progress scientific and progress humanitarian in greater harmony. (50) Ferguson achieved this through his works and his life style, although he would have disclaimed the originating dichotomy. Had Kant had such a life-style and Ferguson Kant's theoretical intensity we might be greater inheritors. Perhaps from reflection we may merge them.
Graham gives a vivid picture of Ferguson in his Edinburgh environment in the Age of the Enlightenment - "He was choleric and would fire up at the smallest provocation in an instant, for he was explosive and at a very low flash point for it would seem that he suffered intellectual fools not at all.... yet "few men added more vivacity and freshness to the literary band than Ferguson .... with Gaelic accents on his lips, with Highland blood in his veins and extremely Celtic temper in his spirit, he brought a refreshingly new but by no means disturbing element into the spirit of Edinburgh. His tall, handsome person, his air of breeding and grace, his vivacious talk, were a charm to his friends ... his heart was as warm as his temper."

Henry Cockburn gives an even more detailed pen picture of the philosopher - "In his younger years he was a handsome and resolute man .... Time and illness however had been dealing with him, when I first knew him, he was a spectacle well worth beholding. His hair was silky and white; his eyes were animated and light blue; his cheeks sprinkled with broken red, like autumnal apples, but fresh and healthy; his lips thin and the under one curled. A severe paralytic attack had reduced his animal vitality, though i left no external appearance, and he required considerable artificial heat. His raiment therefore, consisted of half boots lined with fur, cloth breeches, a long cloth waistcoat with capacious pockets, a single breasted coat, a cloth greatcoat also lined with fur, and a felt hat commonly tied by a ribbon below the chin. His boots were black; but with this exception
the whole coverings, including the hat, were of a quaker grey colour, or of a whitish brown; and he generally wore the furred greatcoat even within doors. When he walked forth, he used a tall staff, which he commonly held at arm's length out towards the right side, and his two coats, each buttoned only by the upper button, flowed open below, and exposed the whole of his curious and venerable figure. His gait and air were noble; his gesture slow; his look full of dignity and composed fire. He looked like a philosopher from Lapland. His palsy ought to have killed him in his fiftieth year; but rigid care enabled him to live uncrippled either in body or mind, nearly fifty years more....

Domestically he was kind but peppery and anxious. His temperature was regulated by Fahrenheit and often, when sitting quite comfortably, he would start up and put his wife and daughters into commotion, because his eye had fallen on the instrument, and discovered that he was a degree too hot or too cold. He always locked the door of his study when he left it, and took the key in his pocket; and no housemaid got in till the accumulation of dust and rubbish made it impossible to put the evil day off any longer; and then woe to the family."

Graham further(53) puts Ferguson into the perspective of his Edinburgh setting so -

"Here I stand at what is called the Cross of Edinburgh and can in a few minutes take fifty men of genius by the hand ... there was a familiar fraternity in which these men lived. They all knew one another - most of them since boyhood for they were all about the same age. They met one another almost every day of their lives. They belonged to the same set of
society, sat at the same tables in the dingy old flats, copiously partaking of claret and punch without a headache and of indigestible national dishes without a nightmare, with all the zest of Epicurus over the most delicious novelties. They would not go out of their wynds without being sure to see friends they had met last night at Mrs. Cockburn's merry parties, over a light tea and cakes; or at the Lord President's over a heavy supper and drink."

Graham also lists friends and associates thus -

Such was the milieu and the talented galaxy among whom Ferguson moved. Undoubtedly he was influenced thereby but remained ever his own man, never descending to the mere collection of concepts and opinions but working out against the inevitable backdrop of his times, his own unique contribution.
Chapter Two

(1) Putnam and McGee in conversation BBC 1983
Leibniz;
(2) Quoted Hampshire "Age of Reason" N.Y.1956 p.143
(3) The Essay p.30
(4) Kettler op.cit.
(5) Edinburgh Review CXXV No.255 1867
(6) Lehmann op.cit.
(7) PMPS ip308 312
(8) as (5)
(9) Stressed by MacRae op.cit.
(10) To be celebrated in Edinburgh 1986 with an international gathering of intellectuals.
(11) Galt "Annals of the Parish" Edinburgh 1821 Ch.1.
(12) PMPS ip14 136 176 254 185 iipl41
(13) Letters to his wife Katey from Venice 1792 2ff Edinburgh University Library Archives AAF
(14) Graham"Scottish Men of Letters in the 18th C." London 1901 pp49/50
(15) Lehmann op.cit. pp164-179
(16) Edinburgh Archives Letters 11 and 12
(17) The Essay p.98
(18) Edinburgh Archives Letter to Carlyle 1775
(19) PMPS iiip221 234
(20) PMPS introduction to Book iv-viii
(21) Moore G "Principia Ethica" London 1903
(22) Kant Prolog. and CPR
(23) Small op.cit. p.600
(24) PMPS iiip402
(25) PMPS ip207
(26) Lehmann op.cit. intro.pp26/7
(27) Jogland op.cit.
(28) PMPS concluding chapters of Book ii
(29) e.g. case known to the writer Mid Argyll 1982
(30) Edinburgh Archives Letters LL453/2
(31) PMPS volii
(32) University of Hawaii - Work on war games 1980
(33) PMPS iip293
(34) Edinburgh letters 1792 2ff
(36) PMPS ip263 iip497
(37) PMPS ip187 iip497
(38) Ferguson "Remarks on a Pamphlet" Cadell London 1776
(39) Letters to and from G. Washington 1778 Edin. Arch. ltrs 11 163
and Proceedings of British Commission at Philadelphia
1778/9 partly in Ferguson's hand Edin. Arch. DC 1 6
(40) Edinburgh Archives Letters to J. MacPherson 11 and 12
(41) PMPS ip269 and in spite of Kettler op. cit. p291
(42) Letter to writer by Curator of the Black Watch Museum, Perth, 198
(43) Small op. cit. p.65
(44) Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh
Part III 1801 p.108
(45) PMPS Book i introduction
(47) Kames - Britannica
(48) Wolff - former professor of logic LSE London: Britannica
(49) Hampshire introduction to "Age of Reason" Mentor N.Y. 1956 p.17
(50) Gellner conversation with McGee BBC 1981
(51) Graham HG "Social Life of Scottish Men of Letters in the 18th C
London 1901 pp107/9
(52) Cockburn H "Memorials of his Time" Edinburgh 1910 p.119
(53) Graham op. cit. p.109
(54) -do-
CHAPTER THREE

SOME GROUNDS FOR FERGUSON'S ECLIPSE
CHAPTER THREE

SOME GROUNDS FOR FERGUSON'S ECLIPSE

Since Ferguson has been dubbed a "Father of Social Science" and since we have been drawn to emphasise the part that his ethic might play in reviews of social-science today, it is necessary to examine the reasons for his undoubted eclipse.

It is, of course, common for men of importance to find their works rejected. Ferguson's was not. Yet his writings were more acceptable to continental thinkers in the many translations which were made in his lifetime. A prophet is often honoured more outside his own countries.

It is, also usual, for succeeding generations to change from acceptance to rejection and back again. Ferguson's star in Britain seems once more in the ascendant, possibly because of the current interest in the Scottish Enlightenment in which he played a prominent part and also because of the growing need felt for an ethic to underwrite a growing secular tendency.

There is today an increasing concern with the offerings of the entire and varied Scottish Enlightenment both at academic and popular levels. It is possible that current dissatisfactions with many complex social issues, quite apart from the heart and intellect searchings of academics looks to that flowering of so many interests for elements that may have been stifled in the industrialisation and debased utilitarianism that was to succeed it.

Such interest is not limited to the philosophical or ethical but these were important aspects of the Enlightenment in which Ferguson figures prominently.
The Scottish separatist movement of today, perhaps chauvinistically grounded rather than on philosophical or ethical reasons, may be a cry for some of the rethinking that Scotland, through re-examination of the Enlightenment, could offer to the who of British society. We might envisage in the decline of the Enlightenment of the 18th century something approaching the misfortune that we see in Ferguson's eclipse. Ferguson's decline could be viewed as part of a more general decline in culture and manner of thinking that needs resuscitation. Indeed his eclipse might be caused less by limitations of style and method imputed to him and which we shall examine with care, than to this more general decline.

Ferguson propounds an ethic as the basis of his approaches to what we now term social-science. Although his methods and even his basic data and conclusions resting thereon may be challenged, they have by relative neglect remained largely undeated. We see this ethic as an essential element largely lost to social-science and Ferguson's individualistic ethic as a healthy counter-balance to the socialising ethic so frequently urged. Moreover his ethic could make a welcome contribution in broader terms to the entire field of ethical and moral debate which some philosophers regard as unsatisfactory as the field of social-science.

Ferguson was not by name a social-scientist for the words, hyphenated or not, were not of his day in spite of their having been indicated by Aristotle. His intention was not so far as one can gather from his works, to present an opus magnus for those who might be deemed social-scientists. But he was intent in the Principles, which is his major work, to offer what can be seen as presenting a balanced overview of the accepted participant elements of social-science, namely, anthropology, political science,
economics and sociology, rather than laying emphasis (except in terms of his ethic) on any one of these facets.

Historian though he had been, Ferguson gave no emphasis in the Principles to that branch of learning.

Before the advent of statistical data handling and systematic analysis, he cannot be faulted for that omission although it is critical for modern social-science.

Those social-scientists who have lost the balance within their science, may have sought in Ferguson what he was not offering and therefore lost sight of his important contribution.

Ferguson's approach, with those of his contemporaries of the Enlightenment, heralded a departure from a panopticism of such as Bacon to concentration on specialised areas of study. Ferguson's interest was ethical. None of this is set forth as a statement of intent but is incipient in the Principles and other writings. Smith economics, in tune with the times, gained a major share of attention and contributed to Ferguson's eclipse.

The Scottish Enlightenment, possibly little understood either on the Continent of Europe or in America, is of unique interest and the revival of concern in it may be considered as coincident with renewed interest in Ferguson. There exists no overview of the ethical debates of that movement; the conference planned for 1986 may lead to new perspectives on that gap. Ferguson's eclipse may then prove merely temporary. Yet even if he be found ultimately wanting or limited, reflection on and criticism of his work may enhance the ethical debate and its contribution to social-science an philosophy.

After the Union with England in 1707 and the failure of the
Jacobite risings of '15 and '45, the best minds felt that they could turn away from civil strife to a new manner of philosophical debate differentiated from though nurtured by the theological debates which had sharpened Scottish minds for centuries. Scottish culture in its relative isolation was distinctive, although linked with the French. France and Scotland had ties which can still be seen in, for example, linguistic comparisons.

Yet in the new climate there was no exclusiveness and migration between the cultures of London and Edinburgh were as commonplace as Continental links and wanderings. Hume sought to remove "scottisms" from his speech and Robert Adam designed stately English homes, albeit in Continental style. Johnson, that powerful element in English culture, was constrained to make a journey through Scotland, to see for himself, the elements lying behind this new phenomenon. (8)

The Enlightenment was varied in its interests which were by no means limited to the philosophical. Hume's History made an immediate impact for its author: his philosophical works had to wait for much later acclaim. (9) Adam Smith ushered in an era of interest in political economy with his Wealth of Nations, largely following the works of the French Physiocrats, especially Say. Home's versatility extended from legal theory, agricultural reform to promotion of Scottish manufactures, especially linen in Dundee.

Only the poets turned inwards and reacted against the Union, frequently using the Gaelic tongue for their verse, or the lowland dialect made famous by Burns. There is a revival of such a turning inwards in the current moves for Scottish autonomy which may be prompted by the disenchantments which have come recently from the Union.
Ferguson's professorial part in education at the University of Edinburgh took place against the background of high regard in Scotland for education at all levels. It was generously provided for by private grants. The Highland tradition, which continues today, was one inspired by seeking to educate highly the sons of humble crofters. At the Universities the students were taught by "Regents" throughout their courses but these, as one result of the division of labours, were being replaced by specialist professors among whom Ferguson was one. Yet Philosophy, Moral Science and Natural Science were still closely linked as they are, if only nominally, in Scottish Universities today. Complaints that suggest Ferguson's lack of profundity may miss the point that he was only just emerging from an era of Baconian overviews.

Even the students were permitted to range widely in their intellectual interests as graduation at University was no firm necessity for approbation. The practical was emphasised alongside the intellectual in a manner which is seen today of increasing importance. This was to prove an element aiding the emergence of what was to become a pioneering and managerial race. At intellectual and philosophical levels it is seen in the Kantian emphasis on reason pure and reason practical. Ferguson's foot in both camps may have made him less intellectually acceptable. His associates were equally balanced between the theoretical and the practical: Francis Home, professor of Materia Medica at Edinburgh engaged in the study of bleaching processes and plant nutrition. James Watt, instrument maker at Glasgow University was there encouraged to work on his steam engine. Ferguson's practical aspects are ethical rather than material.
So in the setting of a broadly based Enlightenment and a University system still wedded to an integration of disciplines, Ferguson was beginning to show signs of a specialist intent, in an ethic which he set out to demonstrate as prime and as scientific. Yet in such a beginning he may not have offered that degree of ethical and philosophical profundity which would ensure his continuing acceptability, especially in an age when an ethic married strongly to the economic and utilitarian was proving itself. His individualistic ethic also ran counter to strong socialist currents.

It was on the Continent of Europe that Ferguson was to be accepted initially much more readily than at home. Links between French and Scottish cultures were close. Ferguson's early acceptance was consolidated and extended by the notice accorded to him by Marx and by the translations of his works into French, German and Russian, although these were mainly his work in early historical vein.

So his work became seized upon by social theorists emanating from the Hegelian/ Marxist tradition until Ferguson came to be thought of as "sociologist". His interest in sociology, as a science of groupings with historical and political overtones of a specific character, was muted and subject to his overriding individualistic ethic. So, not in the mainstream of continental sociological thought, his star seems to have waned for that reason and his more important ethical contribution submerged.

Ferguson was also accepted in the United States of America possibly because of his involvement with the Commission to the Colonists in revolt and partly through the direct influence of Continental thinkers on American academics, who often had a European background. The political, military and legal interests
of American commentators would also have found in Ferguson, insufficient profundity in those directions.

Ferguson's eclipse could be partially put down to his style which the poet Gray described as "short indeed and sententious for he did not develop his arguments." Duncan Forbes in his introduction to The Essay(15) does not contest this and we wonder whether Forbes and Gray among others who have condemned his style, base their conclusions on the Essay rather than on the Principles where there is considerable depth of argument. Where Ferguson emerges from a somewhat dogmatic style resting on basic assumptions which he offers as indubitable, to develop a theme as he does in the case of Habit, he is most profound in detailed argument. In the unpublished Essays, possibly written from retirement, there are presentations of single themes in depth.

Yet it is difficult to see that style should prove a main reason for eclipse. Kant's often turgid and difficult style proved no reason for non-acceptability.(16) It could well be that Ferguson's translations either reduced the impact of his so-called sententiousness or were found to accord better with Germanic turns of phrase.

The unpublished Essays handwritten(17), often difficult to decipher and of which no print out has yet been made, offer sufficient reason for their neglect. The Principles have been made accessible through American photo-process(18) which suggests an acceptability beyond the barriers of style. Remember too that Ferguson "did not suffer fools gladly" and may often have felt that verbum sapienti sat est.

Kettler who assesses Ferguson as pedagogical, didactic(19)
homilectic, propagandist, complex, classicist, vague, eclectic and opportunist, still cannot dismiss his "wordy" style as worthless antiques nor abandon entirely the commitments of the "wordy old Edinburgh professor." We are reminded that Kettler was working as a student of political science which was only of secondary emphasis in Ferguson. He may therefore have missed the subtle philosophical and ethical emphases which demand some mulling over of words, terms, and concepts which were considered by Ferguson as precedent to the political.

For our part we have sought behind the words, terms and concepts and contextual uses of Ferguson's works, meanings and directions which are closely consistent, embedded though they are in a style close to that of his contemporaries which needs sympathetic reading by modern commentators.

Readers may go to the Principles in the disappointed hope that they may deal with political science in some revelatory manner. But Ferguson, in company with classical philosophers(20) is intent on laying a moral foundation for any further work on other aspects of what we call social-science. He is almost dismissive of political detail in a manner suggesting that it is immaterial to mankind what system he lives within -"The present is the best." (21

In the aftermath of the Enlightenment, emphasis came to be placed on the political/economic aspects of social-science which were so scantily treated in the Principles, so reducing again the impact of Ferguson's contribution.

Forbes is a fair and sympathetic adjudicator of Ferguson's worth(23) and himself stresses the importance of the individual. Yet, in his admittedly brief contribution to Ferguson's early work he discusses the individual as "citizen" and his "virtu". Ferguson,
especially in his later Principles, does not approach the individual as citizen, although he accepts this as partial role, for he is more intent on the "integrity" of the individual as a member of the human race in the all embracing cosmos. Such integrity will certainly reflect in the virtu of the citizen but the former is major in Ferguson's calendar. Students of political science would have found him lacking in enthusiasm towards their special interests. This offers yet another reason for his eclipse.

If students of political science find Ferguson tepid, then researchers of war games and conflict theories, as for example currently in the University of Hawaii(24), will be equally frustrated. Or they can misinterpret Ferguson. Lehmann's suggestion(25) that Ferguson's allusions to conflict can be seen as a "specific theory" of the "conflict theory of society" seems completely unjustified.

By character and persuasion Ferguson was an amiable optimist whose outlook was quite other than that of the more combative Hobbes. (26) He reserves only brief comment(27) in the second book of the Principles where warfare is seen only as justified to ensure the integrity of the state against aggression so endangering the continued happiness and integrity of the individuals within that state. Ferguson would have offered little in this direction.

Those who wish to see the philosopher of social-science as a political activist will be equally disenchanted with Ferguson's offering. Kettler assumes that Ferguson wished to pursue an active political role but was frustrated by the failure of the American Commission. "Despite his heroic efforts Ferguson the intellectual was compelled to withdraw from the political sphere of effective action..... there was simply nothing he could do."(28) But there is
no hint of chagrin on this score in Ferguson's writings and his retirement to agriculture gives no hint of disillusion. Stoic philosophers have often projected their findings towards practical involvement but have remained at heart philosophers rather than political scientists or activists. One might as well fault Plato for his failures (29) in the classical political scene. However if such activity is thought essential then Ferguson will fail the test.

Some social-scientists find their thinking dominated by the historical. (30) This dominance can be broken down into an inevitability of origins, causes and effects; a line of progress either in biological evolutionary terms or in institutional/legal/contractual terms; a cyclical progress of advance and regression with the possibility of further cycles; a progression either in line of time or cyclically towards an ultimate possible perfectability. In such a manner the historical can be seen as scientific or philosophical. However social-scientists have often used their history in terms of determinisms constraining freedoms and leading in a direction envisaged hypothetically by the social-scientist himself. Many followers of marxist doctrines have pursued this line to the possible exclusion of a revolutionary leap of ideas, even taking into account the logical process seen as stemming from their thesis, anti-thesis, synthesis concept.

Social-scientists of historical vein would find little of satisfying interest in Ferguson's waning concern with historical influences beyond the biological. It is to be disputed whether Lehmann (31) is correct in saying that Ferguson "held a cyclical view of history." Ferguson followed the stoic example of seeming to compact time into a oneness outside historical convention. Although he was no utopian and was more concerned with a present than an immeasurable future, Ferguson does suggest an ultimate perfectabilit
of evolutionary biological origin. Yet in a century of concentrated historical obsession which tended to precede a current growing lateral concern with things anthropological, lies yet another cause for Ferguson's eclipse.

Ferguson's anthropology (34) was distinctive in his time. It accords more closely with modern trends in anthropology which refuse to view "primitive" societies as "backward" and "deprived", or defective. The anthropologist in modern guise finds that the word "civilization" is ambiguous. Forbes agrees (35) with Ferguson's wary approach to that term.

This is in distinct contrast with the prevailing Hobbesian creed that historically "early" man lived in a manner that was nasty, brutish and short. (36) This creed was to colour much of social thinking in terms of institutions for centuries and support the spread of western culture in colonising and imperialising movements. Although Ferguson favours a seemingly inevitable improvement of the human condition, he finds that all cultures can be viewed in so-called "civilized" and "cultural" terms. (37) It could well be that, as the modern anthropologist suggests, cultural elements of value may be lost to that improvement if the offerings of so-called "primitive" societies are rejected.

This is not to align Ferguson with the romantic view of the noble savage so eloquently presented by Rousseau. (38) Ferguson's very modern anthropological view was to emphasise the nobility of man without the savagery. Ferguson's anthropological contribution which was in advance of his time went largely unnoticed. It makes possible his emergence from eclipse.
The nobility of man is enshrined in Ferguson's insistence on his integrity which lies at the heart of his individualistic theses. Such individualism was out of step with the socialising, cooperative approaches to perfectability of the 19th and early 20th centuries and would have proved another factor in Ferguson's eclipse. Ferguson's abiding interest was with the individual conscious of himself, of his power to choose and to rectify that choice with the aim of preserving his integrity. The word "integrity" could be analysed in as profound a manner as "good" and with as little ultimate determination.

To attempt a semantic approach, it would seem that to use the word integrity is to invoke an integer of unbroken and continuum whole as distinguished from a part or an incompleteness or evanescence. Perhaps Ferguson is wise largely to avoid the use of the word but it seems acceptable to project that the modern concept of integrity accords with a concept of oneness of individuals within the universe of mankind. This was the manner in which the stoics and Ferguson used the noun. No moral or ethical philosopher would dispute the value of the term. Ferguson sees the oneness, the selfhood, the integrity, the preserved self of the individual, as the basis from which a science of society may proceed.

The classical injunction "man know thyself"; the poetic "to thine own self be true"; the Christian injunction to care for one's neighbour as one cares for oneself, extended into a total ethic by Kant; the individualistic ethic of such as Hayek and the existentialists, all seem to emphasise the root of potentiality for good in an ethic grounded in the individual. Actions emerging from individual choice, according to Ferguson, are only later to be analysed and subjected to corrective choice by that individual who alone decides his happiness and self preservation.
For Ferguson the happiness of the individual resultant from such choice and corrected choice, is his to determine alone: it is not to be determined or assessed by observers or third parties. But the good dependent on such an ethic is not entirely consonant with the climate of 19th and early 20th century thinking which placed greater emphasis on a social determination of the "greatest good of the greatest number." Ferguson's individualistic ethic would have to wait for another century and a half, to emerge from it eclipse by socialising factors.

From such arguments it would seem that Lehmann's finding[41] that "Ferguson brings the fact and meaning of society into the centre of his field of vision" cannot be sustained. This would certainly have made of Ferguson the "sociologist" that Lehmann seeks in him. Ferguson, of course, was concerned with the health of human societies as part of the cosmical whole, but he is unremitting in his insistence on the responsibilities of individuals for the health of that whole.

That there can be a "science" of society is disputed. That there can be a "science" of ethics is as hotly opposed. Ferguson is disposed to assert the scientific character of his moral exposition and thereby sowed some of the seeds of his eclipse. For those who see the study of society as difficult if not impossible to clear of value judgments, who place implicit faith in a value freed science, who argue that an ethic is essentially a corpus of subjective value judgments, Ferguson will again prove persona non grata.
Glosses on the term "scientific" in the 18th century were other than those of more recent times. "Scientia" was a probing that led to such knowledge as the human mind is capable of and it could be conceived that a probing of man's ethical concerns might rank equally with other attempts to penetrate truth. In today's climate of "indeterminancy principles" in physics even, the great divide between what has been recognised as truly "scientific" and other aspects of man's endeavour to attain knowledge can be seen to have been weakened. Ferguson's eclipse for reasons of his inadequacy in science and scientific method may in this new climate be reversed.

To the semantacist, contributory to all enquiry, it is interesting to note the various glosses on the term "scientia" \(^{(1)(2)}\). In Hammond, it is "knowledge"; in Dryden, "Art attained by precept or built-in principle;" in Hooker, "Any Art or Species of Knowledge" In Pope, "One of the seven liberal arts, grammar, rhetoric, logick, arithmetick, music, geometry, astronomy." Such were the senses of "science" in Ferguson's day although he himself had intimations of newer interpretations. Post atomic critiques of science as relative, indeterminate suggest that 18th century interpretations were not entirely wrong.

One might reflect on whether the term "science", as limited to the physical or natural sciences, is any longer a term of excellence and such a hallmark of probity that it can be used as a limiting and dominating factor in assessing knowledge. Yet Ferguson, in his age of burgeoning specialist sciences did look on the term as one of approbation and so took special pains to attach it to his ethical endeavours. In the same way today social-scientists have been at pains to emphasise the scientific character of their work lest it lose repute. Scientists working in the physical and natural science
have been chary of accepting social-scientists into their ranks: social-scientists have made strong representations to be so included. This may herald an amelioration of differences harking back to the closer totalities of the past and from which developed specialist fragmentations. Ferguson may have been rejected for his appeal to "science" when this was unnecessary to his aims.

For our part in turning to Ferguson for aid in social-science, it is really immaterial whether or not his works be labelled "scientific". It is his individualistic ethic which seems most worthy of exploration, whether "scientific" or not. Yet, as Ferguson is at such pains to declare the scientific character of his work, we must carefully evaluate that claim in assessing his methodology. In the meantime it is clear that for those who still view science in its narrower senses, Ferguson's scientific ethic will fail to satisfy.

(Note. It is not inappropriate to note here that the social sciences themselves with their relative indeterminancy based on the dilution of laws into tendency statements, are themselves suspect as sciences to the narrower view. This has led to their being supported from and guided towards the even less determinate liberal humanistic studies through which their rigours are ever more diluted to mere descriptive generalisations. Ferguson, seen as social-scientist as well as purveyor of a scientific ethic, will be doubly rejected from the narrower viewpoint.)
A further complaint about Ferguson which may be seen to have contributed to his decline, is that he was merely eclectic and no presenter of any uniquely worthwhile points of view. It is certain that philosophers among others, not only take their stances coloured by the work of predecessors and contemporaries but are subject to all the influences summed up in the term "zeitgeist". Ferguson's unique contribution lies in his insistence, within what we now term social-science, of the basic importance of the ethic born of the individual.

To suggest that Ferguson was merely "representative" of the Enlightenment in "collecting together the knowledge of his time" and conducting a "retrospective review of his epoch" is just not true. To read the reference footnotes that Ferguson provides is to see how little he draws on the dicta or concepts of others except insofar as they had penetrated his thinking from daily exchanges and contacts. In the Essay indeed he pays almost obsequious lip-service to Montesquieu but does not follow that master far in the Principles except to accept possibly the threefold division of the political scenario that Montesquieu offered.

German scholars thought Ferguson's work of sufficient interest to have translations made but these emphasise his historicism which waned after the original Essay and insist on his sociological emphasis, When he was found wanting as sociologist to which he laid no claim, his influence declined largely from misreading of his intentions.

Ferguson's interest in the science of nature had caused him to point out in the early Chapters of the Principles the similarities between man and other species of the animal kingdom
even in their associative tendencies, so suggestions by German scholars (47) that Ferguson saw the social nature of man as distinguishing him from other living things is another misreading. Such misreadings stem from historical rather than Darwinian interest

First enthusiasms based on misunderstandings were almost certain to lead to later rejection. But now we find that neglect is possibly turning to resurrection largely due to the work of MacRae, Forbes and Bryson. However as these contributions have been exiguous it seems that the amplifications of this thesis are apposite.

Bryson, in the United States of America, was first of these to high-light Ferguson's importance in the ethical field of social-science: "There were always incomplete systems of moral philosophy, distinct sections on politics, jurisprudence, economics and the puzzle remains as to why moral philosophy has not been given more recognition by the historians of those social sciences." (48) It is regrettable that her contributions were limited to two brief essays.

Forbes is in sympathetic relationship with Ferguson but his contribution is currently limited to a brief introduction and that to the early Essay which was not Ferguson's major work. He, like Bryson, sees Ferguson's main concern as being in moral argument accepts that these are grounded in the important setting of the Enlightenment and on stanic foundations. Forbes insists that there is much more work to be done to explore Ferguson's offerings.

MacRae too sees a future for Ferguson's work. This was his reason for the chapter in the "Founding Fathers of Social Science." Much of this analysis too concerns the early Essay, although MacRae
finds the early chapters of the Principles the most important part of that work. In particular he sees Ferguson's merit as stemming from his study of the individual in terms other than those of Hobbesean or Rousseauian pretentions.

Yet it was the industrial and economic scenes of the 19th century dominated by a debased utilitarian ethic and an emphasis on the social nature of man, that more than anything else contributed to the eclipse of Ferguson. If his revival is imminent then it will probably rest on an increased interest in the ethic of the individual as the guarantee of social excellence, and on an impatience with the outcomes of western industrialisation.
Chapter Three

(1) Largely due to the influence of Hasbach, Ferguson's earlier works were translated into German. They were also translated into French and Russian.

(2) A book about to be published by the University of Edinburgh will claim Ferguson as one of the "stars" of the Enlightenment. Same claim made in TV series on Scotland Channel Four December 1984.

(3) The Scottish Nationalist Party will take part in the Edinburgh Conference on the Enlightenment in 1986 as will the Gaelic Soc'y.

(4) Largely sponsored by the SNP but also by the Scottish Labour Party and has a considerable following among people not strongly politically oriented. Oil discoveries have greatly contributed to this demand for autonomy.

(5) See references to Williams in Chapter One herein


(7) Organised by the Department of Advanced Humanities, University of Edinburgh and attracting international attention.

(8) Johnson's "Journey to the Western Isles" in the company of Boswell: various including Oxford 1970

(9) "The celebrity which had eluded him as a philosopher came to him as an historian" Isaiah Berlin, "The Age of Enlightenment" Mentor NY 1956 p.162

(10) Kant - The Three Critiques

(11) e.g. by Marx, Hasbach, Brysig.

(12) Continental marriages had spear headed such interchange and lig...


(14) e.g. by Kettler, Lehmann and Bryson op.cit.

(15) Ferguson "Essay on the History of Civil Society" int'd.

D. Forbes Edinburgh 1956 (herin referred to as the Essay)

(16) The works of Kant "are written in a heavy academic style
quite appalling..... yet Kant had one of the most
daring and original minds in the history of thought"
Comment by H. Aitken "The Age of Ideology" Mentor NY 1956

(17) Ferguson's Unpublished Essays in the archives of the Library
of the University of Edinburgh (see NOTE H at the end
of this thesis)

(18) Reprint of the 1792 ed. of the Principles in two vols.
maintaining the original pagination, spelling etc.
AMS Press NY 1973

(19) Kettler op. cit.

(20) In the good company of Aristotle and Plato among others.

(21) PMPS i p187 iip497

(22) Barely 100 pages of vol two

(23) Intro. to the Essay Edin. 1966


(25) Lehmann op. cit.

(26) Hobbes "Leviathan" 1st part ch. 6 Hate etc. largely among the
"passions" reprint London 1970

(27) PMPS ii pp293/299

(28) Kettler op. cit.

(29) Plato's failures in Sicily possible comparable to Ferguson's
in USA

(30) e. g. the German sociologist Max Weber.

(31) Lehmann op. cit.

(31a) PMPS ip335

(32) PMPS iip401

(33) PMPS ip329 leading to a suggestion of a perfection in an after
life.

(34) PMPS ii section iv

(35) Forbes intro. to the Essay

(36) Hobbes' "Leviathan"

(37) especially in the Essay

(38) Rousseau: Contrat Social

(40) especially Sartre (See NOTE E at the end of this thesis)
(41) Lehmann op.cit.
(42) Webster's Dictionary
(43) Jogland op.cit.
(44) See NOTE F at the end of this thesis
(45) PMPS ii ch.vi
(46) PMPS i ch.i sect. 1
(47) e.g. Jogland op.cit.
(48) Bryson - Sociology considered as Moral Philosophy
    Sociology Review XXIV 1932 26-38
(49) Forbes intro. to the Essay
(50) MacRae "Founding Fathers of Social Science" ed. Raison London 1969
CHAPTER FOUR

Ferguson's Methodology
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Ferguson's Methodology

We have presented a number of possible reasons for Ferguson's eclipse. It may well be that it is his methodology that gives most cause for rejection if he can be found "unconvincing," "wordy," and "plagiaristic." (1) He sets out to be "scientific" and "systematic" and continually stresses the importance of such method. However he does not expound a clear system and his intentions, apart from his few basic dicta or data, must be deduced from sympathetic reading. Although such avoidance may not be deliberate, Ferguson says (4) he does not want to be party to any constraining system of thinking which might limit his intellectual freedom. Perhaps his own system is too loose and too open for approval. It seems to partner the openness and variety that he finds in the natural world within which man must make his choices. This is a harder task than to set artificial bounds to enquiry which may falsify the enquiry itself and its conclusions.

Why did Ferguson set such store on claiming that his system was scientific? He is quick to assert, after the generalisation in the title of his main work, that there is indeed a science of morals that parallels that of physical science and that he intends to pursue that science. (5)

For Ferguson the universal scene is a whole and scientia a total approach to such knowledge of that scene as the capacities of man can comprehend. Ferguson sees no gulf between ethical and physical approaches to enquiry (6), except what is required by a necessary intellectual division of labour, specialised vocabularies
and conceptual frameworks. Such differentiation is indeed essential since the matters explored require different methods of handling. He insists (7) that some of the mistakes in man's enquiries have arisen from using metaphor and simile and those across the boundaries of differing territories. Where the methods of the various branches of science are transferred by analogy they merely mislead. Specialisation may help to reduce such dangers but it must not go so far as to deny the ultimate unity of the exercises.

Ferguson realises that the scientist must keep in touch with many fields and while he knows that he cannot pursue, for example, the growing detailed knowledge of chemistry, he must remain aware of its ramifications so far as possible. The daily converse in Edinburgh of widely disparate researchers would have helped to achieve this end. His marital relationship and friendship with Black would also have helped. (9)

If the intellectual division of labour must proceed through a separated physical and moral approach, Ferguson envisages their eventual union at the "point when physical science becomes comprehensive of the order of nature" and "moral science becomes a principles of extensive benevolence, by which the individual states himself as part of the order of nature." (10) The parts must conform to the whole which is natura or god given in a unity which overrides diversity.

For Ferguson his endeavour must be a science. Kant reminds those who seek a definition of science that "a science in the proper acceptance of that term cannot be formed technically that is from observation of the similarity existing between different objects: its
constitution must be framed on architectonic principles: that is its parts must be shown to possess an essential affinity and be capable of being deduced from one supreme internal aim or end." Again "No one will attempt to construct a science unless he have some idea to rest on as a proper basis." Again "Those who wish to pursue a scientific method can choose dogmatic or sceptical approaches but they are bound never to desert the systematic mode of procedure."

For Ferguson the "architectonic" principle is drawn from the universal unity of nature or god, propounded by the classical stoic concept of the cosmos. Within this natural unity things and processes are presented, with living things whether plant or animal being part of and contributing to that unity. For such things it is their "life" which is critical to their being. Without "life" they cease to be. "Life" and its counterpart "death" are the crucial elements of an organism's part in the totality and presumably too crucial to that totality which has seen their emergence and continuance.

Preservation as crucial to continuance seems to be prime\(^{(12)}\) for the organism whether such preservation be seen as "instinctive", "duty-bound" or "purposeful". For man among the species it would seem that self-preservation by self is prime. This is Ferguson's originating thesis. He seems to suggest\(^{(13)}\) that the urge to self-preservation is natural or instinctive or rooted in the cosmic totality. He seems in the early chapters of the Principles to be following an almost evolutionary line with self-preservation as not only the guarantee of continuance but also of improvement and so the primary and possibly therefore the moral essential. Such is his
Kantian "idea". But the morality of such self-preservation seems to lie for Ferguson in the individual's recognition of himself, through his consciousness of selfhood, as "part of the order of nature". Consciousness of self is one of his dogmatic data presented as self-evident truth and not as indicating a "duty".

Such self-preservation must always be viewed as of other than bodily emphasis and allied with the other regardingness that consciousness of self inevitably involves and ever with the possibility of mobility to improvement. Such movement or development will, in the human case, be exercised through choice. The universal system contains within itself opportunity for freedom of choice even where such choice may lead to error, for corrected choice is always possible. Apprehension of error comes when a hindrance to happiness is experienced either by the individual or by successions of individuals. Ferguson is never clear whether he is speaking in terms of one human life and one human choice or a succession of such for his species.

The "notorious fact" of man's consciousness of self is offered in a dogmatic fashion that might be seen to accord with Kant's third dictum. This notorious fact is as unquestionable as the cartesian cogito. Man so conscious of himself will from that consciousness find a drive towards self-preservation and will be aware of those forces within him inspiring him to choose and to act on choice. Such choice and such action will lead to resolution of the choice among alternatives. In the light of hindsight the choice and the action may be seen to have been wrong, and lead to that failure of happiness suggesting new or amended choices, whether for the individual or his species.

Error may persist but experience will ultimately prove
beneficial through a manner of trial and error leading to rectified choice more consonant with the preservation of the individual and his happiness. Through such rectifications choice will come to accord more closely with the whole of nature and so prove, good, right and proper in that context. Erroneous choices will not have been incorrigibly wrong, evil or improper by reason of the very freedom which induces their possibility. That very freedom makes possible their correction and "in the long run" ensures the morality that guides man to his true part in "the order of nature".

For Ferguson man is not basically evil. He cannot be for he is part of a whole represented by deus sive natura. His self-conscious choice will be for activities leading to happiness in the light of self-preservation. His error is corrigible. His happiness is partly assured by such freedom as enables him to err as well as to choose rightly.

Both "happiness" and "self-preservation" are terms developed in highly sophisticated manner by Ferguson. In this lies much of his originality. With Kant, Ferguson sees "satisfaction" and "happiness" as the criteria of worthiness and thence of morality. The glosses on such terms, as in all philosophising, need exploration. For Kant the injunction "Do that which will render thee worthy of happiness" is apparently made simpler by the ascription of a "duty" so to do, whether that prescription of "duty" be considered as of man or given a priori. Yet his categorical imperative still needs elucidating in terms of the individual acting as if his act could be universalised.
Secondary or emergent rules or injunctions do not follow obviously for all detailed decisions, except in terms of a "ten commandments", which may fail through omission, commission or misplaced emphasis. Kant evades exemplification.

Ferguson avoids the deontic by placing the details of choice on the individual who is conscious of himself, thence of other and thence of the totality of which he is part. If he err and place his self-preservation and happiness in jeopardy, he or his kind can discern error through the accompanying diminution of happiness. All this subject to the timeless/ of the stoic philosophy and neither deontically nor teleologically oriented at the moment of choice.

None of the consciousness of self, choice, action and corrected choice would lead to a moral science or a moral system were Ferguson not to spell out clearly the intentions lying behind his words "happiness" and "self-preservation". Such words are so ingrained with pejorative sense that it is difficult to see their part in a morality.

Self-preservation for Ferguson is as much, or more, of the personal integrity as of the bodily self which is its manifestation. The dichotomy that has dogged us since Descartes has led to the divisibility of that integrity which is a nonsense since the term "integrity" challenges division. Time and again Ferguson reminds us that we are not "belly" and "appetite" but that we have a sense of our part in nature that is of nobler or higher aspiration. Here Ferguson may be venturing into a metaphysical concept of man which envisages his part beyond the senses or appearances, or the senses and appearances as they have yet emerged for humanity. In Kantian terms such meta-physics can still be termed scientific.
The search for happiness which is the drive in the individual's choices, which are his alone to make in freedom, towards such a total integrity of personality as well as of person, are no mere searches for physical ease or the evasion of pain or painful decisions, but lie as well in a "conscience" secure in the benevolent of other-regardingness which is an inseparable element in the primary self-preservation.

Because happiness is of the person it will vary from individual to individual who alone will be the accountant of his happiness. Yet just as he may err and make choices that are not consonant with his happiness, so even more erringly may the independent observer assess his happiness. This is what places on the individual so great a responsibility but he is not burdened by it since his choice has been free and is corrigible. Admittedly there is here a time lag and the seen need for correction comes after the error has been made but this approximates to the accepted scientific method of trial and error.

Ultimate happiness may possibly lie in hope since errors of human choice may defer full happiness in a lifetime and hold out a vision of greater happiness yet to be attained. Here Ferguson may even be visualising an after life.

Kant's ethical system is to pose and endeavour to answer the following questions -

What can I know
What might I do
What may I hope

and his whole CPR is given over to the first element. He finds that the second and third elements are not aided by knowledge and
it is only by experience "that I can learn what will achieve satisfaction." *(20)* "Happiness is the estimation of all our desires and the practical law based on the motive of happiness is pragmatical and prudential. But the law which has no motive than the worthiness of being happy I would term a moral or ethical law, ASSUMING SUCH A LAW TO EXIST. *(21)*

This, apart from the use of "law" or pre-condition that Ferguson shies away from, is remarkably in tune with the Scottish philosopher and it is worth noting Kant's caveats on the word "law".

In the Principles Ferguson does not involve himself deeply with the epistemology of his case as is Kant's main concern. He finds man "conscious" of himself rather than knowing himself. This emphasises the biological, psychological or intuitive elements rather than the rational.

Like Kant Ferguson is both metaphysician and pragmatist but with emphasis on the latter rather than the former in contradiction to Kant. Yet he propounds no "laws" of pragmatism or prudence for cases too disparate to welcome such constraints. Man's worthiness to be happy lies in the individual's free maintenance of his integrity, to be increased or refined by ever corrected choices.

Kant's insistence on systematisation as criterion of science, also finds strong echo in Ferguson: "Although in the following page there may be a continual effort to state the argument as well as to arrange the matter in question, yet the Author is sensible that method is the principle aid he can give and that to succeed in the study of the individual, every reader must perform the work for himself." *(22)* He is therefore committed to a methodology to prevent
it seeming that the individual is left to flounder in a sea of choice.

Yet there is still not much guidance for the individual since "even systematisation must be restrained by possibilities for this passion for system may disappoint itself by pushing forward too fast without employing the means that are required to obtain its ends." So Ferguson complains that Des Cartes, for example, searching for explanation of the planetary revolutions without any evidence of reality, piles supposition upon supposition on the basis of his system. Theory and practice must advance pari passu for Ferguson and theories, systems and mistaken identifications of laws may be greater cause of error than the poor choice of the individual.

Particularly must the rationalist be cautious for "men of speculation are apt to mistake their own abstractions for realities while their merit lies in discourse rather than in action and men of ability in conduct are often deficient in discourse." A system is more difficult to correct than a choice which is wary of the constraints of systematisation. Ferguson emphasises the practice to counter-balance the concerns of the rationalist who so often dominates the philosophical scene.

Yet with all its dangers and with all the need for caution, systematisation in science, whether of physics or ethics, must be used to ameliorate a multiplicity without seeming order which perplexes and distracts the human mind. For "the material world is a magnificent but regular discourse composed of parts and subdivisions proceeding from the original creative mind from general to particular. The mere observer (man) must proceed by a laborious induction from the indefinite variety of particulars to
some notion of the general mold or forms in which they are cast."

Though systems may err or mislead, Ferguson is insufficiently
sceptic and too much identified with science, to reject the to him
notorious facts which are the lynch pins of his system viz:
consciousness of self, freedom in choice and the power to correct
that choice, under the aegis of self-preservation with benevolence.

In positing a universal characteristic of the individual's
consciousness of self with its ethical and moral consequences,
Ferguson may indeed seem to be laying down a law but it is
interesting to note how a scientist of Ferguson's pretensions
baulks at the use of the word "law". He rarely uses it without a
diluting qualification such as "predicament" or "principle". Kant
also uses terms such as maxims and schemata in something of this
evasion and, recognising mah's part in reflecting the phenomenal,
indicates as we have shown that a suggested "law" may not indeed
exist. Ferguson under the aegis of nature asks for a flexibility
rather than a rigidity, which will prove permissive yet not chaotic.
From such openness man's freedoms will derive.

Ferguson might have sympathy with modern social-scientists'
liking for the word"tendency"rather than"law". This term opens up
the possibility of alternative choices encouraging the emergence of
hypotheses and trial and error tactics. A branching of options can
then be envisaged for the present which may indeed have to be
corrected in the longer run by some overriding consideration
but may permit fresh fields of human endeavour, hitherto unexplored,
to emerge from such flexibility. So new and unconsidered light
on the "law" may result in restatement or extension in the manner
of Einstein's reflections on Newton's findings.
The choices of individuals are not usually clear cut options but emerge from a complex of circumstance and towards complex ends. The freedom and openness of tendency statements may be seen as beneficial in visualising the "good", the "right", the "ethical", the "moral" as elusive and only to be approached through trial and error. The "tendency" does not colour with approbation or disapprobation individual choices, it relates to the direction which may be achieved through corrections of choice. Ferguson's argument for the corrected choice is both tendency and hypothesis saturated.

In his eagerness to underwrite the title of his work "The Principles of Moral and Political Science", in a period of growing approval of everything termed "scientific"; in his guise of Professor of sciences; as the recipient of Continental honours from the German Academy of Science; Ferguson may have overstepped the mark of scientific ambition. "I am ambitious to show that there is a science of manners or of ethics no less than of Jurisprudence or Politics by pursuing the concept of virtue in a manner like a series of mathematical theorems from an axiom or definition."(27) Shades of Spinoza! But Ferguson does not follow such self advice through with any degree of rigour but proceeds through "a laborious induction process"(28) of investigation and assessment of the various elements in his concept of virtue in moralising manner.

Ferguson should probably be viewed as scientist/metaphysician to whom metaphysics is possibly an extension of science into the noumenal realm. A degree of flexibility on the part of the scientist may induce a Kuhnian revolution, even bringing what was considered as beyond the phenomenal within his bounds from what was erstwhile considered noumenal.
Ferguson here seems more adventurous than Kant who steps back from the boundary between phenomenal and noumenal. He suggests that there are "other and better worlds for mankind yet to explore." In this there is something of the de Chardin flavour. (29)

Such a metaphysical vision might seem to require greater support than the "scientist" in Ferguson could offer, although he asserts that "notorious facts" are "foundation enough upon which we may safely erect the fabric of moral science".

Ferguson's prime dictum or self-evident truth of choice through "a mind conscious of itself" may be considered inadequate to form the basis for a systematisation, a methodology and a science. Perelman says: "That which is self-evident forces itself on our thought as true, self-evidence being merely the subjective aspect of objective truth" and "self-evidence by its nature indubitable will refer back to a veritable knowledge which describes the real as it objectively is." Such self-evidence seems once more to rest on the character, personality and circumstances of the seeker after evidence and may convince only those who are in sympathy with such character, personality and circumstance. Ferguson's scientific/metaphysical contribution may be coloured by the moralist who reflects in his argument what he himself is and what he would require of himself to sustain his integrity. Yet the three facets are not incompatible if the scientific and metaphysical search into human ways yield such universalizable elements as Kant and Ferguson suggest do indeed exist.

Whether what Ferguson has to offer is closer to a subjectivism of moralising rather than a scientific attempt to penetrate truth, is still arguable. However his justification
might be seen to rest on a system based on some seemingly indubitable and universal characteristics of the human condition and defended by an insistence on corrected choice in the manner of hypothesis, extended by trial and error. Ferguson might even have been willing to apply the test of trial and error to his originally so-called indubitable dicta but such an extreme possibility is beyond the bounds of his words and of this thesis, although in character with the man himself.

From the first appearances of the Principles, it is apparent that Ferguson will not be a comfortable writer to explore. The Principles are rewrites of lectures and as such tend to be discursive, parenthetical and, as Ferguson himself is quick to admit, repetitive. Yet this may be a recommendation rather than a criticism of the work of a lecturer in the best traditions of revisionary teaching suited to an aural audience which, over several sessions, may need recapitulation of central or evasive themes.

Ferguson is reputed to have been a popular lecturer and there is profit in considering the Principles as developed from spoken and rhetorical contributions. It might be enlightening to listen to a taped version. In the rewriting done from retirement and mature thinking, there are obvious pithy inserts which nowhere approach aphorisms so alien to Ferguson's forthright style, but which reinforce fundamental concepts. Such inserts may sometimes break into the flow of the argument and give rise to some fragmentation and lack of order so that one must advance on his themes and then retreat a paragraph or two to get a clearer picture of intention.
In such repetitive, discursive, parenthetical and sometimes circumlocutory style, lies yet another reason for Ferguson's neglect. He rejects the easy flow of some philosophers, to groom over his arguments time and again to establish the rectitude of every word and every nuance. For Ferguson was most sensitive to the misuse and abuse of words. In this must be seen his approach to logicality for he presented no formal logic to support his argument.

Yet it seems unfair to complain that "his theory of morals is eclectic and unconvincing, rhetorical precisely where it should be closely logical." Such condemnation from a friendly critic, ignores recent claims for the values of rhetoric and argumentation in a light of logic. Ferguson was insufficiently poetic to achieve a method of dialogue in the manner of a Plato or a Berkeley. His dialogue and argument rest, in print, on his constant reassessment of his terms and, in the flesh, with his students and contemporaries.

Criticism of Ferguson's illogicality implies that he is unaware of the importance of logic or incapable of following through a logical argument. Any student of the classical languages is steeped in the logic of word, clause and period quite apart from full awareness of formal logic. Ferguson would have had considerable sympathy with Zeno's "dialectic the closed fist; rhetoric the open hand" and with Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric. Wherever he takes space, albeit in ordinary language and never in the formulations of standard logic, to get his teeth deep into a specific theme e.g. in the case of Habit, his investigation is as thorough, as logical and as conclusive as could be desired of any exponent, even though the premisses be challenged.
The repetitions, revision and expansions with which he is faulted, he might have excused thus: "Many may be conscious that in a continued pursuit of the same subject for a long time, they themselves could have done better; but in this it is to be regretted only that they have not done so; For in this field there is room for many labourers." Brevity may be the soul of wit but not always of clarity.

Since man is basically created good and endowed with the power of free choice, Ferguson must examine in detail how it is that those choices may err. This is human error for which the individual alone is responsible and which he is left capable of correcting. Just as in some theologies gods can encompass evil and absorb it in an overriding good, so the stoic theory seems to encompass error, even to the point of seeing it good. There is no hint of a misleading daemon.

"Man is formed with a personal disposition to effect what he conceives to be good" but "rationalisation may not take its conceptions from the ordinary course of things" " but from singular accidents, or peculiar habits of thinking any way contracted" so that "it frequently happens that the conception misleads the affection." Theory and rationalisation as well as accident may mislead choice.

Sources of error in choice, whether arising from a "system" or an "affection" are now examined and first among these Ferguson places language. He has already rejected the images and idolae of metaphor, together with misleading applications of the findings and methods of one branch of science to others.
A thing "once conceived as useful or pernicious recurs under the same predicament and this disposition to conceive things as they have been associated is confirmed by habit" and "of all examples which serve or illustrate this law of association, language is the most familiar and obvious."(37)

Ferguson's "Language is the great field of arbitrary association.... words of reproach provoke and expressions of regard conciliate", evokes a later presentation in Stevenson's emotivism. For, sensing the power of the demagogue and the crowd which lie among the dangers of rhetoric: "We may fancy an occasion of joy, when we hear the shouts of triumph, or an occasion of terror when we hear cries of despair."(39) He may even have felt a personal danger here.

While "language is the instrument of society" "this wonderful organ of human knowledge does not always serve the purpose of discrimination," "even though it be the gift of nature to man alone and not "appearing to result from any signal advance of the intellectual faculties."

Words are demoted to "articulate sounds varied indefinitely in every Hord or Assemblage of men", yet the communication they make possible lies at the very base of the "fabric of society itself." What a dangerous source of error! The Unpublished Essay No.14 suggests that "we may need a fresh supply of language to clarify reasoning." Ferguson also advances the possibility of improvement through setting the force of the word in question against its opposite e.g. wisdom against folly, thus invoking a via media between extremes as a possible corrective of error.(42)
In close association with the errors induced by language are those of habit which may perpetuate and accentuate the linguistic mistakes. "A thing once conceived as useful (surely a lapsus linguae here) or pernicious, recurs under the same predicament, and this disposition to conceive things, as they have been associated, is confirmed by habit." (43) Again: Such is the force of association in these matters, and such is its effects on our conduct, even in opposition to conviction and reason; that although we are sensible our notions are ill-founded yet we are not released from their influence until we have worn off one habit by degrees." (44)

Yet, ever true to his original axioms, his premisses and his overall optimism, Ferguson insists that man is still in control of himself. In a most interesting and seemingly unique extension he even visualises the possibility of the very choice of habit as a means of the possible correction of choice which had erred through habit: for "in choosing what habits he shall acquire, he is in some measure the artificer of his own nature." (45) A striking conclusion which is one more offering in such a mastery of destiny as may lead to ultimate perfection.

Habit in Ferguson's beneficent terms, becomes experience with the corrections of choice also habitual. "The novice seemed to require the spurs of hope or joy; the admonitions of fear or grief but under the effects of experience these weakeners of the human mind fall off. By the veteran a steady purpose is formed." (46) Here Ferguson seems to be stressing the acquired wisdom of maturity in oriental or Platonic fashion, but whether in an individual or racial time-scale he does not make clear.

Habits "serve to fix the manners of man, no less than what is
observed to fix the practice of other animals, but, with man, "while the natural propensities to acquired habits tend to mark out the line of his conduct, his will is free." This freedom of will is more powerful than a natural tendency towards habit and man is still accountable for his errors whether they arise from language, custom or habit. Through the corrections of his choice man is master of his destiny.

Ferguson is unswervingly devoted to individual man and his ethic but not primarily nor specifically in what will be termed psychologically scientific terms. Yet neither is he overwhelmed by the social aspects of man's existence. Association is for him a natural thing, a datum, but only one strand in the complex pattern of living. Such association is freely entered into. It is sometime intolerable and capable of rejection or change.

It is not difficult to visualise the practical and detailed elements in the moral concerns of men. Courage, courtesy, comradeship, endurance and the like provide the detail for moralising and suggesting the detail of how individuals do or do not act. There may be the kind of dispute or extended debate as to their meaning and their ramifications as we find in the Platonic dialogues. But they appear to be easier to identify and analyse in individuals than in groups. A so-called group ethic close to the "greatest good of the greatest number" of the utilitarians is more difficult to identify let alone quantify, than the good or happiness which the individual declares from intimate acquaintance as his and which he alone can contribute to the good of the whole of which he forms a part. Group ethics will probably arise from a dogma to be imposed in the form of a constraining contract, an ideology or a religion from a so-called authoritarianism. The ethic arising from the individual's free choice contains all the virtues of a
of individual responsibility which Ferguson imputes to every man.

Was Ferguson contributory or merely eclectic? He certainly passed his adult life in amicable and daily association with the great minds of the Enlightenment. Here every shade of opinion was represented and every topic from chemistry to philosophy. His richly varied life gave him access to many shades both of theory and of practice from home and abroad. It is inevitable that the thinker take colour from his environment but Ferguson's best offerings are obstinately expressed as his own and, through his own declared premises and subjected to his own declared scientific methods, offer a coherent whole. That this may appear unspectacular is no criticism of an acceptable, universal, pragmatic offering, not devoid of metaphysical uplift, so well suited to the British scene in its moderation and bloodless approach to change. This need not suggest an insularity but an offering to universality.

The infrequency of footnotes in the Principles in reference to associates and other philosophers, in contra-distinction to so much of current scholarship, suggests less of eclecticism than what was ingredient to his whole personality and which needed no support from other thinkers.

It would be unfair to suggest that he does not advert to other philosophers who influenced the mainstreams of his thought. They fall into two categories. First, those from classical times which, apart from obvious references to Plato, Aristotle and Socrates, emphasise the Stoics - Epictetus, Lucretius, Marcus Aurelius and Cicero. Second, those of contemporary influence - Locke, Hume, Bacon, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, Reid, Hutcheson and Shaftesbury. Of peripheral interest only stand Machiavelli, Spinoza and Grotius.
Ferguson must have been influenced by the other members of the so-called "common-sense" school of philosophy and especially by Thomas Reid, although he never refers to the school as such in the Principles. Apart from the concept of "sens commun" which Reid emphasised to counteract the scepticism of Descartes and Berkeley, he insisted on the "linguistic mystification" which he saw as playing so large a part in philosophical argument. Ferguson certainly followed this strand of attempted de-mystification in his role as early progenitor of the schools of linguistic analysis. The "sens commun" has a slightly different flavour from "common sens and supports Ferguson's emphasis on the universality of "common" characteristics of mankind.

We agree with Ferguson that he does not represent any "school His style too is unique. Clearly aware of the dangers inherent in words, his prose is wary in the extreme and sometimes very dull because of his unwillingness to use the colour of metaphor. With every sentence he pauses as if to reflect on possible interpretation or misinterpretations of his terms, and then resumes to attempt to make his position clear beyond peradventure. One sees in this the reflection of the give and take of the discussions he entered into with his students and with his peers. The unpublished Essays, as we shall see, are examples of the extensions of such basic words as "self-preservation" and "benevolence".

One seldom encounters such punctilious use of punctuation, with a proliferation of colons, semi-colons and capital letters. This last is unusual for the modern reader but its use by Ferguson serves to emphasise the nouns or concepts on which he places importance. The outcome, in consort with his few basic dogmatic premisses, may yield a picture lacking in profundity but covering
every contingency for attack.

Ferguson then can be seen as a blend of pragmatist and idealist who, in accepting the precepts of the Stoics, may also be termed metaphysician. Moreover he was associated with the great minds of the Enlightenment with its emphases on the humanist schools both of literature and history, of the broad arts and technology. But it was as scientist that he founded the Scottish Academy; it was as scientist that he was appointed to his professorship at Edinburgh; it was as scientist that he was honoured by the Berlin Academy of Science; it was as scientist that he entitled his main work. Whatever gloss we may give to the then and the present interpretations of the concept "science", it is evident that the later Ferguson wished his work to be conceived in such terms.

We may offer three approaches to Ferguson's insistence on the scientific character of his enterprise. We can reject the possibility of a science of ethics, while accepting his ethical rationale. We can visualise a current state of systematisation which by bringing the qualities of choice closer to the quantities which have hitherto been used to assess such matters as the "happiness" of the individual, can come closer to Ferguson's verbalising position in his science. We can reject the idea that "scientific" is an accolade and relieve Ferguson of the need to prove his case in that respect. We incline to the two latter views.

In his pragmatism Ferguson is close to Dewey who viewed choice as "right" if it led to solution of the conflict that gave rise to it. Ferguson would have avoided the concept of "conflict" which stands closer to the Hegelian dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Ferguson's test of rectitude was sought in the harmoniou
progress of individuals inspired by the benevolence inherent in their impulse to self-preservation. His lifting of the veils on the phenomenal emphasises the metaphysician and idealist that accompanies the pragmatist.
Chapter Four

(1)  Kettler op.cit.
(2)  e.g. PMPS ip279 "Love of science and of system are the same"
(3)
(4)  PMPS ip7
(5)  PMPS isect.ix
(6)  PMPS isect.xiv
(7)  PMPS isect.ii
(8)  }Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh VpartIII 1801 p.108
(9)  }
(10)  e.g. PMPS isect.xiv isect.ii pp 112/114
(11)  Kant CPR Everyman London p472
(12)  Unpublished Essays 29 and 24
(13)  PMPS early chapters book i
(14)  PMPS iipll2
(15)  Unpublished Essay No.29 and PMPS iiip9
(16)  PMPS ip155
(17)  PMPS ii pp102/105
(18)  Kant CPR and Prologomena
(20)  Kant CPR op.cit.p472
(21)  -do-
(22)  PMPS ip4
(23)  PMPS ip4
(24)  PMPS iipll8
(25)  PMPS ip136
(26)  PMPS iip274/5
(27)  PMPS iip321
(28)  PMPS iip274/5
(29)  PMPS ip325 and iip325
(30)  de Chardin T "The Phenomenon of Man" Paris 1936
CHAPTER FIVE

FERGUSON'S STOIC ETHIC
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FERGUSON'S STOIC ETHIC

We have stated our main thesis as relating to the neglect we see of those strands of Ferguson's work which relate to his ethic of the individual, emergent through choice and rectified choice and leading to decisive action, all of which may contribute to a more healthy and acceptable social-science.

While such neglect may have arisen from the notion that such an ethic cannot be scientific as Ferguson so strongly urges, and/or that an ethic of sorts is a pre-supposition of all social-science and all social-scientists and therefore not needing specific emphasis it is not unreasonable to suggest that there could well be a re-examination of ethical approaches in which social-scientists can be involved among others.

Neglect of the ethical considerations of social-science, whether these arise from a study of Ferguson, on stoicism or other, is increasingly a matter claiming the attention of social-scientists. It could be viewed as another form of the more commonly debated but inconclusive presentations of the so-called "value-free" judgement arguments.

Note, for example, the contentions of Heim Schreuder(1) who debates the separation of economics from ethics and philosophy, we recalling how dominant economics has been on the social-science scene.
We have already noted Bryson's complaint about the omission of ethical considerations from the works of modern social scientists. Admittedly the Economics of Welfare as developed by Pigou and the Swedish economists showed concern for the well-being of peoples within their economies. Yet, as Gunnar Myrdal points out "Economics is a moral science which in principle, though with faulty logic, was recognised by our predecessors a hundred or two hundred years ago, but is now mostly forgotten." He might well have been speaking of such approaches as that of Ferguson. We reserve for the moment any justification of the "logic" of Ferguson's argument in respect of economics, admitting as we must that he could not approach his science with the modern logician's eye nor the apparatus of symbolic language and cybernetic systematisation.

According to Sorokin there are two main tendencies in "moral physics" - Epicurean and Stoic; the one beginning in modern terms with Hobbes and leading towards atomism, philosophic materialism, relativity and frequently to a more or less consistent evolutionism; the other attaching primarily to the name of Shaftesbury and emphasising the unity and stability of nature, and even when adopting evolutionism, less confident that this would always mean progress. While we may demur from Sorokin's glosses on the two approaches, we agree that there seems to be such a bifurcation with Ferguson's approach tending strongly towards the latter - the stoic.

However we argue that Ferguson's was not an obsessive advocacy of an ethic of stoicism, either in its more popular or in
its more profound philosophical connotations. We are content to present his own moderate support for such an ethic - "The Author in some of the statements which follow, may be thought partial to the stoic philosophy, but is not conscious of having warped truth to suit with any system whatever."(7) We note here two general points about Ferguson's approach to any argument: first, that the conclusions are stressed as his alone and, in this he may be warding off the complaints of eclecticism which were to emerge; second, that he qualified everything with its alternative, possibly to the point of diluting the conclusion but at least following the so frequently advocated via media. He was trying to avoid imposing man made systems, even so carefully contrived as that of Kant, on the natural processes as he saw them. The Stoic position was less of a system than a manner of looking at the totality of the natural processes of the cosmos within which and in harmony with which mankind finds itself.

Yet with all the qualifications of moderacy, Ferguson admits to a partiality for the classical ethical stoic doctrines in spite of their low repute in his day. This might be interpreted as obstinacy or championship of lost causes. Stoicism had become "proverbial with stupidity." But Ferguson was in the good company of Shaftesbury, Montesquieu, Harris, Hutcheson and "many others" who "revere this sect."(8) Yet he continues as ever stubbornly to deny that he is dominated by or "will be party to any all-absorbing body of doctrine."

Hume castigated stoicism with a scorn for philosophies of tranquillity which he refers to as a more refined system of selfishness.(10) We shall need further opportunity to consider whether
Ferguson can offer an acceptable alternative interpretation, especially through two of his unpublished essays, which could counter Hume's assault.

While Lehmann comments of Ferguson, comparing his via media with Hegel's dialectic: (11) "He is after all avowedly stoic not epicurean", he makes no reference to the Scot's reservations on stoicism nor to his subtle development of the concept of selfishness. We also reject Lehmann's conclusion that "Ferguson's emphasis on conflict is inspired by his stoic ideal." First, Ferguson does not emphasise conflict in Lehmann's seeming sense of warfare as in "war games". Ferguson does not omit discussion of war in its strategic sense as part of his presentation of the "necessary instruments of state defence" (12) but his exegis is minimal and certainly not supportive of the position that Lehmann, primarily a student of politics and conflict, holds. Second, Lehmann confuses the more popular connotation of the term stoic, with Stoic ideals which do not inspire combativeness: rather the reverse and certainly so in Ferguson's case.

It is from the works of Epictetus that Ferguson's interest in stoicism draws its sustenance, resting in the main on the thesis of the self-sufficiency of the individual within his cosmic setting, as the concluding peroration of the Principles suggests -

"Everyone indeed is answerable to himself and, in preserving the integrity of one citizen, does what is required of him for the happiness of the whole." (13)

Ferguson's empathy with Epictetus, almost as great as that
which he displays towards Montesquieu, and possibly more profoundly sincere, is made very clear by a close study of Epictetus' Discourses (1) alongside Ferguson's Principles. It is a pity that there is less recourse to the Discourses than to the Encheiridion or Manual or Handbook of Epictetus. In the latter work the more genial and expansive flavour of the teacher-philosopher found in the Discourses is lacking. The incomplete study of Kant through the Prologomena rather than through the Critiques is a comparable case. Ferguson's approach is close to that of the Discourses.

Slave that Epictetus had been and great admirer of Socrates that he was, it is perhaps natural that it is on freedom and individuality (15) that he lays most stress and it is this element of his stoicism that probably most endeared him to Ferguson. Libert Equality and Fraternity were the growing watchwords of revolution in Ferguson's Europe. It was on the cult of freedom displayed through the free choice and corrected choice of the individual, that Ferguson laid his emphasis but in profoundly non-revolutionary vein. He dismisses the practicalities of Equality in political terms, while accepting the equality of men within the framework of the stoics' cosmos. He retains the concept, if not the word, Fraternity, in the guise of benevolence which makes all men his "demesmen".

Freedom, says Epictetus, is to be rid of sorrow, fear and turmoil (16) and will be achieved through an all-pervasive moral purpose. This moral purpose is brought to bear on "external impressions" in the evidence of practice rather than as a theoretical entity. The practical rather than the theoretical is ever a strong theme of the Discourses yet always against a scholarly background of syllogistic logic. Epictetus was no mere verbalising and tranquillising
moraliser, but saw the practice rather than the theory of his ethic as in the main need for exposition.

Sometimes Epictetus speaks of "philosophers" as if outside their ranks. (17) At other times he allies himself with them as peer. With his students he always adopts the clear role of guide and interpreter. Repeatedly he pours scorn on book knowledge, on treatises and the sayings of philosophers of the past, among whom he consigns Chrysippus constantly, (19) where these do not lead to an active life style, impregnated first, with Moral Purpose; leading to second, Choice; and third, adjustments of Choice. Such are the ground rules of an ethical science which can be positive. Epictetus rejects the "suspended judgments of the Academics" and "the rejection of the power to know" of the Cynics, science here being equated with knowledge.

The Moral Purpose or Moral Sense is inculcated in man by his origins in the cosmos and emphasises in true stoic fashion an overriding unity of all things. The Choice to which the Moral Purpose or Moral Sense points can be seen and interpreted by the individual through such origins. But Choices taken may not truly, through their outcome, have accorded with the intentions of Moral Sense and so through error, give rise to error or illusions of rectitude.

So comes the most important element in Epictetus' & Ferguson' approach. For all emphasis is placed on the "third rule" that of adjustments of choice. While error may be inherent in the human condition because of the complete freedom of choice left to individuals, it cannot continue to be condoned, for experience and outcome, through adjustments of choice should suggest the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the choices which have been
made and, in hope, permit further choices more consonant with the Moral Sense.

Errors in Choice will arise from wrong preconceptions which must be subjected to constant reappraisal. Habit must be recognised and countered by contrary habituation.\(^{(20)}\) Testing, waiting, patience and, above all, courage must be applied so that the interpretations of the Moral Purpose may be refined so as to make human choices ever closer in approximation to the right Moral Purpose\(^{(21)}\) which is enshrined in the cosmic totality. Such Moral Purpose inducing in the individual a Moral Sense is seen by Ferguson as being directed by each individual towards maintaining his integrity.

This is an ethic of movement, progress and development rather than one of static identifiability which could prove inadequate to an application of individual choice which may err and need rectification. Error may be the promoter of beneficial change.

For Epictetus, disputation, the exchanges of the "classroom" and "eloquent persuasion" may aid the refinement of choice and lead to a man "to become good conformably with nature,"\(^{(22)}\) "fragment of god that he is,"\(^{(23)}\) "never seeking what he cannot at the time attain, yielding readily what is taken from him"\(^{(24)}\) but holding death as the ultimate touchstone of his choice. All this conforms strongly with Ferguson's ethic.

The early philosophers of the Stoa of which Epictetus was the leading exponent, recommended that he who would be free should not wish for anything nor avoid anything under the obvious control of others; rather he should become adjusted to inevitable deprivations.
Some of this may be thought close to a resignation of calling that Ferguson seems to be advocating. However, we should note that "calling" or "class" in Highland connotations, are less static, less approached with jaundice, less divisive than some sociological interpretations of those terms represent. There was pride rather than false humility even in so-called lowliness.

Stoics like Chrysippus on whom Epictetus pours scorn, saw the individual as playing only a minute part in the totality of the cosmos, this making of him a part "like a dog tied behaind a cart that he must follow." Such determinism is far from the later Stoics. Choice determines acceptance. There is no hint of slavishness either of person or of worker in Ferguson's proud individualism where reason only requires the choice of the possible, unless the ultimate forfeit of life be seen and accepted.

The logos which the Stoics saw at the heart of their philosophy, was in the nature of a seed containing incipiently, mind, soul, the nature and condition of everything, including man, and capable of infinite variety in free development. Such oneness or totality is seen by Ferguson "in the original or creative mind which moves from general to particular" while for "the mere observer from the indefinite variety of particulars to some notion of the general mold." Here we see Ferguson's approach to the link between the ideas of the one and the many and gives some clue to his development of the relationship between the individual and the whole of society.

Ferguson shares a concept contained in the Meditations of Antoninus (Emperor) that multiplicity from oneness can be exemplified by the citizenship of all men in the Universal City. He shares too and propounds through all his work, with Seneca,
philosopher to Nero and later Stoic, the concept of the universal oneness of men in their propensity towards self-preservation and the retaining of their power to diversify through choice to "become in great measure arbiters of themselves."(27) This is far from the dog-like approaches to stoicism by such as Chrysippus and those who do little justice to the stoic argument.

Ferguson certainly subscribed to the Stoic ideal of reform stemming from the universal brotherhood or fraternity of men, and, in what was to develop into the traditional non-revolutionary manner of British as contrasted with Continental change, seen such reform as resting on the assurance that all men have a natural disposition towards virtue under Zeno's gloss that "all men are our demesmen and fellows."

So, individual free will, some approach to pantheism in a deistic age, and above all, an acceptance of the implications of the common humanity of mankind across cultures; these are the strands of stoicism most apparent in Ferguson. Such strands are not idiosyncratic and accord closely not only with the classical stoics, but with such Kantian concepts of universal brotherhood and also with the traces of stoicism found in Spinoza, Descartes and Leibniz. Yet this need no more be denigrated as eclecticism than any pursuits of labourers in the same territories.

We admit that those aspects of stoicism which can be ascribed to Livy, such as duty, simplicity, responsibility and frugality, find their echoes in Ferguson as does also Horace's "man just and tenacious of purpose" and Cicero's "decorum" or what is fitting. But these elements of stoicism seen in its popularist sense are not central to his theme.
The popular development and even misconception of the term "stoicism" is possibly due to an over-emphasis in the schools and universities of the nineteenth century on the works of Livy, Horace and Cicero. Such stoics as Zeno and his followers who are closer to Ferguson's position, thoroughly rejected the Diogenean simplistic approach to self-sufficiency adopted by the Cynics. They considered this a negative philosophy, themselves preferring and adopting one of preferred choices leading to a more positive ethic with which Ferguson concurs —

"Man is conscious of his power to choose among the objects that occur to him; and is conscious of the consideration on which, in any particular instance, he has made his choice. He may have inclinations to which he does not give way, and inducements which he is able to withstand. His person may be restrained to any particular place: it may be driven by force in any particular direction. He may feel passions of fear or hope, constraining him to choose what he is willing to avoid; but he is conscious that his being willing or unwilling in any particular instance, can proceed from no cause but himself. The part he is willing to take is his own; and he alone is accountable for the choice he has made." (28)

"The more general character of man's inclinations or active disposition is not that of a blind propensity to the use of means, but instinctive intimation of an end, for the attainment of which he is left to discover and choose, by his own observation and experience the means that may prove most effective."(29)

"Man is his own master; and in the exercise of this sovereign power of the will, can repeat his efforts, however different from those to which his instincts would lead him, until he
"acquires that inclination, faculty and power of performance, which we term his habit, and which though acquired is scarcely to be distinguished from the original propensity." (30)

Some of the confusions of tense lying herein when both foresight and hindsight are involved may be explained by Ferguson's reluctance to be clear on whether he is considering refinement of choice to be oriented towards the individual in the short term or towards the enlightenment of the species in the long run. Here is possibly further evidence of stoic influence in compacting time past present and future.

After his positive part in the abortive American venture, Ferguson made no clear mark on the political scene nor do we think he sought to. But he had no contempt for civil authority as had the Cynics. (31) Although the stoics claimed the importance of participating in civil affairs, Ferguson seems to view the functions of the apparatus of state as merely regulative and ever subject, if only in extreme and ultimate ressort, to the free choice of the individual to accept or reject. His somewhat perfunctory treatment of the functions of state in the Principles in legislative, administrative, judicial and economic matters, seems witness to his muted assessment of their role. (32)

Yet we disagree with Kettler's exaggeration in stating of Ferguson -

"societal problems all fade into insignificance - they concern only those externals which are irrelevant to true virtue and man's attention is directed to the discipline of his own mind." (33)
There is no withdrawal from facing societal problems in Ferguson merely a cool and moderating assessment of them. We recall that Kettler is speaking as modern sociologist and political scientist who may be disappointed in not finding his interest prime in Ferguson. Ferguson views the individual in his self-discipline as the foundation and guarantee of the value of the societal, rather than the societal as prime. This is possibly why, like Plato, Ferguson treats the mechanics of political and constitutional processes almost as appendix to his central ethical theory.

Hume's castigation of stoicism(34) which probably led to Ferguson's apologia for that manner of philosophising(35) was based on his inadequate investigation of the common term "selfish" which he approaches in everyday literary manner. While it remains for the unpublished Essays to develop this theme in depth, even in the Principles an exemplary quote reveals that Ferguson's stoicism, whether dubbed "selfish" or not, leads to no solipsist or unaware subjectivist approach to the self - (36)

"If we should suppose an individual who is part of a community, yet indifferent to the character of his fellow creatures, or indifferent to the good or ill of which they are susceptible; in such a person we should still not perceive anything to be loved, and scarcely to be admired, even in the highest measure of penetration, memory or other constituent of intellectual power."

Ferguson's moderate acceptance of the stoic philosophy, led him to an unrelenting pursuit of the individual's integrity and freedom of choice, made in a spirit of benevolence. It evades the extremes of, on the one hand, what to Hume was "disguised selfishness" and, on the other, an annihilating absorption of the individual in the social.
It is sometimes suggested that such an intent to sustain the dignity of the individual in the face of the social, is subscribed to by continental philosophers such as Hegel and there has been a recent burdgeoning of commentaries and essays on Hegel which are at pains to rectify supposed misinterpretations in this respect. Such pains are possibly due to a need to correct the disrepute of the German state arising from events of this century.

However as usual commentaries are less accurate than the texts and such works as The Philosophy of Right, by common consent the most important of Hegel's works and accepted as the mature expression of his position and that of his followers, offer undoubted social emphases. A universal, metaphysical approach focussed on the group in its manifestations of family, corporation and state, is in striking contrast to the particular and individualistic so characteristic of the position to which Ferguson's stoic ethic led him.

This, of course, is not to suggest that philosophers on both sides of the divide failed to consider the other's approach. They would have been failing in philosophic debate to have so neglected. But, for example, Hegel's emphasis is clearly on the corporate and Ferguson's on the individual, whatever of common universality and metaphysics may underwrite their cases.

So Hegel: "The individual is subsumed under the totality of the body politic" (38)

"The savage is lazy and is distinguished from the educated man by his brooding stupidity" (39)

"The state is the hieroglyph of reason" (40)

"The state is the ethical universe" (41)
Clearly Ferguson contributed to the turning of the Enlightenment philosophy from such a direction which, while recognising the social scene, does not succumb to its demands at the expense of the individual nor diminish the contribution that the freely choosing individual can offer to that scene. Since for such as Hegel, the state is "the ethical universe" it is difficult if not impossible to see how the consciousness of the individual could ever be justified in challenging that universe.

It is possible that Ferguson's Highlandness could give grounds for emphasising his "stoicism" although here we are closer to the popular interpretation of that term. MacRae(42) makes brief reference to Ferguson's Highland origins. Had he had more time than his brief essay allowed, he might have elaborated beyond considering that Ferguson's Highland birth "brought him to the marches of two cultures, one animated by honour, martial virtue and tribal bonds, the other by commerce, speculation and orthodox learning." Much of this seems to have greater relevance to the Essay where the society of clans might be thought to have been likened to "savage", "barbarous" and "deprived" societies with such deprivation linked to the so-called deprivations of "stoicism".

But over and over the well-grounded anthropologist in Ferguson denies that early or distant societies are barbarous in the usually accepted meanings of that term with their demands for possibly Hobbesean solutions.

Ferguson did not view the clans as primarily primitive instruments of aggression. Indeed he makes infrequent reference to such a form of association, in tune with his coolness to all forms of association. The clan, for Ferguson, seems to be a mere life-sty
calling on individuals to associate with and have loyalty to other
individuals, without any sacrifice of "integrity" or capacity and
responsibility for choices. Such association is basic to a "state
of nature" which exists "here and now"(43) as well as in other times
and places.

The "state of nature" is far from the brutish, nasty and
short supposed by those with historical rather than anthropological
inclinations. Single instances, Ferguson reminds us, of "finding
a wild man caught in the woods"(44), are no scientific reason for
supposing brutishness as a valid generalisation. Highlandness is
not to be equated with militant clannishness even if, in the
climate of the times, it had thrown up fighting and defensive
forces of loosely banded individuals, any more than stoicism
is to be equated with deprivations or aggressions.

Ferguson's stoicism, even if one wishes to consider the
popular connotation of that term, does not emphasise any such
harshness and fortitudes as the Highland life might be supposed to
impose. Indeed in his self-indulgent middle life; his constant
attempts to keep warm with indoor overcoat fur hat and boots
at Kamchatka; his constant preoccupation with income for himself
and his family; the attack on him for frequenting the Playhouse(45)
all seem to cancel whatever of popularly interpreted stoicism
could be considered as part of his make-up. This leaves intact
the profounder stoic strains in the ethical science he propounds.

Ferguson's rare use of the "clan" in his discussions of
association is comparable to the modern sociologist's more frequent
use of the concept "family" and "extended family". Ferguson does
not underpin his theses on the clan as such sociologists use family,
guild and corporation.
Yet he would not have rejected his clan origins even if he could. He shows pride in his forebears although the relative humbleness of his birth was soon to be partnered by association with the aristocracies of birth, riches and intellect.

It is therefore facile to suggest that because of his Highland and clan background, he became involved in aggressive deprivations which lead to such stoic leanings as accord with their popular interpretation. Stoicism as propounded by Ferguson is much subtler than Hume guesses it to be; it offers a timeless and universal ethic not brought to birth to counteract another. Today's social-scientist may well find value in examining such a universal offering as alternative to such as are partial to specific cultures.

We can with interest note another element in Ferguson's origins and continuing environment that has been neglected in his as well as in biographical material in general. This is the influence of climate on person and culture and thence possibly on philosophical style and outcome whether stoic or other.

Ferguson does glance briefly at the ramifications of climatic influence following, of course, the well-known lead of Montesquieu, whose influence in his early work Ferguson stresses almost to the point of obsequiousness. His French mentor began his major work with a disquisition on the prime influence of climate and factors developing therefrom, on social and political matters. This we feel is of such profound importance that so little attention attention to it by social-scientists is astonishing. Durkheim does indeed subscribe to its influence in his data relating to suicide.
We turned with interest to the little consulted lists of the British Meteorological Society's Library records and find, French, German, Scandinavian, Italian, Hungarian, Russian, Polish, USA, S.African, Argentinian, Welsh, Canadian, Swiss, Belgian, Bolivian, Japanese, Austrian, Dutch, Chilean, as well as World Organisational listed contributions on the themes of the extended influences of climate. These range from "human biology", "human psychology", "civilization", "community", "psychopathology", "culture", "the diffusions of cultures", "human bioclimatology" to the "affairs of men." (50)

One assesses that Montesquieu's lead which Ferguson briefly followed, has led to some considerable development of climatic interest led by meteorologists which our space-age research is likely to intensify. Of this social-scientists must be aware.

Ferguson does not place any undue emphasis on the climatic factor but a stoic like insistence on the "fabric of nature" with its total implications for vegetative, animal and human life, especially in Book i of the Principles. Ferguson's bases there are certainly much more general than those of climate alone -

"If any one, therefore shall say, that the universe is an object too vast for him to conceive, that he knows not what may or may not accommodate subject and object; he may nevertheless be qualified to perceive that an established course of things, agreeable to fixed and determinate laws, is a proper scene for the reception of intelligent beings." (52)

Although man is unable to explore the whole underpinning of the universe and all its ramifications, even supposing the
existence of such "fixed and determinate" laws, yet he is free and accountable "constrained as he is by the physical necessities"(53) which he must recognise. Among these climate with its results must figure largely -

"The shade of the barren oak and the pine are more favourable to the genius of mankind than that of the palm or the tamarind."(54)

For such reasons it may be of more than passing interest to speculate how far Highland climate contributes to the popular stoic interpretation of Ferguson. It would be wrong to label those conditions as uniformly "harsh" in stoic sense. That they can be fierce is known but the geniality derived from westerly airflows which pervade the Western Island vicinities where Highland culture is at its strongest, does much to alleviate "harshness".

It is possibly the variability of the climate that has done much to fashion the Highland Scot (and indeed the Briton) and given him an ability and a wish to adapt to circumstance in a spirit of self-reliance. Accepting the inevitabilities of the totality of "nature" as it confronts man in his environment may be held to reinforce Ferguson's major concept of the need for self-preservation through individual choice and effort.

It does not take a latter day Montesquieu to point the way to soil and agricultural variations, population dispersals, architectural types and transportation and occupational extensions which result from climatic factors. In all they add up to the total environment which Ferguson stresses as so important in considering the relationship between individual and society. It would seem impossible to propose blanket institutional solutions
to such variety of circumstance, so emphasising the importance of the individual's paramount freedom to choose among the manifold possibilities with which he is variously and at various times surrounded.

We have taken special pains to analyse to the full the sense in which Ferguson's ethic should be seen in classical terms. It must only be loosely linked with the popular misconceptions of stoicism which have crept into the philosophical through word degeneration.

Above all Ferguson's stoicism was in no heavy hearted vein for - "The Stoics conceived life under the image of a game"(55) which is one of the few light-hearted comments in Ferguson's work.

The Good may stay indefinable but the whole of Ferguson's output seems to throw some light on what may be conceived as "good" in terms of individual human happiness which accords with the nature of the cosmos of which he is part. In his integrity he is "worthy" of happiness through the choices of self-preservation with benevolence and his capacity to revise those choices through experience. All this accords with the stoic cosmic totality which holds out the possibility through later scientific approaches of an "evolutionism" towards the "better" if not to the "perfect".

Yet the door has been opened in metaphysical terms to improvements that whisper of perfectability, either on this or the other side of eternity and either on this or other planets.
That such an approach is drawn from classical stoic sources, lends no additional fuel to the criticisms of eclecticism, since stoicism is a recognised branch of root philosophy. Ferguson makes his choice of a persistent theme, without succumbing to it in totalit
Chapter Five


(2) Bryson op.cit.

(3) Pigou "Economics of Welfare" and works of Swedish economists (4) e.g. Gunnar Myrdal "Beyond the Welfare State." Stockholm 1960

(5) -do-

(6) Sorokin "Contemporary Sociological Theories" NY pp3-13

(7) PMPS ip7

(8) PMPS ip7 et.seq.

(9) PMPS ip7

(10) Hume "Enquiries" Edin. p.343

(11) Lehmann op.cit. pp189/190

(12) PMPS iichs.III and IV

(13) PMPS ii final sentence


(15) Note that Lehmann op.cit. indexing, under "individual" says "see society"

Kettler op.cit. indexing, makes no reference to "individual".

(16) Epictetus op.cit. Book IIi24

(17) -do- Book I v 7

(18) -do- Book I x 12

(19) -do- Book I v 1

(20) -do- Book I xxvii 4

(21) -do- Book II xxiii 27-34

(22) -do- Book II xxiii 42

(23) -do- Book II viii 12

(24) -do- Book II xvi 28
(25) PMPS ip186
(26) PMPS Bki pp278/9
(27) The Essay p.11
(28) PMPS Bkip152
(29)PMPS ip121
(30) PMPS ip131
(31) PMPS ii Ch.vi
(32) PMPS ii - one chapter only
(33) Kettler op.cit.p.212
(34) Hume "Enquiries" p.343
(35) PMPS Bki intro. pp7/8
(36) PMPS iiip349
(37) e.g. Verene, Plant, Pelczynski and Avineri 1980 1973 1971 1972
(38) Avineri quoting Hegel's Realphilosophie II 249/30
(39) Hegel "Philosophy of Right" op.cit.§.197
(40) -do- addm to § 279
(41) -do- p.11
(42) MacRae op.cit. p.21
(43) The Essay p.8
(44) -do- p.3
(45) Letter to Rev.E.Brown attacking Carlyle & Ferguson Edinburgh Archives La II 483
(46) The Essay Part III Section I
(47) -do- page 65
(48) Montesquieu "de l'Esprit des Lois" opening paras.
(50) Nat.Meteorological Library UK: various papers 599,551,681 et.al
(51) PMPS i 165/6
(52) PMPS i p 179
(53) PMPS i p 181
(54) The Essay p.119
(55) PMPS Book i
CHAPTER SIX

Individual and society - Part One

It is a relatively simple and logical matter to move from Ferguson's attachment to the stoic approach to his ethic and towards the relationship that he works out between the Individual and his Society.

This relationship is the perennial concern of philosophers, and especially philosophers of social-science. Unless this aspect of our work is clearly drawn, all the rest fails. The philosophers of the Continent of Europe such as Kant, Hegel, Rousseau and Marx have all offered their contributions to the solution of the complexities of this relationship. With the exception of Kant, they have been oriented by or deeply involved in political solutions. Ferguson is close to Kant in this respect in placing the political aspects second to the ethical, although Ferguson does engage in a critique of institutional political science in a more detailed and pragmatic manner than Kant's universalisation of his themes.

Research into and comment upon Ferguson's emphasis on the ethic of the individual in his society, may provide us with a useful middle ground approach between those of, for example, some French existentialists and Hayekian individualists and those of, for example, the various proponents of a so-called marxist type socialism.

Ferguson's background of classical universals and Scottish Enlightenment provide him with some degree of credibility to enter
upon this perennial debate.

We suggest that 18th century thought, and in particular that of Ferguson and the Enlightenment, may have contained certain valuable tendencies which were to be overshadowed by the essential materialism of the succeeding centuries. Those more apposite but less valuable contributions of utilitarians were to form a straight-jacket of materialistic maximising aims which came to dominate economic, sociological and even philosophical thought. The debate on the ethics of social-science was stifled on the supposition that there was no need for debate of the self-evident.

Ferguson's approaches, taking us back as they do to the bedrock of ethical concern, offer ameliorating strands to social-science especially through the relationship between Individual and Society. Even if Ferguson's offering is rejected, a review of his work should lead to a recognition of the need for fresh debate.

There is no doubt whatever that Ferguson's emphasis, with that of his Stoic conditioners, was on the Individual, and proceeded thence rather than from Social to Individual. This in spite of repeated attempts to include him in the "sociologist's"fold, terms which may be taken to indicate a primary interest in society and on the individual in secondary or contributory manner. That such commentators continue to take interest in him gives some credence to his worth although their interpretations of him are often imperfect.

Aphorisms such as "man is a political animal" and "no man is an island" become so impregnated into a style of speaking and of thinking, that even the efforts of logicians and philosophers retain their colouring.
Society is of course existent. As Ferguson's mentor Montesquieu succinctly reminds more diffuse and possibly less cogent writers, in a datum of first instance quoted in Ferguson's Essay thus(1) - "Man is born in Society and there he remains." No one is in doubt but no one need be more exercised by the fact than by a host of other circumstances.

There is no need in social theorising to resort to the Crusoe antics of the classical economists, nor to the Alice in Wonderland approach of Rawl's amnesiacs, (2) to clear the ground of complexities. Those very complexities will have to be reintroduced with no assurance that the theorising exercise will have increased the validity of the arguments resting thereon.

Ferguson's simple, possibly simplistic, point of take off, his methodology, what he calls his "science", his ethic, are all grounded in the "he", "individual", even when in the guises of "citizen" or "brother".

A crucial support of his theses lies in Section XIII of the Principles where

"The power of choice is a fact of which the mind is conscious. It is therefore supported by the highest evidence of which any fact is susceptible. Attempts to support it by argument are nugatory and attempts to overturn it by argument are absurd." (3)

It might be thought possible to decry Ferguson's entire system erected on so seemingly fragile a basis and so little open to argument. However, it is the individual's "mind conscious of itself which is the lynch pin of the development and this might be conceded to him.
It seems in no way preposterous to suggest that the human is conscious or aware of his own existence. Even if one is disposed to separate out mind from body then it would seem that the faculty might equally suitably be linked with the former as with the latter. Ferguson does not rely on such separation. Indeed his trust in the senses suggests that he sees "mind" as an aspect of man that is in harmony with the senses, although he does not go on to suggest that "the mind conscious of itself" necessarily leads to knowledge of self.

If the mind is conscious of itself, this will lead to its being conscious of what is not itself i.e. the other and the circumstances within which he will make his choices.

"The part he (man) is willing to take is his own, he alone is accountable for the choices he has made."(4)
"and for the choice he shall have made is alone responsible."(5)

If such accountability and responsibility rests on the individual alone, Ferguson will have to counter criticism that such a thesis is "selfish", "self-regarding" and tending towards an anarchic solipsism. His expansions of the concepts "selfish" and "self-regarding" are subtle and we feel go far to meeting such criticism. From his stoic standpoint, Ferguson assures us that the aim of the individual, who is an element of the cosmos, is "the peace and good order of society", "the desire for more knowledge", "more finished proportions", "schemes (in philosophy) more correct and accomplished in relation to the Character, actions and institutions of men." (6)
Looking for further crucial developments of the concept of selfishness, we find these in the little explored unpublished Essays(7) (and see footnote to this page)

It is to Essay Number 29 entitled "The Different Aspects of Moral Science", with its supplementary Number 24 entitled "Of the First Law of Living Nature; Preserve Thyself.", that we turn for a very full expansion of Ferguson's concepts of "selfishness", "self-preservation" and "benevolence" which may justify his insistence on the individual's prime part in the ordering of things.

Note referred to above.

Even current philosopher students of the Enlightenment in Edinburgh Ferguson's homeground, remain in ignorance of the existence let alone the worth of these Essays. They are referred to by reference to their existence alone by Lehmann. Since the Essays are handwritten and difficult to decipher in parts, it is understandable that they have not been explored in works on Ferguson. But for the serious student of Ferguson who has exhausted the early historical Essay on Civil Society and the Principles, they shed important light on Ferguson's work, although they are not all relevant to this present study. They are close to note form with a "draft" written in a column on the right of the page, so that alterations could be inserted on the left. In some instances whole pages are used for the draft. While a scrutiny of water marks might reveal their date and sequence of writing, we have not thought it worthwhile for the present. As each Essay is concerned with one topic, Ferguson there gets very close to his themes; yet the titles of the Essays often give small clue to their content.

Had Ferguson been known by these revised Essays as part of his definitive philosophy, his currency might have been better assured.
Essay Number 29 is a study of the ethic of the individual which echoes although it does not quote the classical dictum "man know thyself" and Shakespeare's "To thine own self be true", as entrant philosophical tenet.

The Essay begins by regretting that man's natural curiosity leads him to consider what is "strange", "alarming" and "unknown" to the neglect of what is "familiar" but more important and less explored, namely himself. That there seems to be an element of primitive psychology in this, gives a little support to Ferguson's claim to be scientific. A closely investigated approach to the Individual is of the "Highest importance" not only for the Individual himself but for Ferguson's ethic.

In the Principles he has claimed, in less than satisfying fashion, that every person "being principally interested in himself is the absolute master of his will". Even if both such aspects of man can be cogently argued, they are not a necessary sequence. In Essay number 29, he is less concerned with mastery of will, than with the "welfare" of all men, stemming from the "welfare" of self.

"Moralists, priests and statesmen, he there argues, "set conscience at warfare with that Universal Principle of self-preservation on which Providence relies for the safety and advancement of her works. Benevolence no doubt tends to make man the safeguard and keeper of his fellow Creatures but its effects are occasional and feeble compared with the Constant and unremitting care which every one entertains for himself... The selfish Moralist is well founded in saying that every scheme of Morality is Illusive and Tyrannical that requires him to prefer the welfare of others to
his own ..... in proportion as a man is devoted to himself he is deeply concerned to know how this self is constituted and in what its welfare consists."(10)

This is much stronger and braver than anything he has offered in the Principles, although already there we find -

"The mind of man has a fellow feeling with what befalls a fellow creature which is so much conceived as an appurtenance of human nature as, in common language, to be called humanity and considered as a characteristic of the species, even to be a stranger is a recommendation and a ground for regard."(11)

For Benevolence is built into and inseparable from instinctive self-preservation but it is subsidiary and not prime.

The good we aim at in self-preservation is of the mind well conditioned and well employed with an habitual affection of Benevolence without Fear or Malice, Jealousy or Revenge and so the wise and virtuous man "maintains his state of being", or his integrity, which is not disinterested but selfish in the best sense and in the highest degree."

It is indeed intellectual bravery to give a new and unique gloss, or possibly a revived one, to the term "selfish", of such clarity. Ferguson stresses the benevolence which partners the "selfish" although he gives primary to the latter "since self-preservation is the primary law of nature" and "from such self-preservation "Happiness and progress spring."(12) Here Ferguson seems happy with his use of "law" which he does not qualify in his customary tentative manner. Happiness and progress are the touchstone of moral good and he is content to build his science on such to him, primary and essential necessities.
It is not even in the later Principles and Unpublished Essays that Ferguson celebrates his fundamental thesis. Already in the Essay he had begun to formulate an interpretation of "selfishness" that was consonant with his later ethic. "Self preservation must not be confused with self-love. The care of self is not for the securing or accumulating the elements of interest or the means for mere animal life." (13) Self-preservation here can be seen as close to Spinoza's "conatus" or the self-preserving instinct of which all feelings and emotions are the expression. Ferguson does not limit his comment by the use of "emotion" or "feeling" which are not usual in his vocabulary.

As far as the moral sentiment (or sense) is concerned, to diffuse happiness is the basis of morality. (14) Happiness lies in selfishness and benevolence wherein benevolence may be the greatest selfishness and selfishness the greatest benevolence. (15) If it be thought that Ferguson protests too much, it should be remembered that he has a great encrustation of prejudice and habitual usage to clear away from the term "selfish".

The Stoic "enlists himself, as a willing instrument in the cosmos for the good of his fellow creatures." Here is the crux of Ferguson's analysis of the relationship between the individual and other (s). It is the individual who makes his choices in complete freedom, even the freedom to err. It is the individual who is conscious of self and the power of that self to choose. It is the individual who recognises or is conscious of the call for self-preservation. It is the individual who recognises or is conscious of the call for benevolence inherent in his own self-preservation and happiness.
All the while, "the general tendency of benevolence" inherent in the self-preservation of the individual, "like that of animal propensities, is to preserve the human race" (16) yielding a "most agreeable state of mind ..... which is the consciousness of a blessing ..... consisting alone in the cheerful performance of what we are entrusted to do, and in contentment with the scene of action in which we are placed." (17)

So ultimately "selfish" as more usually characterised and denounced by Hume and others of traditional humanistic persuasion, is seen as the propellant of other-regardingness, for "the natural state of the human mind, active in the design of the whole, propels the individual towards the social good since man's admiration of what appears to be the Universe of God, implies some qualification to participate in the godlike principles of benevolence and wisdom." (18)

This is very different from Mandeville's self-interest, which although grounded in self-preservation is seen as vicious but producing beneficial outcomes in the shape of comforts of civilisation. (19) Smith and Hume were probably influenced by such interpretations of "selfish". Economists were frequently to begin their historical reviews of their subject with Mandeville, although admittedly in political rather than semantic or ethical terms. (20)

It may be noticed that in all this, Ferguson speaks from individual to individual and thence to the totality of mankind in a universal or cosmological sense. He does not emphasise the relationship between the individual and the smaller groups of which he is institutionally a member. In this he probably shows a parallel with the reformation of ecclesiastical thinking from religious institutions to man's direct access to the godhead.
With his insistence on the individual's participation in the totality of purpose seen in a "universal design", Ferguson is led to a wider theme reminiscent of Kant. "In the relations of mankind, the brother cannot rightly act the part of a stranger, the citizen the part of an alien nor the individual, considered apart from every particular relation, rightly forget that he is a man and has common cause with mankind," \(^{(21)}\) "for the greatest good incident to human nature is the love of mankind." \(^{(22)}\) and care for its preservation through the means he has suggested, namely the grooming of self.

Good anthropologist that he was, Ferguson could see clearly and endeavours to make allowance for problems of comparative ethic, in addition to the problems emerging from differences and imperfections of individuals within the one culturally ethical scene "Virtue, in the mixed nature of man, is at once a condition of the mind, an aspect and carriage of his person, and an ordinary series of action fitted to his situation as a member of a community, in which the conduct of every particular person contributes its share to the good or evil incident to the whole." \(^{(23)}\) The evil is to be tolerated for the good, since the cosmos can absorb error, and it would seem that good will prevail in an eternal time-scale.

Driving the anthropological and comparative theme a little deeper to arrive at an assessment of universal "virtue" and after taking into account Kames' \(^{(24)}\) and Shaftesbury's\(^{(25)}\) approaches, Ferguson recognises that in comparisons the difficulty lies in "fixing where the estimation of moral quality resides, whether in the person observed, in the observer, or in neither separately but in the concurrence of one with another." \(^{(26)}\)
It will be necessary to remove layers of differences that "reside in the evidences of man's moral quality to reveal no indeterminateness in the sympathy which inheres in the nature of man, even when it is susceptible to abuse\(^{(27)}\) and to diversity of opinion as to its virtue.\(^{(28)}\) Here Ferguson has slipped into the use of the term "sympathy" which he tries to avoid but possibly here to distinguish it from other glosses on it that the word "virtue" tempts.

There is never any wavering in use of the terms "self-preservation" and "benevolence" as universal characteristics of men in all groupings, all cultures and at all times. This is a bedrock of individual relation to totality rather than to ephemeral and varied aspects of human groupings.

The philosopher himself, as variant individual, may not pontificate for the other what is not good for himself,\(^{(29)}\) for "he rests his choice of a part to be acted in life, upon the considerations of what he himself by nature is; and upon the consideration of his status and place in the order of things, he conceives himself as part not of the community of mankind alone, but in the universe."\(^{(30)}\) Here we see Ferguson's argument moving almost imperceptibly from the daily to the cosmic and even the metaphysical.

If, Ferguson argues, the individual rests his choices, as he must, on the universal grounds of self-preservation with benevolence he will be on the sure ground of community with nature and so, even in self-assessment and self-advocacy which may be mistaken and open to correction, he will shie away from the advocacies of the independent observer or the independent institution. These may be and probably are more erroneous. Except in terms of numbers
they offer no greater assurance of rectitude, and indeed may conceal that more powerful and varied offering of individual origin, that comes closer, from natural sources, to the universal design.

Ferguson's conception of the individual seeing himself as "in the universe of God," is one of his few direct invocations of a deity as arbiter of his ethic or his philosophy. Nature is equated with God(31) in the spirit of Spinoza's deus sive natura or Malebranche's "seeing all things in God." Ferguson seems to avoid and possibly does not need to pose God as interventionist when Nature is evolutionist.

The equation of God with Nature is a datum not demanding exploration in the terms of the school of "commonsense" which Ferguson shares with his predecessor (Reid) and his successor (Stewart) in the Edinburgh chair of philosophy. Moreover, the influence of the French philosophers, the growing humanism of his day and his early chagrin with clericalism, cooled what might otherwise have been closer to the traditional religious outlook and led to his emphases on Nature.

Whether gods or nature prevail or dispose, man himself chooses and has from freedom chosen to be part of a grouping which he is ultimately at liberty to reject. Leibniz: "A man is free in doing something that flows from his character."(32) Spinoza: "A thing is free which exists by the mere necessity of its own nature and is determined to act by itself alone."(33) The groupings are expedient and the individual remains "absolute master of his own will and for the choice he shall have made."(34)

Yet there must be no descent into anarchism arising from free
choice and this is guaranteed by the natural aims of self-preservation with benevolence which yield the peace and good order of society. Nevertheless the ultimate and profoundest choice, in the manner of Epictetus, are the individual's alone. We seem to see here something of a contrast between the concept of society organisational and society natural, with the latter having primacy over the former, whereon the individual will decide.

Although some are tempted to turn to the Essay for assessment of Ferguson's approach to the relationship between individual and society, there he was much closer to the historical terms adopted more stridently by Hobbes and Rousseau. These he was to castigate in the Principles.

In 1767, which was the date of the first edition of the Essay, Ferguson was then primarily interested in his classical interpretations which were mere entrées to his yet to be developed and profounder studies of social or political systems. Most of the Essay is given over to assessments of the political structures of the Greek and Roman States, with anthropological nods in the directions of China, Mexico, and the Hottentots. Moreover all this can be assessed as true prelude to his controversially assessed "History of the Progress and termination of the Roman Republic" published in 1783.

But all this is in the historical and classical vein of the earlier Ferguson and we have to wait for the mature works of 1792 and after for a closer approach to his theme of the ethic of the individual as paramount between the self and society.

Even in the earlier Essay where Ferguson is intent on
countering contract theorists, he is not concerned to uphold association as it develops in political manner. "If the domestic arrangements of nations be neglected. . . . society. . . . must no longer exist." (39) It may well be that there is here some carelessness in substituting the word "society" for "state", since presumably he does not wish to suggest that the "morals" or the "genius" of mankind would thereby disappear. Perhaps this might be a precursing whisper of the "withering away of the state."

All this then in the earlier writings rushes rapidly from states of nature to established "states". Yet it is in the simpler forms of association of friendship and kinship, reflected in although not necessarily limited to the clan system, that makes the greater appeal to Ferguson. These enhance his insistence on the all pervading ethic of the individual in individualistic relationships that are dominant over institutionalised relationships.

Then in the Essay he goes far to suggest that certain forms of association and society reflected therein, might prove "a mighty and harmful engine". This may be aimed mainly at "commercial states" where "the mighty engine which we suppose to have formed society, only tends to set its members at variance or to continue their intercourse after the bands of affection are broken." (40)

In Section IV of the Principles where he attends to war and dissent, Ferguson presents these as the obverse of the coin of association. Here Ferguson demonstrates the true work of sociolog as the study of association, disassociation and re-association which are to him all subject to the underlying choice of free individuals.
The Principles attempts to demonstrate the worthiness of
the individual to assume this paramount position and how the
individual ethic is fundamentally prior to those adjuncts of social
organisation which may assure to individuals the continuance of
his freedoms, in something of the manner of a domestic arrangement.

MacRae suggests that it is in the first part of the
Principles that their value lies. In the early chapters and,
indeed, in the whole Book, Ferguson lays the foundations for his
examination of the nexus between individual and group. We might
see in this order a reflection of the Platonic emphasis on the early
ethical dialogues with his elaborations of systems of states as
appendage or supplement to the ethical and semantic considerations
on which they are grounded.

Many great thinkers such as Kant and Wittgenstein, suggest
that much of what is written might have been spared. But Ferguson
had a course of traditional lectures to fulfil and his first
crucial chapters, or lectures as they originally were, would not
have completed a course nor necessarily led to the conclusions that
he wished to demonstrate. The "domestic arrangements" must be
fully explored in Book Two of the Principles but it is in the early
chapters of Book One that his heart lies.

There his work was to explore the individual in his totality
of self-consciousness both of body and spirit, of his force and
his energy in moving to choice, of his powers to correct choice
and to act. Such an individual is seen as the atomic particle of
the whole and the earthbound mover of the cosmic enterprise.
He is the guardian of society.
So the earliest sections of the Principles, concerned to distinguish man from animal although partaking of that animality, attempt to establish Ferguson's first axiom of man's consciousness of self on which he will erect his ethic. Such an axiom parallels Descartes cogito and is offered in the same indubitable vein. It accords closely too with Keirkegaard's self knowledge of the self's existence as first principle of existentialism.

But this consciousness of self might be considered impotent had Ferguson not added the elements of will, energy and power as the concomitants and propellants of the "mind qualified by nature to recognise itself," and which is the only means by which we can interpret information received in attending to the facts of which we are conscious. Information received is that of the senses which Ferguson is not disposed to mistrust.

The consciousness of self, of other and of choice, propelled by a native will, energy and power determines action. Correction of choice is achieved by the experience of trial and error.

Ferguson has now come close to the point of "knowledge" although never engaging on the arguments of "truth". His is a pragmatic rather than an epistemological approach which sees the extensions and limitations of knowledge as dependent not only on experience but on habitual and customary constraints.

Such constraints he avers are within the power, the will and the choice of the individual to control. The individual is the channel of knowledge which stems from self-knowledge.

Trying, at this early stage, to assess the social implication
of such self and other knowledge -

"Although man is determined to live with his fellows and must, upon this account be classed with the
gregarious animals, yet parties may agree or be at variance." (42)

"To be in society is the physical state of the species not the moral distinction of man" (43)

"Estrangement is not always a vice, nor association a virtue." (44)

"The task of human wisdom begins, and is then only properly exercised, where the good of society is a matter of free choice, not of necessity, nor even of invariable instinct."

Still, with the mind of man conscious of itself and of the experience and knowledge that flows from that consciousness, there is revealed a fellow feeling for what befalls a fellow creature, even within such doubtful social contexts. Such fellow feeling is, in common language called humanity and is considered as characteristic naturally of the species. "Even to be a stranger is a recommendatio: and ground for regard," (45) for man's moral judgment which is part of his consciousness of self "gives sanction to a propriety of his character and action, in the society of his fellow creatures." (46)

Ferguson then moves to explore the refinements of self-knowledge but he is less concerned with the intellect than with the subjects of thought which move the will to choose. His proposal is to "investigate and to apply but not to explain the laws of conception and will." To consider them as they are verified in the description of human nature; in order to lay open to our recollection, as much as may be, the foundation of power and
choice, and to delineate the superstructure that may be raised on these foundations."{(47)}

He does not delve into the Mind/Body problem; for him it does not emerge. Some will accuse him of naïveté or superficiality in this: some might recognise his stoic proclivities which cause him to conceive an overriding unity, or at least no dichotomy. In unpublished Essay No. 21 he develops some argument on materialism and idealism but there he considers "body" as matter and not specifically as human body.

As for knowledge emerging from self-knowledge, Ferguson was intent on avoiding the scepticism of Berkeley and Hume which he saw as based on the concept of ideas as medial to knowledge. Hypothetical origins and usages in substantiation of theories are rejected for the study of "the applications and consequences of the primary facts of which nature has given us use."

Such consciousness consists "in a conviction of reality that sets every cavil and dispute at defiance."{(46)} Admittedly Ferguson can be cavalier in his primary assumptions. As for example, when he claims that perception through the sense of external objects, either directly or by inference, proceeds with "a conviction under which truth does not appear to be necessary"{(49)} This sounds remarkably like Johnson's kicking the stone to assure others of its reality.

A further example of rejection of debate and Ferguson's firm stand on what he considers as indubitable datum, is found in his assessment of the choice open to the conscious mind. "The power of choice is a fact of which the mind is conscious; it is therefore supported by the highest evidence of which any fact is susceptible."
Attempts to support it by argument are nugatory and attempts to overthrow it by argument are absurd." (50) Or again, "after all in treating of the human will, the names of liberty and necessity may be debated; but notorious facts are foundation enough upon which we may safely erect the fabric of moral science, SO FAR AS IT IS OF ANY IMPORTANCE TO MANKIND". (our italics)

We must note the final reservation for so far as Ferguson was concerned, philosophy, moral science and, what we should today call social-science, are intentionally purposeful rather than matters of intellectual analysis. It might be unwise to so criticise his dogmatic presentation of premisses as to reject his pragmatic offerings.

The conscious mind is led by convictions of unquestionable knowledge by perception through the senses of material objects either directly or by inference. Such knowledge leading to adjustments of individual choice will lead to cumulative improvement both for the individual and for the species. Herein lies the perennial hope of the learning process, which will rest initially and possibly finally with the individual.

Such unquestionable knowledge emerging from individual sense data and processed through choice by a "mind conscious of itself" is crucial for society.

Knowledge so gained directly by the senses will be extended by "testimony" which "informs our social nature and our dealings and conversations of men". Such testimony may have emerged through travel, from lore or from the records of history but it is always to be subjected to the personal testimony of experience for
a "treatise on colour, read to the blind, would be void of meaning," and "a person who has never seen troops in the field will not learn from the commentaries of Caesar or the Memoirs of Turenne." Testimony leads to vicarious experiencing which must be subjected to the active choice of the individual to test its acceptability for himself.

Ferguson, as early historian, had plenty of experience in the use of testimonies of source. This does not blind him to their defects. "We presume the witness to speak the truth as we presume the mirror to reflect the image cast upon it: (we might interpolate - and the presumption that the data of sense are to be relied upon). But the evidence of testimony is so far inferior to that of perception (Ferguson is admitting that sense perception is not infallible) as it brings the additional defects which lie open to doubt, with respect to the competence of the witness, his capacity for observation or his caution to avoid being himself deceived; his veracity, the inducements he may have to deceive, or his ability to resist them." Testimony in the extension of knowledge must be subjected to the "double doubt of those providing and those accepting the testimony."

Knowledge based on perception and extended by "credible testimony", is furthered by inference. Ferguson here seems to use inference in a scientific sense since he relates it to "connections arising from such effects and causes as that the weight of the atmosphere leads to the inference of what shall be the height of a column of a given fluid in the barometer." Inference may also emerge from the subsumption of individual cases "under the genera to which they belong"; also from the reasonings and practices of specialists; from the definitions of mathematicians; from the statutes and practices of lawyers; from the conceptions
of being and its attributes accepted by the metaphysician; from the
laws of nature established by the physiologists."(57) The Individual
would be hard put to it to absorb all such "inferences".

But as with testimony so with inference. Ferguson needs to
reassure himself on the "discernment of truth"(58) in such inferences.
Error is found in "indiscriminate credulity on the one hand, or
indiscriminate scepticism on the other", for "with the credulous
every appearance and every report passes undistinguished and
unquestionned. With the sceptic, every doctrine is a subject of
cavil, and the despair of knowledge is substituted for caution in
the selection of truth."

We might bother as to whether all this refers to the
philosopher, the academic, the intellectual, rather than to the
common individual. Ferguson does not enter into such argument;
we assume that his support for a "sens commun" will suffice for
what may occur to variant individual cases.

How is the selection of truth to be made? Ferguson's
reassurance rests on the fact "that whatever we are conscious of,
or whatever we perceive, has an evidence prior to argument or
testimony; and it is indeed from premisses so known, that we are
enabled, in the construction of argument, to infer the most certain
conclusions."(59) "Else we should fall with Des Cartes into a
species of palsy of all the mental powers, whether of speculation
or action."(60) We recall that the greatest scientists are alert
to the need and the possibility of making their labours clear to
the commonalty.(60a)
It should be noted that Ferguson does not claim to have arrived at "truth" by such means, but at the foundations of "argument for arriving at "the most certain conclusions."(59) Such modest achievement of knowledge as may lead to refinements of choice, engenders a moving process rather than a finality but which is the individual's gift to society.

It is with action, progress and improvement, that Ferguson is strongly concerned. Speculations "even in natural science" "are surely of little account if they have no relation to subjects of actual choice and pursuit; and if they do not prepare the mind for the discernment of matters, relating to which there is actual occasion to decide, and to act, in the conduct of human life."(61)

The "even in natural science" might suggest that this is all the more in social-science or in speculative moral science. He will not subscribe to a theoretical non-involved philosophy or ethic for "Theories no way affect the physical state of things otherwise than they are applicable by assumption of circumstance."(62)

The data of sense which will have led to perception and aided choice, leading through corrected choice to improved knowledge are in themselves powerless unless accompanied by the force which the individual brings to his observations and which lead him to action. Such force will be the variable from individual to individual. Reminiscent of Bergson's "élan vital" the force gives coherence to thought and to association of ideas and is a natural in-built capacity for exertion and no "mere figure or motion impressed on a body." Such a force of mind is very unlike the derivatives of "impressions", "picture" or "wax tablet" of "statis poetic allusion."(63) Ferguson's pragmatic vein is ever averts from the use of metaphor or simile which through mischoice or
misapplication or misinterpretation may pile error on error and leave indelible traces.

So the individual is led, in the manner suggested by Ferguson's moral science, from natural dispositions, through free choice, experience and enlargement of knowledge, to the achievement in ever greater measure of what to him is good and his avoidance of misery through the rejection of what to him is bad. Ferguson sees this as the contribution of the individual not only and not mainly to the society in which he finds himself, but much more importantly to a kind of cosmological evolutionism. Even though he rejects so soundly the brutish and nasty state of possible origin, it seems that he envisages a natural progress from poorer to better. Yet there is a limit for

"What is created can never equal the creator, and in the highest is therefore imperfect so the least defect is the greatest perfection."(64)

Social progress, brings incipient disadvantages -

"Suppose the "savage" to become suddenly rich, to be lodged in a palace, and furnished with all the accommodations or means of enjoyment which an ample estate or revenue can bestow; he would either have no permanent relish for such possessions, or not knowing how to enjoy them, would exhibit effects of gross and ungovernable passion and a brutality of nature, from which, amidst the wants and hardships of his own situation, he is in a great manner restrained."(65) Only in a gradual way, through progress secured "through education, industry, sobriety and frugality in the conduct of the emergent way of life are the disadvantages of the "commercial arts" to be countered."(66)
"These have originated in the needs for man's animal nature: the political arts originate in the wants and defects that emerge from instinctive society\textsuperscript{(67)} and the defects of choice.

Ferguson visualises the progress of society resting on the individual but with a foresight of the disadvantages that will be attendant on industrialisation and its accompanying utilitarianisms. He echoes the distaste shown by the classical cultures for commercialisation and mechanisation.

Through free and almost anarchic choice, Ferguson feels that there is reached the highest point to which moral science can conduct the mind of man, "to that eminence of thought, from which he can view himself as but part of the community of living nature."\textsuperscript{(68)} Individual choice aspiring to such heights is not disassociated from the present well-being of all. Such a relationship between the individual and society is reiterated over and over in the Principles and the unpublished Essays. e.g.

"Whatever the individual may incline to obtain or avoid for himself, he may also have at heart for his friend or his country; hence we derive the distinction of selfish or sociable in the characters of men."\textsuperscript{(69)}

The whole structure having been erected on the shoulders of the individual, "By this he is in some measure let into the design of God or Nature." and "can state himself a willing instrument in that design for all that depends on his will and choice and as a conscious instrument in the hands of providence in matters which are out of his power."\textsuperscript{(70)}

It is uncertain whether the "highest point" is relative to the life-span of the individual or attained cumulatively by the species: there is a frequent blurring of such time-scales.
Ferguson could be toying with visions of as yet unknown refinements of senses and of knowledge about those sensations which could lead to ever more profound attainment of preservation and development of the species, through new sense data of the individual.

For he does engage in a tentative approach to evolution in its more general sense and in what some might term metaphysical exploration -

"In alliance with the animal kingdom, man is enabled to perceive the material system about him, to hold converse with his own species, and to observe, in the operation of nature, marks of intelligence which inexpressedly surpass the powers of man. In this, while he derives knowledge from the source of perception in which he partakes with the animals, he aspires to communication with an order of being greatly superior to his own."(71)

In such a way Ferguson opens up a vista not only of progress of individual man and thence of society, resting on the accepted senses of perception, the conscious self and on knowledge derived therefrom, but on still to be discovered or appropriated media from other species. In this we find something of the natural scientist probing beyond known horizons, in the manner of Teilhard de Chardin.

Through such a theme of progress, in spite of the moderation and timelessness of the vision, he reaches an almost metaphysical or ultraphysical speculation. "In alluding to what mankind may have gained, we do not limit the view of what the ordinary race of men have accomplished, but rather look forward to that of which human nature in the best is susceptible... beyond the limits of this terrestrial globe."(72)
Some might claim that such outward looking, previsages an afterlife or nirvana in transitional religious senses. But as Ferguson's "sport with visionary conjectures" takes him beyond this planet to "Saturn and Jupiter" in an amazing anticipation of current space entry, we suggest that the former claim does not outrule the latter. "In the Universe of God there are we may suppose much higher forms of intelligence. This terrestrial sphere which he (man) occupies and probably many such may supposed to be nurseries for the great world of intelligent being."(73) What a breathtaking vision for mankind from this Scottish thinker of the eighteenth century Enlightenment!

But even in such flights of vision, Ferguson's feet are firmly on this ground. He reminds us that looking forward to happiness achieved by the individual and donated to society, must not defer that of the present. Happiness is to be valued "more for the present than for the future" yet, in the timeless ethic of the stoic, "eternity is embraced by the ingenuous mind."(74)

So comes to an ultimate conclusion: Ferguson's investigation of the quality and capacity of the individual, through the preservation of the self in a spirit of benevolence, to make those choices which will lead to the happiness of himself and his kind. Such choice stemming from Moral Sense which in an a priori sense derives from cosmic forces, will carry the weight of the libertarian framework within which they will be exercised if the maximum benefit to society is to be achieved. The Individual's forces and powers of choice and action will lead ultimately to the attainment of the Stoic's "greatest society". Herein lies the kernel of Ferguson's approach to the relationship between the Individual and Society.

He will supplement such arguments by approaching the man-mad
organs of society or the state, in the second volume of the Principles, having as he believes, firmly established the nexus between Individual and Society as resting on the shoulders of the former.

Giving over a large part of his second volume to recapitulation and fresh glosses on his theme, Ferguson treats the state (possibly not to be differentiated entirely from society in his present contexts) as functionary and expedient.
Chapter Six

(1) The Essay p.16

(2) Dworkin with McGee referring to Rawls imaginary Congress of Amnasiacs in "The Theory of Justice" - conversation BBC. 1981

(3) PMPS ip152

(4) PMPS ip152

(5) PMPS ip202

(6) PMPS ip207

(7) NOTE H to this Thesis concerning Ferguson's Unpublished Essays

(8) Unpublished Essay No.29 p.4

(9) PMPS ip202

(10) Unpublished Essay No.29 pp.4

(11) -do- pl3

(12) -do- pp15/16

(13) Essay pl3

(14) Essay pl3

(15) Essay p38

(16) PMPS iip19

(17) PMPS -do-

(18) PMPS iip16

(19) Mandeville "Fable of the Bees" 1729

(20) Laski's Lectures LSE 1930s attended by writer.

(21) PMPS iip103

(22) PMPS iip110

(23) PMPS iip114

(24) Kames "Moral Essays" 1751

(25) Shaftesbury's use of "Moral Sense"

(26)

(27) PMPS ip133 & iip126

(28)
(29) PMPS ip308
(30) PMPS ip312
(31) PMPS ip361
(32) Leibniz in Hampshire's commentary "Age of Reason" NY 1956 p.168
(33) Spinoza: Definition VI "Ethics" Bk.i trans. White N.Y.1949
(34) PMPS ip202
(35) Essay p.269
(36) Essay p.116
(37) Essay p.117
(38) Kettler op.cit. pp78/9
(39) Essay p.135
(40) Essay p19
(41) MacRae in conversation with the writer Nov.1981
(42) PMPS ip3
(43)
(44) PMPS ip24
(45) PMPS ip35
(46) PMPS ip35
(47) PMPS ip76
(48) PMPS ip79
(49) PMPS ip83
(50) PMPS ip152
(51) PMPS ip155
(52) PMPS ip84
(53) PMPS ip84
(54) PMPS ip85
(55) Addm. see Philip M.Phil thesis Surrey 1980
(56)
(57) PMPS ip87
(58) PMPS ip88
(59) PMPS ipp/89/90
(60) PMPS ip91
(60a) e.g. Christmas Lectures by outstanding scientists for children each year in London.
(61) P M P S ip91
(62) P M P S ip91
(63) P M P S lp102
(64) P M P S lp184
(65) P M P S lp254
(66) P M P S lp256
(67) P M P S lp256
(68) P M P S lp313
(69) P M P S lp125
(70) P M P S lp313
(71) P M P S lp313
(72) P M P S lp325
(73) P M P S lp325
(74) P M P S lp326
CHAPTER SEVEN

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY Part Two
CHAPTER SEVEN

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY Part Two

Having laid his groundwork in the first volume of the Principles, in such detail and with such conviction, it might be expected that Ferguson would commence the Second Volume with the detailed exemplifications of the functions and expedients of the state or society within which the individual will exercise his ultimate free choices.

Whether he fights shy of exemplifications which may betray weakness in his moral science, or whether he wearies of the "trivia" of his task, the main purposes of which he feels he has already accomplished, is matter for conjecture.

It is certain that Ferguson places all value on the basis of his ethical science and erects a superstructure of organisational factors in a manner, if not perfunctory, yet giving the feeling of déjà fait. Yet for the sake of traditional completeness and to satisfy those whose interests lay in other areas of social-science, he must offer an outline of the economic, political and jurisprudent institutions that will rest on his prime ethic. But such economic, political and jurisprudent sciences are apparently secondary not only in approach but in importance. In recent times the superstructure has outweighed and reduced the impact of the ethical foundation.
Almost half of Volume Two of the Principles is taken up with recapitulations or, what in music might be termed, variations on his theme. Ferguson does indeed apologise for the "repetitious nature" this represents. In such recapitulations it is interesting to regard his work as that of an artist intent on filling in a canvas or as a technician filing his fitments, rather than as an introducer of new themes.

He feels, in spite of criticism that may result, that he must reiterate that it is on what "is agreeable or disagreeable" that the individual will rest his choices in a freedom which is paramount. "Lines" of "moral wisdom and precept" will flow from such choices in every direction whether leading to the discernment of personal qualities, or the foundations of law, of manners or of political establishments." However clarity may seem to demand expansion.

Ferguson refers to the "philosophers of old" who resolved themselves into two camps: the Epicurean "a deserter from the cause of his fellow creatures" and the Stoic who "enlisted himself" as a willing instrument in the hands of God for the good of his fellow creatures."

This "willing instrument" propelled by self-preservation and benevolence will make/choices and corrected choices as will lead him to that felicity or happiness to which he is drawn by his nature. It is the purpose of institutions to create a framework in which these aims can be assured.

This is seen as a caretaking and almost negative role and while Ferguson does not stress here, he always holds out the
possibility of the individual opting out of such a framework in extreme or vital circumstances and further, that such a framework might prove unnecessary.

There is no detail of a "state of nature" which might prevail were traditional accepted structures rejected or "withered" away. But there is always hint of a natural state, never brutish, but close to the "clan" and the "woodland", set against the commercial democracy he senses is evolving and with which he seems to be philosophically and temperamentally out of tune.

If the institutions are to provide an adequate framework for the happinesses that they exist to make possible, then they must be clearly informed of the grounds on which such happinesses are based and the grounds of their recognition.

These Ferguson offers as sets of alternatives to his fulcrum of choice, employing some of the very few italicisations that appear in his work -

"Pleasure/Pain, Beauty/Deformity, Excellence/Defect,
Virtue/Vice, Prosperity/Adversity.

Such are the guidelines for the institutions. For his part he says, he would rather reduce this collection of alternatives to an all-embracing duo of "Happiness/Misery" (as they may be commonly termed, for it is under one or other of those titles that we shall find probably every constituent of good or evil and thence through his choice, man's felicity or unhappiness," for the institutions to determine.
He now proceeds in neatly pedantic manner, and probably for the sake of his undergraduate students, to follow these pairs of expressions, under their compacted form, through the next hundred or so pages of Book Two of the Principles.

Stoicism quickly resurfaces. Pleasure and Pain are not merely physical. "Few look upon the pleasures of mere sense as matters of principal regard." He advances one step: "Every exercise of the human faculties into which malice and fear do not enter as motives..... is in its own nature agreeable." He has not shifted ground, for malice appears as the reverse of benevolence and fear of self-preserving regard. It is man's hope that the securing of his pleasure and the diminishment of his pain will be the purpose of institutions to assure, and those not in the merely accepted physical terms.

The "agreeability" so sought is never a static thing for to be "employed" is pleasant. It is typical of Ferguson's philosophy of choice and of action resting on that choice, that he should select for the first ingredient of pleasure, the activity of labour.

Such an emphasis on labour is probably what brought him to the approving attention of marxists. But the activities of labour are not detailed into a Smithsonian tortuous disquisition on the pains of the manufacture of pins. Neither does Ferguson enter into a debate on the alienation of labour with resultant seeming oppression: for him all labour is pleasing in its own right: "Labour is its own reward" quoting "The Rambler" and possibly Johnson. Labour could here be well equated with the activities of leisure.

It is not clear that Ferguson's insistence on the integrity
of the individual, would see in the "division of labour" a necessary fragmentation of that personality. Ferguson's assessment of that concept is certainly wider and more philosophically profound than that of Smith's use of the term in mainly industrial context. Ferguson sees it as a more general tendency emerging from the increasing limitations of a Baconian attempt at panopticism.

Forbes sees Ferguson's view of the division of labour as leading, paradoxically to a commercial and manufacturing progress giving security and liberty but, at the same time, inevitably producing a "second rate" society full of "second rate citizens" pursuing comparatively worthless objects." This, we feel, is seeing into Ferguson's case too great an emphasis on division of labour as cause of a degeneracy, which he would have felt more widely based.

The individual may find pleasure in a society which erects organisations which ensure a framework for the continuance of his pleasure. Yet Ferguson quickly notes that in society and social organisation "soon, dominion, precedence and rank, renown and celebrity lead to jealousies, envies, malice and revenge which diminish the pleasures of society." Society is not necessarily good nor agreeable and this stricture is not limited to the burgeoning industrial society.

It is to the individual alone to "apply the canons of excellence and defect, or merit or demerit, to himself and his fellow creatures." "There can be no generalisation of commiseration and pity", for "benevolence is particular in its choice" and will rest on "the companion with whom we are familiar, the friend we love, or the country to the service of which we are devoted." Through individual choices and individual circumstance
alone are choices made and from which we must seek "the seeds of an agreeable intercourse" which cannot be the subject of generalisation. Choice rests on individual decision even when it contributes to a corporate choice and decision in its contribution to social well-being as part of the larger design.

Beauty and Excellence are important means of Happiness for the individual. In terms that echo Einstein, Ferguson feels that the "main if not the sole constituent in the mechanical kingdom (according to Pere Buffier) is order or the apt combination of parts whether simultaneous or successive for the attainment of a beneficent purpose."(9) If such order depends, as he maintains, on Wisdom and Goodness, one might expect him to make a detailed exploration of Beauty and Excellence in terms of Excellence and Goodness. Ferguson stops short however at the explicability of Beauty in some accord with Kant's movement from Beauty to Sublimity and with refusal to debate an infinite regress to the creator. This brief section is interesting as showing Ferguson's only approach in the Principles to the aesthetic.

Such an ordering of things requires of the Individual that he accommodate himself to it through choice which is cognisant of the cardinal virtues of WISDOM, JUSTICE, TEMPERANCE AND FORTITUDE. Throughout a long disquisition on these ingredients of Virtue which are human rather than divine as is beauty, Ferguson emphasises their importance in choices, leading to Happiness. Happiness, whatever its causes, is subject to two general propositions: first, it is an attribute of the mind; second, it requires security in such happiness.(11) The first is the province of the individual alone: the second may rest with the organisations of society.
Habit plays a great part in the happiness of the mind for "He that sleeps on a straw matrass is no less disturbed than on a bed of down, or under a canopy of state." If the institutions of society are seen as ensuring the continuance of the conditions within which the individual may achieve happiness, tempered by habit, yet man is not slave of habit, his power to exert his ultimate veto is not diminished by habit.

It is in terms such as these that Ferguson analyses happiness and he is quite unwilling to interpret it in reductive terms any more than he was willing to consider it in generalisation.

There were those of his contemporaries who might have felt that he had indeed gone some way to reductionism by stressing benevolence as a secular gloss on the brotherly love or charity of the Christian Gospel. Galt, speaking through the mouth of the character Rev. Mr. Balwhidder -

"But as there was at this time (1794) a bruit and a sound about universal benevolence, philanthropy, utility, and all other disguises with which an infidel philosophy appropriate to itself the charity, brotherly love, and well-doing inculcated by our Holy Religion, I set myself to task upon these heads, and thought it no robbery to use a little of the strategem employed against Christ's Kingdom, to promote the interests thereof in the hearts and understandings of those whose ears have been sealed against me, had I attempted to expound higher things." Galt castigates the secession from Christianity to Utilitarianism since the former inculcates all in "morals and manners, to which the new fangled idea of utility pretends." In similar vein he puts down the "new benevolence" and the "Greek name" of philanthropy since they neither themselves "enlarged or bettered" the understanding.
In this Galt seems to tread some such ground as Ferguson in wishing to effect no reduction from the term he sees as supreme. But Ferguson, the erstwhile cleric, speaks from an environment of increasing religious scepticism or mild acceptances only; he seems to use "benevolence" as a kind of secular parallel to "charity" with its New Testament overtones. He is never prepared to countenance its reduction to or parallel with "utility".

It would seem that there were many contemporary attempts to explore the concept of benevolence with its crucial overtones of a beneficial relationship between the individual and his society, in a variety of synonyms.

Hume, in a very circular argument, reduces benevolence to generosity, humanity, compassion, gratitude, friendship, fidelity, zeal, disinterestedness, liberality and "all those other qualities which form the character of good and benevolent". This list is later extended to include "love" and "sympathy". (15)

This seems to be a mere literary dilution which evades the issue of selecting one term which, more than others, seems to encapsulate the required sense. Such selection is often an important task for the scientist and the philosopher. Ferguson believes that his insistence on self-preservation (with benevolence) achieves, in his exegis, such a required and economically expressed sense.
Ferguson seeks to reject a further "ingenious attempt" to explain the phenomenon of virtue leading to happiness through its "resolution into sympathy". For the use of the term sympathy makes it "difficult, in this account of the matter, to fix where the moral quality resides; whether in the person observed, in the observer, or in neither separately, but in the mere concurrence of one with another for the effect will be found without the supposed cause, and the cause will be found without the supposed effect." (17)

Although this caveat is not very clear, Ferguson is intent on knocking down quite gently Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments which rests on the term "sympathy". For though "it displays a masterly tone of expression; and, if eloquence were the test of truth, no want of evidence to obtain belief." (18) We recall that Smith was originally trained in the literary humanities and so his prose may seem to ring with more "eloquence" than the classicist and scientist in Ferguson would bring to "veracity".

True that the so-called "impartial observer" reminiscent of Smith's other character of "hidden hand", in economic/political fields, who underwrites Smith's concept of "sympathy", presupposes some "previous standard" of excellence. But this removes from such analysis as Ferguson offers, reliance on the origins of the moral quality stemming from the individual alone as part of the universe of nature. To introduce second or third persons into the scene not only offends against clarity but would destroy the foundation of Ferguson's argument.

In similar vein, but with less vehemence, Ferguson dismisses Shaftesbury's attempt to resolve all into a "Moral Sense".
At first sight this might seem strange since this is the key concept for Ferguson's stoic masters. But he argues that although it might well be a "maxim of moral science" it affords no guidance in application because of its great generality. This does not seem a faultless argument but Ferguson goes on to contrast it with the clarity in practice with which self-preservation, enlightened as it is by benevolence, "can be perceived to demonstrate the character of virtue without the intervention of external signs." "It is difficult to conceive why they should look for any other account of moral approbation than this."(19)

Methodical in his observation of the alternatives to his ethic and perhaps lending some mistakenly interpreted colour to the complaints against him of eclecticism, Ferguson goes on to dismiss Kames' approach in his "Moral Essays" where moral excellence is considered as a "secondary quality". This goes completely against the grain for whatever Kames may have argued for his statement, since "the individual's power to abstract from feeble occasion and passing specimens a standard of estimation whatever our judgment applies or whatever choice is made,"(20) is direct and prime and can never be conceived in terms of secondary.

All this seems of peripheral interest since Ferguson is so assured of the cogency of his argument and is so humane in his approach to those of others, that verbal confrontation is never insisted upon nor developed more fully. The only elements on which he seems at all strident are the reduction of terms to "utility" and the concept of the contract.
In the terms that he has chosen, Ferguson must try to assure the universality of his ethic and the relationship between individual and society, partly because of his emphasis on the uniqueness of the species and partly to enhance the "scientific" character of his enterprise. Anthropologist and historian that he was he would not deny nor would wish to, that the individual's judgments differ widely in different places and at different times, even to the point of the same individual's variability.

Variations of standards in cultures there certainly are. But Ferguson places much of a so-called variation at the door of differences of language and of "accent or speech". This last offers an unusual gloss on linguistic differences as they are usually argued by semanticists and would make considerably appeal to modern students of the influence of dialect and regional language. Ferguson's experience with the Gaelic certainly enhanced his interest in this as would the cultured English impatience with "Scottisms" of Hume of which Ferguson would have been well aware.

That this might be taken as dodging the main issue of cross-cultural differences and comparative traps, Ferguson senses, so he produces what might be considered as a crucial master-card. (21

"Notwithstanding the diversity of opinions which men may be supposed to entertain, with respect to the morality of particular actions, yet, in every age and nation, in every rank and condition, there is a rule of propriety (our italics) which, though it may be different in different instances, is to each the canon of estimation, and the principle from which they are to judge."
So a unity of a universal moral science can be preserved in the face of a diversity of case studies. "Propriety" in the manners of one's country, "decency" and "civility" are singled out as the constants in such a single moral science.

Ferguson must acknowledge that some customs will be recognised as "pernicious and cruel" and "are to be counteracted" but he does not go into detail of which, how or by whom, leaving it to be supposed that the ultimate corrections of choice on which he has insisted will redress the "cruelty" ultimately, or, that self-preservation may need to countenance instances that are "appropriate to the manners of one's country."

Ferguson is criticised for indeterminacy and it may well be that his quietly understanding review of other approaches than his own in "benevolence" together with his attempts to extend his ethic to seemingly incompatible cultures, contribute to such criticism. Ferguson is no fanatic of argument and insists always on a via media in deep consciousness of the virtues of the Aristotelian "mean" yet he insists that the formalisation of what he calls the "first mean" is not to advocate an "indiscriminate mediocrity". An indeterminate mediocrity would lead the individual, including the philosopher, to indecision and failure to choose decisively and to act of such decisions. It is in action that the moral quality will be revealed when the "movement performed is traced to its connection with the disposition of mind from which it proceeds." Such disposition of mind leads Ferguson to his moderation yet decisiveness of argument.

With universal moral quality viewed as stemming from the individual, Ferguson assigns secondary part to social assessment of
moral quality as observed in action and to social sanctions designed
to uphold such assessment. There will be faults as Ferguson has
always argued, in individual choice. Conscience, public repute,
law and religion "may be invoked for "additional correctives"
of the individual's power to correct his choices. But note that
these are "additional" and not "overriding" or "fundamental" corrective:

So is necessary a consideration of the Jurisprudence and
Politics as the "heads" under which there will be such
"interventions" into "individual choice." This consideration is
brief in the extreme, as is so much of the institutions approached
in the second volume of the Principles. "Law" and "Politics" "are
not sacrosanct" and compulsion will be limited to the repulsion of
a wrong. Moreover every "innocent person" may defend himself and ac
in the defence of every other innocent person, in the light of self-
preservation with benevolence accompanied by wisdom, justice,
temperance and fortitude. "No tyranny will be permitted to
prevail and the individual through his choice, is the one who will
decide what is tyrannical."(23)

It is in the "innocence of the person" that Ferguson seems
to visualise the "rights" of individuals in contrast with the
juristic sense of the contract theorists. Such inalienable "rights"
to choose in the light of self-preservation with benevolence extend
beyond the person to possessions if the are "occupied."

Ferguson makes great play with his interesting concept of
right based on occupancy which "accompanies labour as the ingredient
of right of possession". With the cessation of occupancy, as if
a member of the individual person had been severed, such right
ceases. In this he is close to Locke's right to property through
Mixing man's labour with nature's gifts." However Ferguson does not suggest, as does Locke's work, the seeds of a labour theory of value. (24)

With regard to "rights", so Ferguson argues, Hobbes has stressed "original" and "equality" of such rights without the qualification of "occupancy", which for Ferguson are almost an extension of the person himself, like a right arm or a tool. Had Hobbes, Ferguson contends, observed such an accompaniment to his claim for "rights", he would not have posited his thesis of neighbour molesting neighbour in a supposed brutish state since a respect for labour in occupancy is a basic rule of mankind. It is natural and persistent with only "passion or error overturning it" (25) the anthropologist and stoic in Ferguson sees no difference in this between the so-called "then" and the so-called "now".

Rights Ferguson sees as emergent from man's humanity and are natural and prior to the conventions of society. Moreover man's choices do not depend on "mere original rights". "Mutual practice" may cause to emerge as a "matter of fair agreement" a right "for every party" to do "whatever is practicable". (25a) Practicality excludes everything that "is inconsistent with the safety of mankind. Such practicalities may change with time and place and "rights" of this nature, assessed by one generation, Ferguson adduces, cannot bind posterity. Yet through habit and custom succeeding ages may accede to terms agreed in the past unless "oppression gives freedom to procure relief". (26)

In this manner Ferguson builds onto the basis of rights of humanity an accretion of habitually accepted rights which so long as he determines, will be acceptable to the individual.
This is no place to attempt to enter into detailed studies of alternative offerings in terms of so-called human "rights" as they affect the relationship between individual and society by other philosophers, but some reflections may be apposite at this point.

Hobbes certainly saw the state of nature, whether or not he visualised that as historical or useful fiction, as a state of fear, uncertainty and conflict with individuals having the "right" to anything they could seize and hold. Such a right is nothing more than freedom to do anything to protect oneself in instinctive manner and, except in tone, not very different from Ferguson's instinctive self-preservation. But Hobbes' assessment of the nature of individuals with their insistence on rights and on fear, may have been largely influenced by his own unhappy childhood and the early fear of his father who later deserted the family. Hobbes admits that "fear and he were twins" leading to a desire for peace that might only be a achieved through sacrifice. Ferguson himself is fearless in character and in argument: he insists that what we should most fear "is fear itself."

In using the metaphor of a brutish and warring situation Hobbes tends to lend to the language of "rights" in such seeming "natural" circumstances, connotations more cognate to civil societies where "rights" are ensured through contract, organs of administration and the protection of the sovereign.

Hobbes' dilemma is that he visualises a "brutish" society and a "civil" society and needs to bridge the gulf. This bridge is the Contract -

"The finall Cause, End, or Design of men (who naturally love
"Liberty, and Dominion over others) in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, (in which wee see them live in Commonwealths) is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented live thereby. that is to say getting themselves out from that miserable condition of Warre, which is necessarily consequent to the naturallPassions of men, when there is no visible Power to keep them in awe, and tye them by feare of punishment to the performance of their Covenants". "The only way to erect such a Common Power is to conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, or Assembly of men, that may reduce all their Wills, by plurality of voices, unto one Will."

Although one can find caveats in Leviathan to this generalisation in terms of say "small societies" and the need to "discourage Invasion", yet we read this as the leap which Hobbes makes from one kind of society to another and find Ferguson's argument from continuity more acceptable.

Ferguson had no need for bridge or for Contract as he visualised society as a continuing reflection of a cosmic disposition of things. In his "natural" state man is typified by an inherent integrity which supercedes rights, body or possessions although Ferguson is not indifferent to these. In civil society "he is no other for a state of nature exists here and now" as ever. If man's integrity is challenged whether by laws, by contracts or by sovereigns, then neither fear nor servility will prevail, for such paraphernalia exists merely to preserve the conditions within which his integrity is to be assured. Individuals can exercise choice to the death if need be. Their awareness of the humanity of others of their species inculcates in them a respect for the integrity of each and all.
Magistrates can administer in relation to customary or habitual practice, laws and institutions established in society but they will be valid "if, and only if, the mutual consent of the parties acting freely and in the exercise of their rational faculties; and with such means of communication as are sufficient to make known their thoughts and intentions, are present." Here we may be asked to interpret practice, law and institutions in terms of "contracts" in the plural with a small and legalistic "c" not to be confused with the dominant Contract of such as Hobbes and possibly Rousseau.

Ferguson pursues his concept of right by occupancy beyond the individual man to the individual state. His involvement with the American Colonies may have inspired him here. He envisages the rights of claimants as resting on

a) the "contract" of symbolic possession" with occupancy by the erecting of "columns" (as one might suggest by the planting of flags on the Moon or the Falklands);

b) the "use" following occupancy (arguments adduced in support for example of colonialism or imperialism).

In such manner Ferguson moves from the investigation of happiness, to the field of so-called "rights" which he considers in minimal manner, and thence to political and institutional areas where the happiness of the individual is related to the "Felicity of the nation". In this context the individual, while in no way deserting his claims to identity and integrity, will be viewed as "citizen".
Hobbes indeed recognises the right to rebel in terms of self-preservation but the emphasis is on the preservation of life itself i.e. bodily preservation, a not unnatural standpoint in an age of changing monarchies, changing allegiances and facing vicious retributions and civil war. Rights in Law under the Commonwealth dignified by the Contract protect individuals who continue to underwrite the Contract from interference from others including arbitrary actions of the sovereign. It is not clearly drawn and cannot be, whether such Rule of Law provides more protection for the sovereign and his instruments of administration than for the individuals who have subscribed to their ceding of "rights."

The emphasis on bodily preservation in Hobbes' political sections is seemingly allied with an innate materialism. But a true morality envisages the spiritual aspect of self-preservation and a true freedom that is not limited by mere absence of restraint. That Hobbes has to turn to his "Christian Commonwealth!! as seeming redemption of such emphasis appears as a poor appendage rather like "pie in the sky", and does not blend easily with his earlier approach. Ferguson, metaphysician rather than political scientist, infuses his whole social-science with spirit as well as body, yet his pragmatism keeps both in satisfying harness.

Protection of property could emphasise the materialistic aspects of "rights" and Locke goes a long way to seeing the civil power as largely concerned with protecting the rights of property. Ferguson has a neat assessment of property which is an extension of the very individual himself and not merely "mixed with labour", so going beyond materialism.

So we are offered by Ferguson a muted but broader theory
of human rights than those of, for example, either Hobbes or Locke, where fear dominates and the possession of property obsesses. There is an undertone of complete indifference to governments while they carry out their functions of securing peace and security within which the integrity of the individual may be assured. Such is surely a magnificent individualistic theory which allows for the social but confines it in its "proper" place as moral science dictates.

For Ferguson "laws" and "politics" are not sacrosanct but invoked to modify and ameliorate errors of choice leading to unhappiness. But there is constant insistence that the individual can always exercise, even erringly, his capacity to reject in matters that he sees of "vital" concern. If in the last resort this could lead to death Ferguson would maintain that death has nothing to do with unhappiness. It is the final touchstone of integrity and might be seen in terms of martyrdom for such integrity.

The "formal institutions of state" act in "defence of men" "in support of their liberty" and to secure the continuance of conditions in which such liberty may enable individuals to achieve happiness.

In the guise of good "citizen" and for good order, the individual will resign into the hands of the magistracy his weapons of defence. Yet there must remain circumstances in which an "injured citizen" must be permitted to defend himself and to "adopt the only means which are effectual" for his self-preservation. Ferguson is here stressing in pragmatic terms of legal and political consideration: he must not be seen as pursuing a course leading
to an anarchy which was about to distress Europe. British style now tends to engender "bloodless" revolutions or possibly to what can be considered as politically evolutionary change, the individual holding back in terms of "vital" choice "lest the roof fall".

"The due bounds of convention, often politically exceeded to the point of tyranny" may have power reclaimed by the "multitude of individuals with whom it originates, whenever it is abused" (32). "Such maxims in speculation cost nothing but the words in which to express them; in practice, we must remember that, as the multitude can never be assembled, this maxim puts the sword in the hand of every individual, to employ it for himself." "The benighted traveller will fly from the cracked roof" and "he need not recur to any maxim of law for this purpose," (33) for "the rights of the mind cannot be sustained by any other form than its own." (34)

Individuals may be caught up in conflicts between nations in war which originates in "rapacity, malice, error or misapprehension of rights." (35) Ferguson does not discuss the question of which party to the conflict can be considered to blame nor does he enter the argument of what today is termed "conscientious objection" to obey the injunctions of the state in time of war. His covering thesis of free choice presumably resolves such a dilemma and if the so-called coward is imprisoned or shot for sustaining his integrity, Ferguson would term this a manner of self-preservation.

Although Ferguson's major published work is entitled "The Principles of Moral and Political Science", he leaves himself a mere hundred pages and one Chapter to explore Political Science
in terms of Population, Wealth, Manners, Civil Liberty and Political structures as they are reflected in the institutions which arise for the caretaking of society.

This is not so careless a matter as might appear from such brevity for all Ferguson's foundations have been laid in his earlier approaches to moral and ethical science which is ever his main concern and on which the political or social institutions rest.

There is no essential conflict between the "individual" and the "citizen" as the happiness of the individual citizen is the fundamental concern of the state as it is of the individual himself.

Salus populi suprema lex esto.

While individuals will "accommodate themselves to the interests of the state" this "yields no paradox" since their means and their ends are the same.(36)

Since "people are the vital blood of a nation and if they are fitted by their character to supply that part, they have a value proportioned to their numbers." The whole does not seem to be greater than its parts. The summation of the value of individuals does not rest on equality. Although all men are part of the cosmos and thus are equal in their common humanity, in terms of the political scene, "there is an absurdity in the pretensions of equality."(37) Such a claim is reinforced by emphasis on the differences even in one and the same individual who becomes other than his erstwhile self through time, experience and circumstance.

Moreover, the differing developments of institutions will require various qualities for the various caretaking of various societies. "A small democracy will need the qualities of the statesman and warrior in each person; aristocracies will admit
hereditary distinctions arising from the transmission of values; under monarchies the scale of subordination may be extended."(38)

Yet, in his customary spirit of moderation, Ferguson will not admit extremes of inequality. Where the relationship is conceived on the "models of master and slave" the "value of the people is to be estimated from their qualifications to repel such pretensions." Nonetheless, from his statements throughout, we do not gather that from such rejection of "pretensions" will emerge incipient revolution. Ferguson seems to be reviewing the master/slave relationship in its classical or other cultural, rather than any nearer, contexts.

The character of its people will be evaluated on "partial models" according to "the prime intentions of the state" under review, whether for war or for commerce and "To such partialities we must submit in estimating the comparative merit of nations" since "human nature nowhere exists in the abstract."(40)

While sharing a common humanity Ferguson's assessment of the worth of the individual to his society enshrines variety. He does not see progress or excellence in a blanketing uniformity.

How brief is Ferguson's nod in the direction of Wealth! Admittedly Smith's work had preceded his own in such detail that he would not have wished "if he could" to entangle himself in that particular aspect of the division of labour. Moreover, Ferguson's interests were never mainly on material approaches whether concerning the individual or the nation. He cannot help "but regret to have replaced the statesman and the warrior with the mere clerk and accountant."(41) It was not "among the ancient
Romans alone that commercial arts or a sordid mind were held in contempt."(42) One seems to hear a whisper of Napoleon's taunt - "Nation of shopkeepers".

Forbes(43) notes that Ferguson saw the paradox of commercial and manufacturing progress leading to security and liberty but at the same time "producing a second rate society" full of "second rate citizens pursuing comparatively worthless objects." But Ferguson does not seem to see the benefits of security and liberty as proceeding necessarily from industrialisation and his opposition to unrestrained materialism was deeper and more eternal than a mere diatribe against the new movements.

Yet it is incumbent upon him to review those institutions of trade, wealth and taxes supportive of the transactions of states which by their good housekeeping secure for the individual room for his freedom and a climate in which his happiness may be assured in continuance.

Labour will produce wealth as well as happiness for the individual: division of labour in its economic connotation will produce surpluses, for the division and sub-division of tasks is "conducive to the accumulation of the fruits of labour." From such surplus it is an easy step to trade and foreign trade. Here the main concern of the state is to "facilitate communications",(44) and to "aid the freedom of trade."(45) In economic activity the individual is still prime for although the state "may do much to protect or even to aid the trader it cannot "excite his ardour" nor "direct its application."(46)
Experience, which has been frequently stressed by Ferguson as the outcome of individual choice, in the scientific manner of trial and error, now appears in slightly different guise. This is the trial and error of loss or of profit, which will make the trader "exquisitely sensible" to its experience. Such possible traceability to the choice of the individual seems preferable to Smith's vaguer and indeterminate image of the "unseen" or "invisible" hand which seems to represent an amorphous collectivity rather than an individuation of origin, evasive of responsibility.

In addition to the facilitation of communications and aids to the freedom of trade emphasised as of prime concern to the institutions of state, Ferguson appends "the maintenance of coinage and credit" which avoids "the inconvenience of barter." (47)

So it is as an agency for the avoidance of inconvenience that Ferguson visualises the state in economic capacity and possibly in its wider context. Were metaphor permitted to Ferguson's scenario we might venture to liken his state to a major domo of the household rather than a sovereign and even metaphysical power of Hegelian colour.

As the life of the Highland Scot is particularly indebted to the sea, it is not surprising to find that Ferguson stresses "the safety or defence of the commonwealth" as resting on "the wisdom of encouraging seamanship." (48) Such "encouragement" does indeed venture beyond the mere efficiency syndrome.

Even for the minimal function of "facilitation" revenues are needed. "Once these came directly from individual to individual feudal lord; then from demesne lands to feudal sovereigns, only later from taxes levied from labour and the estates of the people."
At this point Ferguson may have been struck by the perfunctoriness of his overview of the principles of political science; he may also have retained strong memories of "the taxation" and "representation" motif of the Colonies in which he played so active a part. So for such reasons it seems he is tempted to enter into more detail on "maxims" of taxation of which the foremost is that "the interests of the state and the people are the same". (50)

Private estates of individuals must never "be unnecessarily" taxed under "the pretence of public concern", for this would be "self-defeating". Security of individual property must be assured so that the diversification of taxation may help to apportion burdens "at least in appearance." (52)

Public provision from taxation is a question of "public oeconomy and good policy, rather than a moral duty." (53) It is "a wise maxim in every well ordered society, that no person able to earn his bread, should be maintained gratuitously" and "they only who have no bread and are unable to earn it, should be maintained." (54) This may be given a harsh interpretation but it pairs with "from each according to his ability and to each according to his need."

Taxation must not be punitive on individuals; since "private interest is the great principle of lucrative arts or accumulation of wealth, it is material to the prosperity of nations." (55) Here Ferguson seems to have succumbed to a materialism alien to stoicism but he accepts that "well ordered societies" need a prosperity based on capital accumulation.
Stoicism in the form of frugality resurfaces after capitation tax, land tax, monopoly tax, customs and excise have been briefly reviewed as sources of revenue. It is now on debt and borrowing that Ferguson focusses his attention. "Borrowing on the credit of the state resembles the vicissitudes of the gaming table."(56) "It is wise as the public occasion may tend to accumulate debt, that there should be public regulation also, tending to diminish it"; a foretaste of sinking fund theory but presented in "the manner of the balance of universal order through the system of nature." Even taxation must be brought to the school of nature, through the concept of balance, or moderation.

So Ferguson presents his brief yet effective survey of the instruments of "state facilitation" which will enable the individual to be sustained in his choices towards happiness. The whole of his political science and its economic aspects are founded on the moral science to which he had devoted such greater effort.

Now Ferguson moves to his final coda expressing the quintessence of the relationship between individual and society.

He has explored the relationship between individual and other. He has placed initial and greatest stress on the individual's consciousness of self and his power to choose and to act on that choice. He has related concern for and with self, derived from a natural drive to self-preservation, to a concern for the other through benevolence, ingredient in self-preservation. He has seen the extension of the individual's concern for the other to all such others in the human species. He has viewed the individual as "citizen" but shown that his integrity as individual is paramount.
and that on such integrity the benefits of the state will depend.

All this tends to leave a hiatus in regard to the relationship between Individual and Group which is the stuff of the sociological area of social-science. Individual to Individual; Individual to Mankind; Individual to State; leaves the nexus between Individual and Society, if that is to be considered in any other terms than of total humanity or of civic sense, less clearly defined.

In the early approaches to the biological development of man Ferguson gives some consideration to the family and, extended in Scottish context, although less explicitly to the clan. For although Ferguson was of the company of enlightened men and women; although he founded a science, society and was honoured by a German one; he always places the individual as prime and so side steps the elements of association in terms of say, corporate or group processes.

Liberty must not be conceived in libertarian manner for moderation must always prevail -
"the zealot for liberty" runs from the "wildest disorders" for it is "not an exemption from all restraint, but rather the most effectual applications of every just restraint to all members of a free society, whether they be magistrates or subjects" that"ensures true liberty". (57)

Indeed the restraints themselves must be moderate for "There is no infringement of liberty more sensible felt than a teasing imposition of frivolous observance." (58) The rule of civil law itself must be subjected to such qualification.

Never advocating rebellion and revolution, Ferguson still
insists for every individual equal right of "self-defence". This is his civic extension of his premiss of self-preservation. Recalling that Ferguson has included possessions in use in his concept of self-preservation in their seeming extension of the self, "we must not mistake this for an assumption that all men have equal things to defend, or that liberty should consist in stripping the industrious and the skilful, who may have acquired much, to enrich the lazy and profligate." (59) Here is re-emphasis of his taxation theme and a clear rejection of an equalising socialist state.

Now Ferguson gets close to advocacy of the kind of civil society he prefers. Hereditary advantages must be admitted as "impossible and inexpedient to restrain": they are generational extensions of self-preservation. With the seeming concomitance of aristocratic power approved, "Liberty does not consist in the prevalence of democratic power ... and there is indeed no species of tyranny under which individuals are less safe than under that of a majority or prevailing factor of a corrupted people." (60)

Majorities are no more than de facto government until the "people at large" and "every individual" "by acquiescence give to the civil law its sanction and make it binding on those who avail themselves of the benefits bestowed." Missing no strand however minute in his endeavour, Ferguson recognises that women and children are excluded from the "political meetings of the people" as if this was faulty. The inclusion of children in his consideration is interesting and unique. Distinctions between citizen and alien are not clearly drawn but "anyone" who remains "within the precincts to which the civil laws extend and "continue to take benefit of them he is not at liberty to counteract or disturb the order of things established," presumably except on occasions of last resort.
"The people at large" will have to act through their representatives and then their liberty "depends more upon the character of the representative, than upon the form of the proceeding." (62) Individual representatives represent individual selectors but Ferguson never forgets the character of any participant in the cosmic scene including his own.

Ferguson closely follows his mentor Montesquieu in emphasising a tripartite division of the institutions of state. Among these the "judiciary" or "magistracy" is given primacy. For by the "discretionary powers" wielded by the judicature, subject to courts of appeal and the occasional tribunal by jury, "the citizen is given all the security which it is possible to obtain through the medium of any human establishment." (63) Such discretionary power brings to the civil law the same element of flexibility that he adduces to "law" through tendency tactics. Here is a flavour of unwritten constitutions and case law with their adaptabilities.

Ferguson sums up the main purposes of his facilitatory government through its "instruments", as first, to "wield the strength of the community against foreign enemies"; second, "To repress the commission of wrongs at home" through such "legislation, jurisdiction and execution necessary to prevent the abuse of power." (64) Above all, Government is for "preserving the state" and creating those conditions conducive to the freedom within which the individual may make his choices towards happiness.

Our scientist will not share in that excess of interest in political science which, in company with comparable excesses in economic science and history, has created imbalance in social-scienc
All such presentation does not offer an ideal state of affairs but an examination of the realities of pragmatic situations. This does not make of Ferguson an idle commentator. His arguments are consistent and develop with deceptive ease from the one to the other. If his philosophy appears unscholastic and commonsensical these must not be the grounds for its rejection. Profundity must not mask the realities of political science which is very close to the decision choices of individuals in everyday life. These are sacrosanct and the institutions of state are to be assessed as they may impinge on those choices. As law without force is a dead letter and force "not less dangerous in the hands of the profligate rabble than it is in the hands of the usurper who would render them subject", the greater security lies in the free choices of individuals.

In true stoic cosmic manner, Ferguson must look beyond the nation. Whoever, be he subject or magistrate who would be exempt from the restraints of the law "is an enemy of mankind." Here civil or national law is transformed into what will, with foresight, be seen as an international law which resembles "natural" law ever based on self-preservation with benevolence.

Anthropologist that he was, Ferguson is not prepared to pontificate across frontiers, for the supposed best system. "We are for the most part, ill qualified to decide what is happy or miserable in the condition of other men at a distance."(66)

We are offered a list of democratic, aristocratic, monarchic, ochlocratic,(67) tyrannical systems from among which we may choose. But, presenting all these forms in what we assess is for him a matter of small consequence, Ferguson asks this pertinent question -
"To what government should we have recourse or under what roof should we lodge?"  "The first answer, no doubt, is the present!"  (68)

And, with obvious reflection on the American Revolution which he had witnessed at close quarters and with foresight of the French, "Beware you take away so much of your support that the roof may fall in" and "for forms of Government let fools contest, The best administered is always best."  (69)

Errors of choice will be committed wherever men are free to think, to act and such freedoms are the sign of "vigorous" government. For "congregations of men must not be considered as aggregates of quiescent materials but as convocations of living and active natures" in whom to err is human.

"The amount of this argument, relating to the felicity of nations, may be summed up in these comprehensive though vague expressions, That the felicity of nations is proportioned to the degree in which every citizen is safe, and is most perfect where every ingenuous or innocent effort of the human mind is encouraged, where government devolves on the wise, and where the inoffensive though weak are secure."

Whatever the government, in any situation, the individual may be wretched or unhappy. "Clodius was a wretch in the abuse of freedom which he took up in the midst of disorder and faction; and Helvidius of Thrace was happy, though under a tyranny, by which their country was oppressed."  These may be thought frail examples by "A national spirit is frequently transient.... it comes, like a useless weapon, to be laid aside after its end is attained."  (70)
Ultimately the kind of government is immaterial to the contented mind which rests its contentment and happiness on the choices it has made in a spirit of self-preservation and benevolence. The moral science of the individual deriving from the nature of the cosmos will prove more important than the political, which it acknowledges but over which it will prevail.

"Everyone indeed is answerable only for himself; and, in preserving the integrity of the citizen, does what is required of him for the happiness of the state." (71/2)

If it is argued that Ferguson was not a profound philosopher and it might be so argued, then we must be alert to such criticism. But that he was indeed a professor of philosophy at Edinburgh at the time of Great Enlightenment, cannot be ignored. That academic philosophers were called upon to fulfil different functions from those of today must be acknowledged. Their remits were in the "sciences" as well as in "philosophy". They were close to, although emergent from, a Baconian age of panopticism from which their broad involvement may be seen as thin generalisation before intellectual division of labour advanced the specialist. It is no bad thing to reflect on the equal dangers of too broad or too narrow an approach to research and presentation. We see Ferguson as treading a careful path between the extremes in accordance with his nature.

But if philosophy today places importance on its verbalisations, then much of Ferguson's offering will prove acceptable. If philosophers place importance on the logic and rhetoric of ordinary language and the clarity of argument through such language, then Ferguson will be acceptable. If the pragmatic schools of e.g. the USA are still debated, then Ferguson will be
acceptable. If the existentialism of the Continent of Europe is worth consideration, then Ferguson's arguments which often approach to it, will also be worth debate and consideration. If the metaphysical/pragmatic influences of Kant are seen still to exert some dominance than we can place Ferguson in the train of that intenser proponent of an universal ethic. If Stoicism is seen as a philosophy worthy of acceptance or of challenge then Ferguson is a clear proponent of such a philosophy. If modern proponents of a philosophy of ethics such as Williams, find their field in poor state, then Ferguson may have something very worthwhile to offer.

In all this we have approached Ferguson from the sidelines of philosophical/social-science if such, in spite of Winch, be permitted to fields of proper research and enquiry. We are sure that he is social-scientist although not in that nomenclature. We find that his ethic, whether considered as scientific or not, offers an ingredient to social-science whose relative absence we deplore. Such an ethic is grounded in his total philosophy. His a posteriori approaches do not seem to invalidate his argument even if the circle in which it is argued is thought too small, too self-involved and self-supporting. For Ferguson too has his a priori metaphysical viewpoints which he does not ignore but accepts as data for his current enterprises.

With these reflections in mind we are happy to present this critique of his largely overlooked works and link them with possible improvements in social-science, aware as we are of criticisms of Ferguson's profundity.

It might well be that if, in the Pantheon, Kant reads
Ferguson's Principles, or more importantly meets the man, he might assess all in the light of further work that he himself purposed to be called "Metaphysics of Nature" -

"In the present work (73) I look for the patient hearing and the impartiality of a judge; in the other for the goodwill and assistance of a co-labourer. . . . Deduced conceptions cannot be presented a priori but must be gradually discovered . . . . but this will be rather amusement than a labour."

Such a work was never to be achieved.

Ferguson's work has not, of course, the stature of a Kant. We do not know whether he was conversant with the Critiques. We do find that the Scottish Philosopher's work shows a light which is not extinguished alongside his great continental contemporary.
Chapter Seven
(1) PMPS ii p3
(2) PMPS ii p10
(3) PMPS ii p12
(4) Ferguson often quotes The Rambler without numbered reference
(5) Was Ferguson or Smith the originator of this concept or neither?

Carlyle: "A quarrel with his old friend Adam Smith which later
forgetting old sores he took his sedan chair and went to visit
the companion of bright days, and sat by the sick bed as
peaceful and companionable as if they had never passed each
other by in the High St." In Rae "Life of Adam Smith" 1895 p433
It is possible that the quarrel originated in or from the
division of labour argument which was general knowledge.

(6) PMPS ii p15
(7) PMPS ii p20
(8) PMPS ii p20
(9) PMPS ii p27
(10) PMPS ii p37
(11) PMPS ii p63
(12) PMPS ii p51

A novel but considered as drawing on much valid
contemporary material.

(15) Hume Treatise Vol. II Section iii
(16) PMPS ii p123 Ferguson's italics

(17) PMPS ii p124
(18) PMPS ii p126
(19) PMPS ii p134
(20) PMPS ii p133
(21) PMPS ii p150
(22) PMPS ii p157
(23) PMPS ii p180
There is an interest in Hobbes today that goes beyond the political to his materialism and his moral philosophy. Such interest evokes very varying estimates of his intentions, and his worth as is seen in the above collection.

It may well be that the complexity and obscurity of much of Hobbes' writings and the fact that the Latin texts call for revised translation, that makes this so fruitful an area of debate and scholarship.

There is no doubt that those who have specialised in Hobbes offerings display great divergences of opinion. Some find in him scorn of a metaphysic: others see his obsession with (at least the word) God, as evidence of a religious metaphysic. Some insist on his psychological interest; we would be moved to consider Hobbes' own psychological constraints. Consistency in his works is strongly supported only to be challenged by others in terms of the relationship between his moral science and political exposition.

Emphasising as we do that all philosophers and other workers reflect to large degree their own propensities and environmental circumstance, we note together Hobbes' own emphasis on Fear and his citizenship in politically dangerous times. His outlook is very different from the fearless Ferguson.

(24) Locke J "Two Treatises of Government" 1690
(25) PMPS iip193 and 235
(25a) PMPS iip247
(25b) PMPS iip233

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(26a) Hobbes "Leviathan" Pt.II Ch.XVIII opening paragraphs.
(30) Locke op.cit.
(31) PMPS iip272
(32) PMPS iip292
(33) PMPS iiP291/2
(34) PMPS iiP296
(35) PMPS iiP411
(36) PMPS iiP416
(37) PMPS iiP417
(38) PMPS iiP418/9

(41) Ferguson The Essay p.
(42) PMPS iiP93
(43) Forbes op. cit.
(44) PMPS iiP428
(45) PMPS iiP430
(46) PMPS iiP426
(47) PMPS iiP425
(48) PMPS iiP429
(49) PMPS iiP430
(50) PMPS iiP434
(51) PMPS iiP435
(52) PMPS iiP435
(53) PMPS iiP373
(54) PMPS iiP372
(55) PMPS iiP433
(56) PMPS iiP451
(57) PMPS iiP458
(58) PMPS iiP459
(59) PMPS iiP463
(60) PMPS iiP463
(61) PMPS iiP473
(62) PMPS iiP474
(63) PMPS iiP481 (our italics)
(64) PMPS iiP465
(65) PMPS iiP482
(66) PMPS iiip508

(67) Ochlocratic - rule by mob

(68) PMPS iiip496/7 Ferguson seldom uses italics and this is the only occasion noted of an exclamation mark.

(69) PMPS iiip500

(70) PMPS iiip224

(71) PMPS ii final sentence

(72) See Note E

(73) Kant Critique of Pure Reason Final Paragraph of the Preface to the First Edition
CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

It is the coherent thread of Ferguson's philosophy and its undogmatic tone after assertion of his basic premisses that impresses. His dogmatism in premiss may be taken as evidence of a lack of philosophical profundity but foundations must be laid and it is possible, accepting his development, that had he found error in his casting he would have been willing to recast in the manner of the trial and error or iteration on which he lays such stress in the application of human choice. He might also have made appeal to misinterpretations of his verbalisations which he always saw, with so many philosophers, as falsifying intention, in spite of his own care to make clear beyond mistake.

He would not have yielded any ground on his basic premisses of man "conscious of himself" and with freedom to choose and to rectify choice in the search for happiness dictated by a primary urge to self-preservation always enlightened by, or shot through with, benevolence. His wordy and repetitious extension of these premisses must not mask the coherence and step-by-step extension and development of these premisses which we see as his important contribution to ethics, to social-science and possibly to philosophy as a whole.

He has no identity with any "school" nor does he attempt to develop any "ism": he vehemently denies any such aim. The very Enlightenment against the background of which he thought and worked, seems to have been a loose consortium of individual contributions, rather than a "school" in the unifying sense of that term. His deliberate isolation may have been satisfying to his personality
and to an open-minded student body but it probably contributed largely to his eclipse by movements more consonant with the directions which Hume and Smith were to spearhead and which emanated from more humanistic and less scientific bases.

Ferguson needed to be as free in his philosophising as he advocated as basis to the individual's choice in all fields. Yet where he finds his theses in agreement with other philosophers, as with the Stoics, he does not ignore nor deny his source. Yet he will remould their efforts in his own terms.

To support his basic premisses, he does not enter into ontological argument. Yet he does not ignore ontology for deus sive natura is for him datum. Man, through nature or through god, is there and Ferguson seems to see no need for debate of essence and existence: he looks forward from the existing present towards a future determined by present choice, rather than resting on a discussion of origins. In this he conforms to a stoic concept of timelessness which compacts the tenses. Origins of the universe and the causes of god and nature are matters which he ignores. He is present and activity oriented rather than perplexed by or involved in causation. Although he is sometimes visionary metaphysician and frequently moralist, it is on the extension of his scientific ethic in terms of human practicability that he insists, rather than on impracticable utopianisms or flights of metaphorical fancy. In this we may see associations with the Commonsense approaches of Reid.

Ferguson does not debate the mind/body problem. For him the individual is integer and such a dichotomy would undermine the integrity with which he views his man. His derogations of man's "belly" and "four quarters" at the expense of "mind", "spirit" or
"conscience" is made to emphasise the need to balance the two aspects in which man is so frequently viewed. Man's tendency frequently to choose for what seems to lead to happiness through physical or bodily ease arises through the ever present possibility of choice in error through paramount freedom. In harmony and balance "body" must be served and Ferguson is not so dogmatic a stoic as to suggest that deprivation must be deliberate. This is either common sense or reason: perhaps the philosophers of sens commun are reasonable. Man's part in the universe of nature, in his assurance that he will not be misled ultimately by his god or his nature, will ensure that what is called "mind" and what is called "body" will remain in harmony and integrity.

Ferguson is no formal logician although he briefly alludes to the "is" or "is not" of Aristotelian logic. It can be cogently argued that the logic of his presentation lies in the rectitude of the development of his premisses through careful word and style, although there are those who deplore his "wordiness" and are out of sympathy with his style. The "openhandedness" of rhetoric is substituted in Ferguson for a closer and possibly restricting logic.

A science of ethics, if such there is, having established what may be seen as a meta-ethical construct, will extend towards normative offerings. It is unthinkable that any ethical philosophy can leave unresolved the human choices and actions in terms of which it is expressed and from which humans pursue their roads. It is difficult to disentangle what has come to be termed "ethical" from what has come to be termed "moral", the former retaining something of an a priori, theoretical or meta-ethical connotation and the latter that of practical application in the mores of a culture. It is probably from such a confrontation that the dilemmas
of a Williams or a Hare arise. Ferguson's ethical formulations depend on the universal and god-given nature of man: he feels that they can be expressed in scientific and theoretical terms. His rhetoric and expansions in his lectures to students needed more words and more space than the basic science demonstrated but there was no divorce between the two but a logical outcome.

Ferguson would have insisted that his premisses, if accepted, would certainly lead to the conclusions that he painstakingly draws in terms of a verity that he seeks and is sure of finding, so far as the human condition is concerned. It scarcely matters whether that process be termed scientific or logical or not.

Ferguson's leaning towards an evolutionism drawn from the "nature" of the universe, causes him to rest heavily on the senses for his assessment of that verity. He seems to reject the possibili that the senses mislead or that man is misled by his nature or by his god or by such appearances as those of perspective or unusual condition. Man will err in choice but his very nature will permit him to correct his error because of the loss of happiness that his erroneous choice will have caused. Such happiness, of spirit as well as body, infused with the benevolence that accompanies self-preservation, is indicator and guarantor of the integrity which will make of him an acceptable or healthy part of the universal whole. In such corrigibility of error lies the potential for improvement. Ferguson gives a hint of yet unknown "senses" derived from animal kingdoms or other worlds infusing, supplementing or even replacing those yet analysed.

Such choice, such error, such experience, engender the "knowledge" of what will achieve happiness and sustain man's integri
Ferguson sees knowledge as directly originating from the senses and as an "extension" of instinct. Sensation, grounded in instinct, according to the nature of the universe, is common to although variant in all men. It will not mislead although man may err in the choices he is free to make from such instinctive, sensation-grounded knowledge. Instinct and origins do not deny total freedom since in the cosmic scene there appears to be a built-in capacity for the originating impulse to accept as almost profitable the possibility of error and correction.

While extensions of knowledge rest on habit, memory, imagination and testimony, consciousness and perception from the senses are prime for knowledge, deepened by the reflecting individual to a knowledge "most sure" which defies scepticism. Inference is a weaker force but must be accepted to make a way through the infinitude of external things among which choice must be made. Without such perception and inference Ferguson says the individual would turn in on himself in a scepticism of incipient insanity.

Armed with such primary and extended knowledge the individual can make his choices but this knowledge is not presented by Ferguson as yielding "truth". He sees "truth" as the "noumenal" beyond present reach, with the exposition of the knowledge of the phenomenal as all that is "necessary" for man. He seems to hold out more ultimate possibility than does Kant of the "necessary" penetrating the "noumenal" or meta-physical at some juncture. Such is possibly his approach from knowledge to truth in his pilgrimage from pragmatics to metaphysics on the basis of his moral science.

With Ferguson's ontology largely by-passed; his logic largely
rhetorical and verbose; his epistemology evading truth for human certainties; his evasiveness in regard to laws emergent from the vaguenesses of the terms "nature" and "natural"; what then has the philosopher Ferguson to offer to the philosopher, the philosopher of ethics and to the social-scientist?

Ferguson's contribution seems to lie in his emphasis on the responsibility of the individual to cause to disclose and then to promote an ethic which will preserve himself and thence his society and mankind. Preservation moreover is not ossification since the freedom of the individual, paramount in Ferguson's ethic, yields room for a correction even allied with error which makes possible movement towards improving changes in the human condition. If in social context such responsibility were to be lifted from the shoulders of the individual, invested in society and imposed on him anew in corporate manner, then progress might be stifled from its root-stock in individuals.

Such is the tenour of Ferguson's exposition of the relationship between individual and society. Our interest in it is twofold. First, the insistence on the importance and primacy of an ethical debate and contribution to social-science. Second, to suggest the need to adjust the balance between social and individual within the context of social-science, which Ferguson does without destroying the need for such a science, itself balanced in terms of its participant sciences.

We examine his work from the viewpoint of a social-scientist who explores the philosophy where investigation is rather of processes than origins or reasons. Ferguson does this and his premisses, arguments and conclusions are worthy of debate in a moder social-science where the ethical and the philosophical are not prime
considerations.

We believe that Ferguson correctly assesses the balance between individual freedom and social health, with his emphasis on the former providing a welcome corrective to the imbalance caused by emphasis on the latter during a following century of social theorising.

Even if Ferguson's contribution were to be represented as mere moralising and that his ethic is an autobiographical one in which he posits as "good" what he says is so, there are caveats to such criticisms. First, this may be true of any ethical philosopher. Second, pace Stevenson, every presentation of an ethic may be seen as moved by emotivism based largely on the propounder or his school. Third, if as we suggest, Ferguson was able to propound a universalism in humanity in which he, as human, partook, then the criticism loses its bite.

Ferguson's normative ethical guidance for the individual is clear. Because he was philosopher, scientist, zoologist, biologist by inclination and in the terms of his day, he stresses species and particularly that in which he plays his part. He finds that the rectitude or morality that may inhere in the species, is more satisfactorily left in the hands of the individual than in adventitious groupings, consortia or majorities. His denigration of majority rule as possibly degenerate "olchocratic", in political terms, indicates his assessment of a possibly greater "purity" emerging from that "atom" of societies, the individual.

His theological approach to his ethic is vague. He seems to visualise a beneficent creator who has made man as part of the nature with which He equates. Man's part in the created whole
is free to the extent that such freedom guarantees the species; it is not clear whether freedom extends beyond that. Granted his and his species ability to continue to correct errors, he and his species will progress through the "happiness" of a "good" process. Such a "good" process is seen as leading towards a perfection, in hope, either in this world, in a world to come not yet envisaged, or in other worlds undiscovered and unknown. From such an ethic emerges a metaphysical approach which seems to attempt to penetrate the noumenal and offer a prospect for man's choices, beyond the phenomenal as presently sensed.

This thesis offers Ferguson to the philosopher/social-scientist with hopeful pleasure.
NOTES

A  Concerning Adam Smith's "Theory of Moral Sentiments"

B  Concerning some interpretations of Ferguson

C  Concerning Comte's terminology

D  MacRae's comments on Ferguson's eclipse

E  Ferguson and Sartre

F  Ferguson's footnotes in The Principles

G  Gaelic and the is/ought debate

H  Ferguson's Unpublished Essays

J  Extracts from "The Scotsman" on the Enlightenment
NOTE A Concerning Adam Smith's "Theory of Moral Sentiments"

In spite of the fact that Adam Smith's "Theory of Moral Sentiments" has been supposed to provide evidence that he balanced his economic/wealth/commercial/industrial concepts with those as strongly ethical, we are prepared to give credence to the comments of Thomas Wilson in a final paragraph on The Essays.\(^{(1)}\). There he concludes that while the introduction to the volume has emphasised the extent to which Smith's views on moral philosophy were carried over into his writings on economics etc., it would be going too far to claim a satisfactory synthesis.

In any event, for our purposes, the general acclaim of and interest in Smith's contribution to nineteenth century thinking through "The Wealth of Nations" which was by far the greatest of his influences, reduces his appositeness to this research.

We need only select a few of Smith's dicta from the Theory\(^{(2)}\) to indicate the superficiality of his approach to ethics in comparison with those shown by Ferguson in the development of his "science" of ethics.

"The wise author of nature has in this manner, taught man to reject the sentiments and judgments of his brothers." p.128

"Happiness in this life is thus upon many occasions dependent upon the humble hope and expectations of a life to come." p.132

"The pleasure of wealth and greatness rouses and keeps in continual motion the industry of mankind." p.179

"The wise and virtuous man is at all times willing that his private interest should be sacrificed to the public interest"p23!

Since during and in the aftermath of the first Industrial Revolution there has accumulated much adulation of Smith (to say nothing of Hume) it may be found interesting to consider some
opinions of them by their contemporaries in the Scottish
Enlightenment with whom they were in close and almost daily contact.

"Without doubt you have read what is called "The Life of
David Hume" written by himself, with the letter from Dr.Adam Smith
subjoined to it. Is not this an age of daring effrontery? My friend
Mr. Anderson, Professor of Natural Philosophy at Glasgow, at whose
house you and I supped, and to whose care Mr. Windham of Norfolk was
entrusted at that University, paid me a visit lately; and after we
had talked with indignation and contempt of the poisonous productions
with which this age is infested, he said there was now an excellent
opportunity for Dr.Johnson to step forth. I agreed with him that
you might knock Hume's and Smith's heads together and make vain and
ostentatious infidelity exceedingly ridiculous. Would it not
be worth your while to crush such noxious weeds in the moral
garden?"

Speaking of some verse - "Dr.Adam Smith who was present
observed in his decisive professorial manner: "very Well - Very Well
but Johnson dissent to a degree." In a footnote to this - "The
difference between Johnson and Smith is apparent even in this slight
instance. Smith was a man of extraordinary application, and had his
mind crowded with all manner of subjects; but the force, acuteness
and vivacity of Johnson were not to be found there. He had book-
keeping so much in his thoughts and was so chary of what might be
turned to account in that way, that he once said to Sir Joshua
Reynolds, that he made it a rule when in company, never to talk of
what he understood. Beauclerk had for a short time a pretty high
opinion of Smith's conversation. Garrick, after listening to him for
a while, as to one of whom his expectations had been raised, turned
slyly to a friend and whispered him "What do you say of this? eh?
flabby, I think."
Boswell speaking of the reverend Dr. Knox, Master of Tunbridge School - "It were to be wished that he had imitated that great man (Johnson) in every respect, and had not followed the example of Dr. Adam Smith, in ungraciously attacking his alma mater Oxford. It must, however, be observed that he is much less to blame than Smith; he only objects in certain particulars; Smith to the whole institution; though indebted for much of his learning to an exhibition which he enjoyed, for many years at Balliol College."(5)

Such Boswellian glosses on attitudes to Smith may be dismissed as mere gossip but they give some hint of contemporary opinion.

In more recent tone: "As far as I know very little of value has been written on Smith's ethical theories, which have never been very valuable."(6)

References
(1) Essays on Adam Smith's collected works ed. Skinner & Wilson Oxford 1975
(3) Boswell's Johnson, Everyman Paperback from date 1777 p.87
(4) Boswell op. cit. pp332/3 (1780)
(5) -do- p592 (1784)
(6) Dr. E. Butler of the Adam Smith Institute in letter to writer 18 Feb.1981
NOTE B  Concerning some interpretations of Ferguson

There is indeed divided opinion as to Ferguson's merit in the few commentaries. Lehmann(1) among other opinion, finds Ferguson realistic, critical and empirical, so rejecting Sorokin's dismissal of Ferguson as offering substitute speech reactions or painful elaborations of the obvious.(2)

We have been at pains to stress Ferguson's insistence on the Individual in the Individual/Social syndrome and prefer to grant him social-science rather than sociological status. Huth attributes to Ferguson, as do many of his continental commentators, a societal or sociological approach to the study of humanity, to the practical denial of an appreciation of the individual over against society. In this, says Lehmann, Huth "shoots distinctly above the mark".(3) Indeed it reduces any confidence we might have had in Huth's scholarship.

References:  (1) Lehmann op.cit. p.26
(2) Sorokin "Contemporary Sociological Theories" N.Y.1928 p.ix
(3) Lehmann op.cit.pp.25 and 27
NOTE C Concerning Comte's Terminology

Even if we concede that Comte's introduction of the term "sociologie" was intended to be closer to what Aristotle intended by "social science" than most manifestations of "sociology", yet we suggest that Comte evaded or did not face the issue of the importance of a specialised study of ethics in his initial expansion of his key term by the blanket assumption of its "covering phénomomenons sociaux"

Deploring "néologismes systematiques" he introduces this "terme nouveau" "exactement équivalent à mon expression, déjà introduite, de physique sociale, afin de pouvoir désigner par un mot unique cette partie complémentaire de la philosophie naturelle qui se rapporte à l'étude de l'ensemble des lois fondamentales propres aux phénoménones sociaux" (1)

Aitken notes that Comte "gave the science of sociology its unfortunate name" (2). We remain unsure whether the name has led the field astray or whether the field would have strayed despite the name.

We ourselves have tried to assure an emphasis on the scientific character of our enterprise, with the qualifications of that character set out in the body of the thesis, as well as on the need for balanced contribution from the various partners in that science (including "sociology") by an unremitting use of the hyphen in social-science. This indicates the same overall synthesis of the disparate parts that "science" bears to its constituents such as chemistry, physics etc. etc.

References

(1) Comte A Cours de philosophies positive Paris 1939
(2) Aiken H intro. to "The Age of Ideology"
"A fascinating question remains; why did sociology not develop directly out of the theories and analyses of Ferguson and Millar, the eighteenth-century use of comparative sources - historical and ethnographic - which were far more extensive and exact than most people today believe?"

"The ingredients of a developing and worthwhile discipline even though without a specific name (and it is easy to forget how recent are the specific names of some of the major divisions of natural science: names are sometimes magical) were in existence by the time of Ferguson's death. Men as intelligent as Mill knew their Ferguson, but could not see the point of "Civil Society". Comte named the discipline but distorted its content."

We have suggested several possible answers to MacRae's questions in our main thesis.
NOTE E  Concerning Ferguson and Sartre

While the notion of "god" has largely been altered and often rejected, there is in most philosophies, an insistence on an essence of some kind which precedes the existence of men.

Sartre wishes to dispense entirely with the idea of "god" and to insist that the existence of man is prime and rests entirely on his shoulders. This can be criticised as nonsense since man is born as man with all the incipient characteristics of his origin, his shape and his potential.

However granting this originating criticism, Sartre's arguments from there on bear a striking resemblance to those of, and even sometimes the very words of, Ferguson. Sartre rejects, Ferguson tends to ignore, the complexities and unanswerabilities of origin. Ferguson is more interested in what comes after inception, which is datum for him, than in probing the metaphysics of beginnings.

(1) "Atheistic existentialism, of which I am representative, declares .... that if god does not exist there is at least one being whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or, as Heidigger has it, the human reality. What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world - and defines himself afterwards. If man as the existentialist sees him is not definable, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. Thus, there is no human nature, because
"there is no god to have a conception of it. Man simply is. Not that he is simply what he conceives of himself, but he is what he wills, and as he conceives himself after already existing - as he wills to be after that leap towards existence. Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism. And this is what people call "subjectivity" using the word as a reproach against us. But what do we mean to say by this, but that man is of a greater dignity than a stone or a table? For we mean to say that man primarily exists - that man is before all else, something which propels itself towards a future, and is aware that it is doing so. Man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life, instead of being some kind of moss, or a fungus or a cauliflower. Before that projection of self nothing exists; not even in the heaven of intelligence: man will only attain existence when he is what he purposes to be. Not, however, what he may wish to be. For what we usually understand by wishing or willing is a conscious decision taken - much more often than not after we have made ourselves what we are. I may wish to join a party, to write a book or to marry - but in such a case what is usually called my will is probably a manifestation of a prior and more spontaneous decision. If, however, it is true that existence is prior to essence, man is responsible for what he is. Thus the first effect of existentialism, is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely on his own shoulders."

Considering this extract from Sartre and bearing in mind -
that he is a philosopher -

a) in the cartesian tradition of man knowing himself

b) in the bergsonian tradition of man as faber moved to self improvement through an élan vital,
c) in the revolutionary tradition of rejecting a religious approach to philosophy,

d) in the literary tradition which permits such metaphors as "leaps",

it is in the last sentence of the above quotation that we find especial interest. Here is an apologia for subjective individualism which bears close resemblance to Ferguson's final sentence of the Principles.

It might be worthwhile reflecting on the close relationship between Gallic and Gaelic, evidenced both in language and in history.
NOTE F Ferguson's Footnotes in The Principles

Epictetus (Arrian)
Marsden History of Sumatra
Cicero de amicitii
Rousseau Origin de l'inégalité
Reid Inquiry into Mind
Dalrymple Sir D ip108
Cicero de natura diorum
Rambler 35 ip13
Newton Principia
Alison Essays on the Nature & Principles of Taste ip24
Pere Buffier ip27
de la Rouchefoucault Benevolence and Valour ip41
Sparman Hottentots ip50
Helvetius de l'Esprit ip72
Epictetus Encheiridion ip74
Tatler ip92
Rambler ipp94/5/6
Newton Regulae philosophandi ip181
Socrates apud Xen. on Habit ip209
Johnson Dictionary on Ambition ip235
Jones Sir W translation of Hindoo verses on Creation ip274
my Lord Bacon Science is fruitful of arts ip282
Shaftesbury The Moralist or Rhapsody ip289
Alison Principles of Taste sec. 21d part 1st
Rousseau Contrat Social ip218
Becaria Marquis Crime and Punishment ip220
Thucidides lib.ii.c45 and Gray's Elegy "action not end of purpose" ip327
Chremes in Terence Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto ip350
Virgil lib 6 ip359
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<td>93</td>
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<td>de corpore politico part I Chap II sect.1</td>
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<td>Temple Sir W</td>
<td>Business in the diversion of man</td>
<td>388</td>
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<td>Macbeth</td>
<td>394</td>
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<td>Wealth of Nations</td>
<td>427</td>
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<td>Maritis</td>
<td>Travels into Cyprus and Syria</td>
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NOTE G Concerning Scottish Gaelic, the future tense and the is/ought debate.

Scottish Gaelic originally had no future tense. As in modern Welsh the inherited present tense has largely future meaning and the present time is expressed by the present tense form of the substantive verb and preposition with the verbal noun.

There are two meanings commonly of the verb "to be" - a substantive verb with the meaning roughly "to exist" and a linking verb as in "John is a boy" or "the sky is blue". (1)

These points are of philosophical interest in discussions centring round the is/ought debate and ontological theory. Ferguson does not refer directly to these matters as such but Scot and Gael that he was, his thinking would have been coloured by such linguistic fundamentals.

An apparent simplicity in Ferguson's concept of the correct choice should not blind us to its importance; allied as it was with a concept of timelessness in stoic fashion. It might offer to the is/ought debate a simple solution which more sophisticated systems, according to Williams, have not clarified.

The substantive "is" gives little cause for debate here: "ought" is more complex and the stuff of ethics.

"Ought" can be presented as deontic, a priori, god or nature given, institution given, culture given or individual-idiosyncratic. All these have a past determining flavour. Or it can be considered as teleological, idealistic, with a flavour of the future.

However, Ferguson in his time-compact presentations, seems
to emphasise the fundamental unity of is with ought. Is, chosen now, can be rectified with hindsight to become another is, which can be viewed as the ought of the mistaken is and so on...

Such an approach can be contrasted with the dialectic of an "is" confronted with an "is other" leading to an "is-other-other" which offers no obvious factor of ought.

The individual's own projection of his "is" which leads him to recognition of his error, even if that recognition is only partial seems already to contain an incipient and developing ought.

Such an "ought" might be approached through rectification by rejection or through hypothesis tested and found capable of falsifying, with injunction to "try again" or "go back to square one". New methods of systematic analysis show such an approach.
Concerning The Unpublished Essays of Adam Ferguson

These are in the archives of the Library of the University of Edinburgh. Handwritten and often difficult to decipher, it is not strange that they have not excited much attention. Lehmann limits himself to listing their titles but seems not to have explored them further. MacRae has little opinion of them (1).

For the present writer, it is the Principles that seem best to encapsulate Ferguson's thinking: the Unpublished Essays provide emphasis, by specialised themes, on some of his basic concepts.

While we have drawn on them to support some of our conclusions, many of the essays are not directly related to this work. For this reason we have concluded that full presentation of these essays calls for a separate endeavour which, we believe, will further enhance the reputation of our Subject, although not falsifying our conclusions.

Here we content ourselves in drawing some additional attention to to the concepts of self-preservation with benevolence and the scientific aspirations of Ferguson.

Unpublished Essay Number 29 is the lynch-pin of the exploration of self-preservation and "selfishness" in relation to benevolence. We remind ourselves that this is the main thesis of Ferguson's ethic.

Were "self-preservation" to be related in our minds to the natural processes of biological life and its continuance, for individual and for species, as it was with Ferguson, that compound word might not be subject to a habit formed innuendo of blame that
usually assails it, especially in terms of the Christian ethic.

Ferguson is fearless in tackling this habitual verbalisation, degenerated as it had into a much criticised and even malignant presentation of solipsism. "Realist naturalist, Ferguson insists on the similarity that man shares with other animals, in the basic need for the preservation of the species, which he cannot abdicate.

For Ferguson it is the individual morality which prevails; the social moralist if he demands to differentiate may require a precedence of the well-being of others over that of self; the religious moralist sees duty to God as supreme over that of self or to other. Ferguson maintains that both the last named "set conscience at variance with the principles basic to his ethic."

Ferguson blatantly asserts that every individual's constant and unremitting care is for self and cannot be other. Benevolence is inherent in this self-preservation and safeguards others in relation to self; but he has no hesitation in giving to benevolence a secondary status.

Are we, Ferguson asks, to understand that social or religious morality would instruct the individual to repress self-love and impose self-neglect? Natural ethic gives to every individual the responsibility of his own charge, so that it is "a tyranny and illusion" to require him to prefer the welfare of others to his own. In proportion as a man is devoted to himself he is deeply concerned to know himself and thus to understand others.

One of the main reasons for the seeming conflict, lies in the supposition that self-interest lies in the preservation of property and circumstance, as if these were the self. But this self, which
the individual is charged to preserve, lies not in his properties and in his body, not in his food, not in his clothing, but in his mind, his affection, his purpose and his actions. The confusion of the conflict arises from a constant preoccupation, among even philosophers, with the material world and its appearances.

As it is in the minds and the extensions of mind, of individuals that we find the good constituents of happiness, so the wise man conceives that in maintaining himself in a state of being to achieve such happiness, he is not disinterested but "selfish in the best sense and in the highest degree."

True virtues stems from the happiness of the individual: individual happiness yields social well-being and both are oriented towards a perfection of being, which while infinite from individual origins, proceeds towards oneness.

In Essay Number Ten, Ferguson recognises the tricky undergrowth in trying to assess diversities of happiness. The future outcome of choice in relation to happiness is also recognised as a complicating factor. But Ferguson will never play the sceptic and "if this is difficult yet nevertheless it must be attempted or indecision and irresolution will prevail." It is better to be corrigibly in error than vacillating.

He will not generalise on happiness; it must be particularised for by generalisation "we confound the separation and distinction in which it (happiness) lies by supposed assemblage of combination." He does not enter into the social utilitarian attempt to summate or to transfer happiness.

The criterion of benevolence in carrying out "what is the
present moment you are called upon to do" (in terms of self-
preservation) will "yield that happiness which is constituent of most
enjoyment, and least suffering, but always considered from the
individual's assessment, rather than from assemblages or combinations

Essay Number 24 emphasises the misapplication of terms which
generates, for example, the slur on selfishness "which is in fact
the best manifestation of self-preservation." Inconsistencies
"in language argue an abuse of words" and lead us to forget that
"self" is not "belly" and "four quarters", not "body merely with
senses and appetites but a mind also conscious of itself." If this
were truly understood then the grievous mistake of considering
selfishness as an ill-wind "disappears."

Happiness will rest on choice and Ferguson's optimism in
seeing the beneficial effects of corrected choice are explored in
Essays Numbers 12 and 18. In the former "we are protected by our
competence to discern on the face of every event and action what is
right and what is wrong to do so that Good will (upon the whole)
prevail." "although we may err in choice (18) indeed "conscience
itself may fail" yet "as the mariner to keep his intended course
has only to guard his compass from disturbance, so the moralist
has only to study the distinction between right and wrong in the
choice he has to make on all occasions."

We ask: Is such confidence in endowment mistaken? Is such
optimism in the power of experience to amend defect misplaced?
Indeed is the whole of Ferguson's optimism over-sanguine or may we
glean from the simplicity of his basic premisses such confidence
that choices will indeed achieve ultimate happiness for self as
well as for others?
The individual must act. He must act on some prescription of choice between alternatives. Such choice is immediate and largely instinctive but corrigible in the light of experience and knowledge. It is productive of a more examinable happiness than attempts of social or religious origins.

Essay Number 22 yields some extension of his claim to "scientific" method. He stresses the dangers of language, concept and metaphor and the far greater danger of transferring from one "department" to another, language, concept and metaphor which are appropriate to the one alone.

Through subsumption of particulars a "theory of science" may emerge but although there are such special laws as for example, gravitation and motion which are specific to "mechanics", any application of such analogies to other departments of science will only mislead.

So, in the discussion of individual liberty, an analogy drawn from the physical sciences of impulse/motion is applied in cause/effect manner to what the individual does. But the mind conceives objects and chooses to act with no consciousness of such necessity as is triggered by the impulse/motion concept which places strictures of necessity on our liberty of choice which is always open to correction.

In such ways the Unpublished Essays relate to and enhance the Principles, without fundamentally altering anything to be found therein. They are repetitious indeed but with emphatic glosses which it is useful to note.
Recognising that the Unpublished Essays of Adam Ferguson are suited to detailed presentation in their own right and from their diversity of subject matter and that this has not been attempted, it is our purpose to do so in a future work. They go beyond the scope of this thesis.
NOTE: J

Some Extracts from an article in "The Scotsman" 9.4.83
(Paul Scott)
headed "Giants in the Land/"

"The Scotland of the Enlightenment was one of the great explosions of creative energy in the intellectual history of the world, and it was an explosion which still reverberates.... It was, said Sir Walter Scott, an age "when there were giants in the land.""

"We still have no coherent view .. of how it was that .. there was so abject a collapse in the following century.... It is only in the last few years that a number of books have begun the process of serious inquiry.... Much of this has been in America and there is every sign that we are now beginning a new revaluation of the Enlightenment movement in all its aspects."

"The 1986 conference of some 50 distinguished scholars (at the University of Edinburgh) will be an opportunity for Edinburgh at long last to do justice to the giants who, for a time, made it the intellectual capital of the world."
ADAM FERGUSON

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Edinburgh 1767  
London 3rd ed. 1768  4th 1773  5th 1782  6th 1793  
Boston 7th 1814  
Edinburgh 7th 1814  
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etc.

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