> *Dr. Hutcheson had the merit of being the first who distinguished with any degree of precision in what respect all moral distinctions may be said to arise from reason, and in what respect they are founded upon immediate sense and feeling. In his illustrations upon the moral sense he has explained this so fully, and, in my opinion, so unanswerably, that if any controversy is still kept up about this subject, I can impute it to nothing, but either to inattention to what that gentleman has written, or to a superstitious attachment to certain forms of expression, a weakness not very uncommon among the learned, especially in subjects so deeply interesting as the present, in which a man of virtue is often loath to abandon, even the propriety of a single phrase which he has been accustomed to. (TMS, pp. 320-1)*

Hutcheson was a very influential figure in the Scottish Enlightenment, and Sher goes as far as to comment that he was 'the father of Scottish academic moral philosophy during the age of the Enlightenment' (1985a, p. 167). He was a Presbyterian minister, and religion did influence his moral philosophy, as did the moral philosophy of the Enlightenment. Again, for Sher 'the Enlightenment in Scotland ... was largely an ecclesiastical and academic phenomenon' (1985a, p. 151). More precisely, 'Scottish moral philosophy, like Scottish "social science", had orthodox Presbyterian roots' (Sher 1985a, p. 44). This was a period, as discussed earlier, of change in religious thought, and Camic (1983, pp. 60-4) identifies this change in religious thought as being influential on the Scottish Enlightenment. He concludes that the move away from the pre-Galileo model is evidence of secularisation. This, however, is to ignore the religious context of the era. Camic has also been criticised by Sher (1985b, p. 741) for ignoring the Presbyterian influence on the Enlightenment. For Sher the Enlightenment was certainly not a secular movement, and the 'philosophical mentor Francis Hutcheson' (1985b, p. 741), was a minister of the Church.

This change in the religious thought of the era did influence Hutcheson and he 'brought God into his essentially Stoic discussion of moral theory as a replacement for the Stoic conception of fate' (Sher 1985a, p. 177). For the Stoics it is necessary to endure misfortune; for example, Marcus Aurelius states:

> Our life is warfare, and a mere pilgrimage. Fame after life is no better than oblivion. What is it then that will adhere and follow? Only one thing, philosophy. And philosophy doth consist in this, for a man to preserve that spirit which is within him, from all manner of contumelies and injuries. (1906, p. 17)

Hutcheson, despite being essentially Stoic in his approach, does depart from the Stoics on this point:

> When we despair of glory, and even of executing all the good we intend, 'tis a sublime exercise to the soul to persist in acting

> the rational and social part as it can; discharging its duty well, and committing the rest to God.... Thus the most heroick excellence, and its consequent happiness and inward joy, may be attained under the worst circumstances of fortune; nor is any station of life excluded from the enjoyment of the supreme good. (Hutcheson 1968, pp. 225-6)

For Hutcheson, then, it is 'the existence and perfection of God (that) save the Stoic system from ultimate pessimism and make happiness possible' (Sher 1985a, p. 177), and this brand of Christian Stoicism became the approach of the Scottish Enlightenment:

> Instead of employing this Stoic philosophy as a weapon against Christianity ... the Moderate literati followed Francis Hutcheson in using it as a foundation for a Christian Stoic approach to morality. With God instead of personal fate as the ultimate director of events and determiner of outcomes, Stoicism was stripped of its pessimistic, pagan attributes and reconciled with the promise--the threat--of the Scottish Presbyterian jeremiad, which taught that divine Providence rewards or punishes the people of Scotland or Britain as a whole according to the extent of their faithfulness to their ethical and religious 'covenant' with the Lord. (Sher 1985a, p. 325)

The first of the major philosophers was Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746). His reputation rests chiefly on his earlier writings, especially *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (London 1725), *Reflections upon Laughter and Remarks on the Fable of the Bees* (both in the Dublin Journal 1725–1726), and *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions with Illustrations on the Moral Sense* (London 1728). His magnum opus, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, was published posthumously in Glasgow in 1755; a modern critical edition is awaited. During his period as a student at Glasgow University (c. 1711–1717) Gershom Carmichael taught moral philosophy and jurisprudence there and there are clear signs in Hutcheson's writings of Carmichael's influence. In 1730 he took up the moral philosophy chair left vacant on Carmichael's death. Hutcheson is known principally for his ideas on moral philosophy and aesthetics. First moral philosophy.

Hutcheson reacted against both the psychological egoism of Thomas Hobbes and the rationalism of Samuel Clarke and William Wollaston. As regards Hobbes, Hutcheson thought his doctrine was both wrong and dangerous; wrong because by the frame of our nature we have compassionate, generous and benevolent affections which owe nothing at all to calculations of self-interest, and dangerous because people may be discouraged from the morally worthy exercise of cultivating generous affections in themselves on the grounds that the exercise of such affections is really an exercise in dissimulation or pretence. As against Hobbes Hutcheson held that a morally good act is one motivated by benevolence, a desire for the happiness of others. Indeed the wider the scope of the act the better, morally speaking, the act is; Hutcheson was the first to speak of “the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers”.

He believed that moral knowledge is gained via our moral sense. A sense, as the term is deployed by Hutcheson, is every determination of our minds to receive ideas independently of our will, and to have perceptions of pleasure and pain. In accordance with this definition, the five external senses determine us to receive ideas which please or pain us, and the will does not intervene — we open our eyes and by natural necessity see whatever it is that we see. But Hutcheson thought that there were far more senses than the five external ones. Three in particular play a role in our moral life. The public sense is that by which we are pleased with the happiness of others, and are uneasy at their misery. The moral sense is that by which we perceive virtue or vice in ourselves or others, and derive pleasure, or pain, from the perception. And the sense of honour is that which makes the approbation, or gratitude of others, for any good actions we have done, the necessary occasion of pleasure. In each of these cases the will is not involved. We see a person acting with the intention of bringing happiness to someone else, and by the frame of our nature pleasure wells up in us.

Hutcheson emphasises both the complexity of the relations between our natural affections and also the need, in the name of morality, to exercise careful management of the relations between the affections. We must especially be careful not to let any of our affections get too ‘passionate’, for a passionate affection might become an effective obstacle to other affections that should be given priority. Above all the selfish affections must not be allowed to over-rule ‘calm universal benevolence’.

Hutcheson's opposition to Hobbesian egoism is matched by his opposition to ethical rationalism, an opposition which emerges in the *Illustrations upon the Moral Sense*, where he demonstrates that his account of the affections and the moral sense makes sense of the moral facts whereas the doctrines of Clarke and Wollaston totally fail to do so. Hutcheson's main thesis against ethical rationalism is that all exciting reasons presuppose instincts and affections, while justifying reasons presuppose a moral sense. An exciting reason is a motive which actually prompts a person to act; a justifying reason is one which grounds moral approval of the act. Hutcheson demonstrates that reason, unlike affection, cannot furnish an exciting motive, and that there can be no exciting reason previous to affection. Reason does of course play a role in our moral life, but only as helping to guide us to an end antecedently determined by affection, in particular the affection of universal benevolence. On this basis, an act can be called ‘reasonable’, but this is not a point on the side of the rationalists, since they hold that reason by itself can motivate, and in this case it is affection, not reason that motivates, that is, that gets us doing something rather than nothing.

If we add to this the fact, as Hutcheson sees it, that it has never been demonstrated that reason is a fit faculty to determine what the ends are that we are obliged to seek, we shall see that Hutcheson's criticism of rationalism is that it can account for neither moral motivation nor moral judgment. On the other hand our natural affections, in particular benevolence, account fully for our moral motivation and our faculty of moral sense accounts fully for our ability to make an assessment of actions whether our own or others'.

Certain features of Hutcheson's moral philosophy appear in his aesthetic theory also. Indeed the two fields are inextricably related, as witness Hutcheson's reference to the ‘moral sense of beauty’. Two features especially work hard. He contends that we sense the beauty, sublimity or grandeur of a sight or of a sound. The sense of the thing's beauty, so to say, wells up unbidden. And associated with that sense, and perhaps even part of it — Hutcheson does not give us a clear account of the matter — is a pleasure that we take in the thing. We *enjoy* beautiful things and that enjoyment is not merely incidental to our sensing their beauty.

A question arises here regarding the features of a thing that cause us to see it as beautiful and to take pleasure in it. Hutcheson suggests that a beautiful thing displays unity (or uniformity) amidst variety. If a work has too much uniformity it is simply boring. If it has too much variety it is a jumble. An object, whether visual or audible, requires therefore to occupy the intermediate position if it is to give rise to a sense of beauty in the object. But if Hutcheson is right about the basis of aesthetic judgment how does disagreement arise? Hutcheson's reply is that our aesthetic response is affected in part by the associations that the thing arouses in our mind. If an object that we had found beautiful comes to be associated in our mind with something disagreeable this will affect our aesthetic response; we might even find the thing ugly. Hutcheson gives an example of wines to which men acquire an aversion after they have taken them in an emetic preparation. On this matter his position may seem extreme, for he holds that if two people have the same experience and if the thing experienced carries the same identical associations for the two people, then they will have the same aesthetic response to the object. The position is however difficult to disprove, since if two people do in fact disagree about the aesthetic merit of an object, Hutcheson can say that the object produces different associations in the two spectators.

Nevertheless, Hutcheson does believe aesthetic misjudgments are possible, and in the course of explaining their occurrence he deploys Locke's doctrine of association of ideas, a doctrine according to which ideas linked solely by chance or custom come to be associated in our minds and become almost inseparable from each other though they are ‘not at all of kin’. Hutcheson holds that an art connoisseur's judgment can be distorted through his tendency to associate ideas, and notes in particular that a connoisseur's aesthetic response to a work of art is likely to be affected by the fact that he owns it, for the pleasure of ownership will tend to intermix with and distort the affective response he would otherwise have to the object. Hutcheson, it should be added, is equally sensitive to the danger to our moral judgments that is posed by our associative tendency. And in both types of case the best defence against the threat is reflection, understood as a mental probing, an examination and then cross-examination, whether of a work of art or of an action, and of the elements in and aspects of our situation that motivate our judgments, all this with a view to factoring out irrelevant considerations. Without such mental exercises we cannot, in his view, obtain what he terms ‘true liberty and self-command’. This position, which he presents several times, points to a doctrine of free will not otherwise readily discernible in his writings. Our free will, on this account, is a habit of reflection through which we form a judgment which we are in a position to defend. We stand back from the object of reflection, do not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by it, but instead adjudicate it in the light of whatever considerations we judge it appropriate to bring to bear.

4. Hutcheson, Hume and Turnbull

Hutcheson influenced most of the Scottish philosophers who succeeded him, perhaps all of them, whether because he helped to set their agenda or because they appropriated, in a form suitable to their needs, certain of his doctrines. In the field of aesthetics for example, where Hutcheson led, many, including Hume, Reid, and Archibald Alison, followed. But influences can be hard to pin down and there is much dispute in particular concerning his influence on David Hume (1711–1776). It is widely held that Hume's moral philosophy is essentially Hutchesonian, and that Hume took a stage further Hutcheson's projects of internalisation and of grounding our experience of the world on sentiment or feeling. For Hume agreed with Hutcheson that moral and aesthetic qualities are really sentiments existing in our minds, but he also argued that the necessary connection between any pair of events E1 and E2 which are related as cause to effect is also in our minds, for it is nothing more than a determination of the mind, due to custom or habit, to have a belief (a kind of feeling) that an event of kind E2 will occur next when we experience an event of kind E1. Furthermore Hume argues that what we think of as the ‘external’ world is almost entirely a product of our own imaginative activity. As against these reasons for thinking Hume indebted to Hutcheson there are the awkward facts that Hutcheson greatly disapproved of the draft of *Treatise* Book III that he saw in 1739 and that Hutcheson did his best to prevent Hume being appointed to the moral philosophy chair at Edinburgh University in 1744–1745. In addition many of their contemporaries, such as Adam Smith and Thomas Reid, held that Hume's moral philosophy was significantly different from Hutcheson's (Moore 1990).

One close contemporary of Hutcheson, who also stands in interesting relations to Hume, is George Turnbull (1698–1748), regent at Marischal College, Aberdeen (1721–1727), and teacher of Thomas Reid at Marischal. He describes Hutcheson as “one whom I think not inferior to any modern writer on morals in accuracy and perspicuity, but rather superior to almost all” (*Principles of Moral Philosophy*, p. 14), and no doubt Hutcheson was an influence on Turnbull in several ways. But it has to be borne in mind that the earliest of Turnbull's writings, *Theses philosophicae de scientiae naturalis cum philosophia morali conjunctione* (Philosophical theses on the unity of natural science and moral philosophy), a graduation oration delivered in 1723, shows Turnbull already working on a grand project that might be thought of as roughly Hutchesonian, but doing so several years before Hutcheson's earliest published work. As regards Turnbull's relationship with Hume, we should recall that the subtitle of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* is “An attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects”. As with Hume's *Treatise*, so also Turnbull's *Principles of Moral Philosophy*, published in 1740 (the year of publication of Bk. III of the *Treatise*) but based on lectures given in Aberdeen in the mid-1720s, contains a defence of the claim that natural and moral philosophy are very similar types of enquiry. When Turnbull tells us that all enquiries into fact, reality, or any part of nature must be set about, and carried on in the same way, he is bearing in mind the fact, as he sees it to be one, that there are moral facts and a moral reality, and that our moral nature is part of nature and therefore to be investigated by the methods appropriate to the investigation of the natural world. As the natural philosopher relies on experience of the external world, so the moral philosopher relies on his experience of the internal world. Likewise, writing in Humean terms, but uninfluenced by Hume, Turnbull affirms: “every Enquiry about the Constitution of the human Mind, is as much a question of Fact or natural History, as Enquiries about Objects of Sense are: It must therefore be managed and carried on in the same way of Experiment, and in the one case as well as in the other, nothing ought to be admitted as Fact, till it is clearly found to be such from unexceptionable Experience and Observation” (*A Treatise on Ancient Painting*, p. x). It is, in Turnbull's judgment, the failure to respect this experimental method that led to the moral scepticism (as Turnbull thought it to be) of Hobbes and Mandeville, whose reduction of morality to self-love flies in the face of experience and is a shock to common sense.

The experience in question is of the reality of the public affection in our nature, the immediate object of which is the good of others, and the reality of the moral sense by which we are determined to approve such affections. This moral sense, of whose workings we are all aware, is the faculty by which, without the mediation of rational activity, we approve of virtuous acts and disapprove of vicious ones; and the approval and disapproval rise up in us without any regard for self-love or self-interest. In a very Hutchesonian way Turnbull invites us to consider the difference we feel when faced with two acts which are the same except for the fact that one of them is performed from love of another and the other is performed from self-interest. These facts about our nature have to be accommodated within moral philosophy just as the fact that heavy bodies tend to fall has to be accommodated within natural philosophy.

Turnbull is committed to a form of reliabilism according to which the faculties that we have by the frame or constitution of our nature are trustworthy. It is not simply that we are so constructed that we cannot but accept their deliverances; it is that we are also entitled to accept them. Turnbull, a deeply committed Christian, believed that the author of our nature would not have so constituted us as to accept the deliverances of our nature if our nature could not be relied upon to deliver up truth. We are in the hands of providence, and live directed towards the truth for that reason. This doctrine has been termed ‘providential naturalism’, and bears a marked resemblance to the language and also to the substance of Reid's position.