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Archibald Campbell
3rd Duke of Argyll (1682-1761)
The Great Patron of the Scottish Enlightenment

Summary
The role of enlightened patrons in the Enlightenment often has been ignored. This paper seeks to show how one of them, Archibald Campbell, 3rd Duke of Argyll, contributed to the Scottish Enlightenment possible through his appointments to the church, universities and civil institutions of the country.

The patrons of culture
Most of us who study the European Enlightenment work on problems which we think were significant for the intellectual life of the period or on thinkers and artists who stylishly articulated what we take to have been important ideas and sentiments. Despite many advances in the ways in which intellectual history is written, we still too often neglect the social contexts which made the appearance of works possible and the careers of the enlightened both possible and effective. One set of people active in the period and shaping it who are still neglected are the innovative patrons of culture. Political patronage has received more than its due but cultural patronage has not. The patrons of art and artists have often been studied but we do not have a large literature dealing with those whose patronage in other areas helped to shape and even changed the courses in which opinion ran and actions were determined. How important this can be has been shown by C. C. Gillispie’s work on Turgot and his protégés and on some studies of Newton and the Newtonians.1 Much of the higher educational infrastructure in place in France by 1800 had been built by men whose careers Turgot and his friends would have helped and consisted of institutions which they had had a hand in founding. Those institutions persisted through the Revolution but with changed names. It has also been noted that Newton’s protégés became important teachers, consultants to the government and industry and sometimes projectors of note.2 Other cases could be cited. Among them perhaps none is so compelling as the work in Scotland of Archibald Campbell, 3rd Duke of Argyll (1682-1761). He is what, as Carlo Denina wrote, the great Scottish patron between c.1724 and 1761, one who also decisively changed the course of his country by fostering its enlightened thinkers and doers.3

Lord Archibald
Lord Archibald, as he was known until he received a Scottish earldom in 1705, was a remarkable man. Born in 1682 into the most powerful family of the west of Scotland, the Earl of Ilay grew up in England and Scotland in troubled times. His grandfather lost his head for treason in 1685; the family estates were confiscated and then, after 1688, restored with all their honors and social position. The motto of the arms which the Earl of Ilay used for many years on his seal ring, was “Mermim.” Lord Archy received a classical education at Eton after which he attended Glasgow University, then the best in Scotland. In c.1698 he went to Utrecht to study law. As a younger son, he needed to make his own way in the world. There he took extra-mural courses which polite Scottish lawyers often took, languages, mathematics, natural philosophy and probably a bit of medicine including chemistry. When he left Utrecht, he did so as something of a polymath and virtuoso. This education was almost certainly finished by a tour into France and Italy, a tour cut short by his father’s death in 1703. He and his older brother, John, 2nd Duke of Argyll, returned to Britain and to military and political careers.

His brother eventually became the highest ranking army officer in Britain and a great political figure. Lord Ilay had a regency by 1708. In 1705, he was named Lord Treasurer of Scotland and began a political career which would see him manage most Scottish patronage from 1725 until his death in 1761. One of his obituaries estimated that he had appointed 55,000 men to positions of one sort or another in his long career. We need not believe that; he could usually only nominate, not appoint, but this estimate is in such a context that the Scottish Enlightenment most plausibly roots, not in the works of men like Hutcheson or Hume. It was that context which shaped Lord Ilay’s thinking about Scottish affairs. Later in his life Ilay would actively pursue most of those projects in one way or another. He improved all his estates and created two of them out of wasteland, one on Hounslo

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Heath, the other on a Scottish bog in Peebles-shire which he drained. He was a competent botanist who from c.1730-1761 maintained a garden at his small estate near London. There he tried to aid British agriculture by growing English plants growing foreign plants, shrubs and trees to British conditions. In contact with botanists and gardeners in the Lowlands of Scotland, Europe and even in the Levant, his work in this regard was used by the Duke, and he consulted and later Sir Joseph Banks. Ilay sent his botanical specimens to others encouraging them to emulate him, and he himself had probably planted well over a million trees in Scotland, many of them seedlings he had raised. And, he paid the trade in fertilizer to that which grazed his land. He even imported bison from America which in his most certain planning to inter-breed with Highland cattle to get a harder beef creature. This was not a scheme which came to anything. He was also one who thought that more than crops and sheep were needed. Where he could, he abolished older tenures for simple rentals on long range of restrictive leases and then employed competent overseers and reeve responsible to him rather than clan relatives as was usual in the areas where his Scottish estates lay. In all that he was certainly not alone, but owning or having jurisdic- tions over areas of about 3,000 square miles made some impact on the economy.

Fisheries and Manufactures

As readers of David Hume and Adam Smith will know, no eighteenth-century Scot thought of agriculture without relating it to industry much of which was undertaken in rural areas by men not primarily responsible for the founding of the first Scottish development board, the Board of Trustees for Fisheries and Manufactures. This promoted the linen trade which he moved in Parliament to promote where he thought it was in, and by any good mercantilist would have done. He sought to improve the bleach and dyes used in the textile trade, and to that end employed chemists to experiment with lime, alkaline and acids to find them. One of them, Dr. Francis Home, found in the 1750s that dilute sulphuric acid was a good bleach. Ilay had interests which involved a pottery in Argyll (1743-61) was himself a chemist working for him, production in Scotland. Again, the Duke used his own knowledge in the 1750s that dilute vertical vane windmill which he probably did not design but which he in effect advertised as elegant and efficient. Ilay’s early interest in John Law and his reform schemes did not lapse. Indeed, he thought it should be used to supply the preface to the second edition of Law’s Money and Trade Considered (London, 1726). He was a supporter of Law’s ‘bubbles’ in France and the Duke used his own knowledge of chemistry and sometimes directed others working in one or another of his three laborato- ries. His own chemical achieve- ments seem to have been restricted to the production of inks and paint, dye and distilling and the making of pharmaceu- tal preparations. It is not alto- gether surprising that he had been given a position of medical M.D. by the King’s College and University of Aberdeen in 1708, a very well honored for a trained civil lawyer.

The Medical School

Ilay’s interest in medicine was exemplified in other ways. As I have shown elsewhere, he was almost certainly the creator of the Medical School in 1725-26. This was a political sop to Scotland which was responsible for the founding of the University of Edinburgh, the other on a Scottish University. Ilay himself continued to be interested in it to the end.

Holland and on South Sea stock in England. His library housed a lot of what was to be called political-economic literature. Ilay continued to be interested in credit, banks and economic policies. He was one of the founders and first Governor of the Royal Bank of Scotland; his picture is still on the notes issued by the Bank. Later, he aided in the founding of the British Linen Company (now the British Linen Bank). He dealt in commodities and stocks, lent money to men whom he wanted to enlist in his faction (but who still paid a reason- able interest rate) and made money on foreign currency transactions. David Hume gave him a set of his economic essays which he said he gave to a duke but to a ‘man of sense and reason.’ Adam Smith was closer to being his ‘fellow menuet’ and the mis- cellany of acts which regents had taught before. He continued to be active in college affairs not only there but else- where. By the time of his death, he had appointed or approved the appointment of about 60 men in the universities of Scotland; other teachers were elected by the colleges and appointed by the university. Ilay was to his political machine. Ilay was a great book collector who amassed from scratch a library of over 12,000 volumes housed in a fine library building in London.5 He was also a patron of the arts such as the Foulis Brothers of Glasgow. His collection was impressive for the number of medical books it contained and even more so for its collection of mathematical and scientific works. The latter were heavily slanted to applied mathematics, e.g., mechanics, architecture, insurance and reveals once again his concern with utility and understanding things better through the application of sci- ence. He was said to be a tinker- er who could take apart and repair his own watches and understood the mechanical principles applied in machines. He had many model machines which were both toys and useful to workmen who duplicated them for use on his estates or in his mills. His garden on Houndlow Heath had a famous vertical vane windmill which he probably did not design but which he in effect advertised as elegant and efficient.

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Adam Ferguson: a man of the Scottish Enlightenment or a European figure?

Summary
The author maintains that, if considering his direct influence on Constant, and his clear, patent influence on Tocqueville, Ferguson’s thought must be set in the context of the history of European liberalism, of which he is more than a precursor. His work philosophical and conceptually represent a bridge between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but in the eighteenth century he stands not as a man of the Enlightenment, but as a precursor of Romantic ideas. Biographically Ferguson is a Scotsman, but conceptually he is a European figure. His thought concerns such issues as, among others, without considering the contemporary European philosophical and literary currents.

Adam Ferguson is now recognized as a major thinker in the history of social sciences, after long neglect, which ended in 1930 with William Ch. Lehman’s Adam Ferguson and the Beginnings of Modern Sociology and, thirty-six years later, David Kentley’s The Social and Political Thought of Adam Ferguson. The publication of the Correspondence and, more recently, of the Manuscripts essays, will certainly contribute to a better knowledge of an author who has much to say in the new field of inquiries dealing with the origin of society and, in particular, historical change.

Nevertheless, this is not the subject of the present paper, which aims, by contrast, to set his work in the history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to better set his figure in a European context, which, sad to say, is often neglected in scholarly essays, even of good quality, but which seem to have lost any ties with the past. It is true that the seven-year war (1756-63) marked the expansion, in some respect, the real formation, of the British Empire, of “Imperial Britain”. This has fascinated, and fascinates, historians, because it was the period of the formation of a new world, of the world as it is today, with the American hegemony in science and in politics. Nevertheless, the second half of the eighteenth century on the continent saw the great enlightened sovereigns, Frederick the Great of Prussia, Maria Theresa of Austria, and Catherine the Great of Russia, while Paris was the intellectual capital of Europe, the intellectual capital of the world, indeed. To this due attention should be given, to really understand the history of that latter century, setting the authors historically in the period in which they lived and wrote.

By contrast, as we have said above, this problem seems to find scarce mention, with due exceptions, obviously, in the recent historical literature on the subject, dominated, as its cultural background, by the real disappearance of the European nations, of the European states, taken singularly, from the world stage.

The ‘Adam Ferguson Institute’
As for the reasons of its commitment to ‘study and discuss’ the work of the Scottish philosopher and the concept of civil society, emphasizes the concepts of freedom, the necessity of taking action on the part of the individual against the decline, etc. These are the reasons of a particular world of politics and business, which help understand a certain, in some measure hidden, meaning of An Essay, and its impact on society. These reasons are revealing of a way of seeing the work of the Scottish philosopher, that runs counter to a long-standing tradition, which describes him as a very Scottish author, even provincial in his concerns. Certainly the Correspondence could support this last interpretation, if emphasizing some particular aspects of Ferguson’s biography, his love for the native country, for example. Not less certainly, without its letters it would be difficult to understand the real meaning, often hidden, of his works. But, if biographically he is a Scotsman, his intellectual achievements are European, no doubt.

As an editor, with my New York colleague Eugene Heath, for Pickering & Chatto publishers, of the two-volume work: Adam Ferguson, History, Progress and Human Nature, forthcoming, and Adam Ferguson, Philosophy, Politics and Society, due in 2008, I am in a privileged situation to discuss with the contributors a series of topics aiming to reassess the thought of Ferguson. Therefore, I have an early, first-hand knowledge of topics which will form subjects of debate in the next few years, contributing, as all of us hope, to a better knowledge of social sciences. For the purposes of the present paper I wish to mention, among others, the paper by David Allan, on Adam Ferguson and Scottish History, a paper aiming to explain the reasons why Scottish history and society are, or rather appear, absent from the reasoning of An Essay. The paper maintains and, in my opinion substantially demonstrates that, by contrast, Ferguson is the result of a long-standing tradition of Scottish history and society, and that “Ferguson’s immersion in the peculiar perspectives and concerns of the eighteenth century Scotland … has too often been downplayed”.

By contrast, the paper by Iain McDowell on ‘Adam Ferguson, Roman History and the threat of Military Government in Modern Europe’, tries to avoid biographical explanations for political or philosophical theory, the author’s aim being that “a more persuasively intellectual account of Ferguson’s argument may be given without falling back on the fact that he spoke Gaelic etc.” Therefore, as we have seen, apart from the Ferguson Americanises the purposes of businessmen and politicians, we find in historical studies both the line of interpretation of his Scottishness, and the one of his intellectual context, but little of him as a European figure, although some distinguished books deal with the reception of his work in Germany. As an historian of ideas, I read, and teach, the classics of political thought and, in particular, my attention has always dwelled upon the history of European liberalism. Among my favourite authors are John Locke and John Stuart Mill, but not Benjamin Constant and Alexis de Tocqueville. And in the work of the two French, in particular, I find much evidence of Fergusonian concepts, but the same concepts and, often, the same words, although expressed in a different language.

Ferguson and Constant: I will now compare some passages from Ferguson, from An Essay, in particular. It is an attempt at discussing the reasons for this. There is, nevertheless, a curious exception, which does not come from the world of learning. It is an attempt at Americanizing Ferguson, on the part of the so-called ‘Adam Ferguson Institute’ in Ohio, which, in its homepage (http://www.logon.com/atif),

Adam Ferguson
The Old Cathedral, St Andrews

Ancient, Enlightenment and the Enlightenment

Notes
6. This is the technical term for laws the Scottish high courts will not enforce because they have become outdated.

3
excepté celle d’ôble et de payer .... Non, messeirs, ne laissons pas. Quelque touchant que soit un intérêt si tende, prions d’un reste que tout se passe dans ses limi-
tes. Qu’elle se borne à étre juste; nous nous chargerons d’être heureux.”

Les philosophes, en effet, se sont appliqués à exhaus-
tivement de réflexion à la question de savoir comment les peuples, par les moyens dont ils sont capables, peuvent s’établir à la tête de nations. Ils se sont souvi-nus que, dans l’histoire des nations, il n’a jamais manqué de grands écrivains qui, par des moyens indépendants ou soutenus par des pouvoirs publics, ont construit de vastes empires. 

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L’autorité fait du mal, même lorsqu’elle veut soumettre à sa juridiction les principes de la tolérance, car elle imposera à la tolérance des formes positives et fixes, qui sont contraires à sa nature” (Constant, Principes, XVII, p. 192).

For its similarity, we enter here a passage from Tocqueville, on the “property, community et tutalière, qui se charge seule du sus-
assurer leur jouissance et de veiller sur leur sort .... Il y avait volontiers à leur bonheur, mais il y en eut une unique agent et le seul arbitre; il pouvait à leur sécu-
dité, qui obligeait leurs besoins, faciliter leurs plaisirs, conduire leur industrie, régler leur succession, diviser ses dotés; qu’il ne peut ni leur 2 ter orné de tout le trouble de penser et la peine de vivre!” (Tocqueville, Démocratie en Amérique, Gallimard, II, qua-
tième partie, chap. IV, p. 524).

“Liberty seems to require that ..... People of every separate order or rank ..... should each have an active share in the legis-
lation of their country” (Principes de Moral et Political Science, 1792, reprint Garland Publishing (New York and London, 1978), II, 67, “...the practice of representation enabled every order of the people ..... to have a vigint eye on the proceedings of the whole” (ibid. p. 468).

“Les peuples qui recourrent au système représentatif, doi-
vent exercer une surveillance active et constante sur leurs représentants” (Constant, De la liberté tome II, pp. 537-60);

“...the attainment of knowl-
edge, ability, and public virtue, are proportion to the concern which numbers are permitted to take, in the affairs of their com-
munity” (Principles, I, 266);

Le danger de la liberté moderne est ..... Il ne renoncions trop facilement à notre droit de partage dans le pouvoir politique” (De la liberté des peuples, p. 280);

To the ancient Greek, or the Roman, the “property, community et tutalière” was nothing but the con-
cept of the ‘property, community and public nothing” (An Essay, p. 50).

“Chez les modernes ..... l’in-
dividu, indépendant dans la vie privée, devient l’intermédiaire entre la propriété et l’administration de la justice”; “les anciens, comme le dis Voltaire, avaient aucun

13 Constant: “le but des anciens était le par-
d’obtenir la paix. Le but des modernes est la sécurité dans les garanties accordées pour la protection de ces jouissances”; p. 548; “la liberté individuelle, je le répète, voilà la véritable liberté moderne”, p. 558).13

Again Ferguson: “the history of man seems to have shown ..... shone that the attainment of knowledge, ability, and pub-
lie virtue, are proportion to the concern which numbers are permitted to take , in the affairs of their community” (Principles, I, p. 266); “forms of government that are consistent with the wisdom of its adminis-
tration” (Principles, II, 509); “the error that results from the freedom of one person is best corrected by the wisdom that results from the concurring freedom of many” (Principles, II, p. 510).

Ferguson and Tocqueville

Tocqueville was a man of the nineteenth century, a group that we can call him, and we cannot document a direct influence of Ferguson’s writings back to a century later, when the romantic movement was in its full maturity, while An Essay can be considered as an early, although immature, intonation of Romantic ideas, which have an active share in the legis-
lation of their country” (ibid., p. 578).

“The forms of leg-
islature we have proposed impose numerous obligations; whether collective or represen-
tative, may be censured as expensive, or even dangerous, by the inc-
veniences of faction or party division; but, if these inconveni-
ces are to be dreaded, they nevertheless have the advantage of not being haz-
arded, for the sake of the end to be obtained in free govern-
ment results from the concurrence of a large number of the people” (Principles, II, p. 508);

“Le démocratie ne peut obtenir la vérité que par la concurrence. Le grand privilège des Américains n’est donc pas seulement d’être libres, mais aussi d’avoir la faculté de faire des faus-
tes (Démocratie, V, pp. 508-9).”

From the above dis-
course or, rather, from the above citations, a few conclusions may be drawn. First of all, if considering his direct influence on Constant, and his clear, patent influence on Tocqueville, one could maintain that Ferguson’s works must be taken to stand by and watch as this leads to the loss of both. Secondly, as said above, bio-
graphically Ferguson is a Scotman, but conceptually he is a European figure. His thought cannot be understood adequately without considering the contemporary European philosophical and literary cur-
rents, i.e. Enlightenment and Romanticism: Montesquieu, obviously; from there he takes his inspiration, but, not less, Constant and Tocqueville, who take his inspiration as well. As a writer, without doubt Ferguson is far inferior to Hume and Smith, not to men-
ion Constant and Tocqueville. Nevertheless his short nota-
tions, almost epigraphs, in An Essay, are a rich mine of reflec-
tions and observations, and are singularly penetrating, at such a point, one could add, that even exhaustive research could not be more.

Therefore, he gives a full theory of historical change, which Hume, a man of the Enlightenment, is unable to give, and for which Smith lacks adequate philosophical interest-
s. Enlightenment aims, in fact, at a perfect society, which, once conceived, is far from being safe in the exclu-
sion of a corrupted people” (Principles, p. 266).

1 This paper was delivered in Montpellier, France, on 12 July 2007, for the twelfth Congress on the Enlightenment of the University of the Southwestern Mediterranean.


4 V. M. Tocqueville, now in twenty-five years after An Essay, when the author had before his eyes the experience of the American Revolution and The Federalist.

In Tocqueville’s analysis of the American society the


9 See Ferguson, Duncan Forbes ed. (Edinburgh 1978), now from onwards cited as An Essay.

8 A Civil Societarian knows that freedom is the road to both material and spiritual wellbeing. Civil Societarians will not trade their freedom for security because this leads to the loss of both.

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ment results from the concurring freedom of many” (Principles, II, p. 510).

4 This is owing to the tendency

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Les transferts des cultures et techniques aux provinces orientales de la monarchie autrichienne au XVIIIe siècle: le rôle de l'armée

Cet élargissement entraînait une foule de mesures: Il fallait protéger les provinces orientales contre l'étranger, les intégrer aux territoires déjà existants; avoir une bonne connaissance des circonstances locales, réorganiser l'administration, augmenter l'importance du centre, favoriser de ces acquisitions et créer une atmosphère d'espoir et de progrès. Ce but multiple pouvait être atteint soit par la participation des habitants des provinces orientales ou unie leur participation. Faire participer les subordonnés nouveaux signifierait accepter des limites (garder les relations fédérales, la puissance des églises, le sous-développement parfois énorme, etc.), alors que contrairement aurait été synonyme de résistance éventuelle non seulement à la puissance des moyens à la rupture avec la tradition. Parce que les autorités impériales n'eurent d'autre choix que d'adopter la méthode d'un champ libre pour installer un système neuf, on favorisait au début l'emploi d'une force suffisamment loyale envers la cour, assez forte pour une politique dynamique et déjà assez experte: l'armée, surtout le corps des officiers supérieurs qui avaient acquis une grande compétence civilisatrice au cours du XVIIIe siècle. Pour comprendre les relations organisationnelles au fond il faut noter que les relations de Vienne avec l'Europe orientale (de la Russie jusqu'à la Turquie) furent jusqu'au 1735 du ministère du guerre («<c-Folkrögattoro>») et non de celui de la chancellerie de la cour.3 Si l'on considère le rôle des militaires dans le transfert des cultures et techniques, il faut distinguer trois aspects: le territoire de la frontière militaire, celui des provinces récemment acquises, et celui de l'État tout entier.

Les transferts sur le territoire de la frontière militaire

Les transferts sur le territoire des provinces récemment acquises

À l’approche de leur annexation il n’existait pas d’idée précise sur les affaires culturelles, sociales, juridiques, religieuses et économiques dans les régions acquises.

Notes

3. Millar was defined by John Rae “the most effective and accurate compiler of scientific materials in the empire during the XVIIe siècle”.


13. On the same concepts see Immanuel Kant, in the passage in which he criticises the tutor who has undertaken the high task of supervision of their younger fellows, showing the danger which threatens them, when they move off... Altogether, this danger is not so great, because they, at the cost of falling, would learn how to walk: Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist die Aufklärung, in Geschichtsschreiben (Berlin, 1912), Band VIII, pp. 35-36. Concerning Frederick the Great, Kant wrote that he was a prince who “does not believe unworthy of himself to say that he considers his own duty nothing to himself, who therefore rejects from himself even the proud name of tolerance”, ibid. p. 41.


16. See also Madison in the Federalist L. L. cited by Tocqueville. “It is a great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard the rulers against the society.”

17. On the same subject see Montesquieu: “Le gouvernement d’Angleterre est plus sage, parce qu’il a un corps qui l’examine continuellement, et qui s’examine continuellement lui-même; et telles sont ses erreurs, qu’elles ne sont jamais longues, et que, par l’esprit d’attention qu’elles donnent à la nation, elles sont souvent utiles. In un mot, un gouvernement libre, c’est-à-dire toujours agi, ne saurait se maintenir, s’il n’est, par ses propres lois, capable de corrections, in Considerations sur les Causes de la Grandeur des Romains et de leur Décadence, in Oeuvres Complètes, II, chap. VIII, p. 116.

18. On this subject see A. Kalvai-I. Katzenstein, “Adam Ferguson retourne Liberalism through a glass, darkly”, Political Theory, 26, no. 2 (1998), pp. 173-97, who nevertheless judge according to sociological categories, and Euler, the political science of freedom and historical context. See furthermore R. Hanowy, The political theory of freedom: Adam Ferguson and E.A. von Hayek (Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar, 2005), and V. Merolle, Sageons en Ferguson, Con un Saggio in Millar, Gangemi (Roma, 1994). I wish to write here from Benedictos Croce, the essay “liberty of liberty”, who, in his Manifesto degli Intelligenzi Antifascisti, in opposition to the praise of ‘anamnésis’ de Gentile’s Manifesto degli Intelligenzi Fascisti, offering a specimen of his philosophy, which was essentially a development of Hegelianism, wrote that the essence of liberalism is in the ‘highly historical concept of free competition and of the alternation of the parties to power, in consequence of which, thanks to the opposition, almost building on it, the progress is realized’. These words, in my judgment, perfectly apply to the social philosophy of Ferguson.

19. Montesquieu: “Pour règle générale, toutes les fois qu’on verra tout le monde tranquille dans un État qui se donne le nom de républicque, on peut être assuré que la liberté n’y est pas... Ce qu’on appelle union dans un corps politique, est une chose très équivoque... Il peut y avoir de l’union dans un État où on ne croit voir de quel le trouva.”


22. See Millia, L’Origine des Décisions de Rance, 1st ed. 1777, and An Historical View of the English Government, 1st ed. 1787. Millar was defined by John Rae “the most effective and influential apostle of Liberalism in Scotland in that age”, John Rae, Life of Adam Smith (London, 1895) pp. 53-4.

Introduction

Extrait d’une carte militaire de la fin des XVIIIe siècle, concernant la Slovénie comme objet d’expérience des principes de mercantilisme (population, industrialisation).12

Les transferts au sol de toute la monarchie autrichienne suivant les besoins militaires et politiques. Joseph II commanda en 1765 des cartes géographiques de tous les pays de la couronne.13 Après l’appréciation professionnelle utilisant la trigonométrie et exécuté par le corps du génie, on transféra cette technic technique depuis l’Empire central jusqu’à l’Europe orientale. Vers la fin du règne de cet empire on avait fini un plan cartographique de presque toute la monarchie en 4685 sections, complétées par des commentaires écrits mis à la disposition des seules autorités militaires supérieures. Ces matériaux représentaient de nos jours une source très riche de preuves topographiques, démographiques et philo-logiques de cette époque.

Considerations finales
Dans une communication il n’est pas possible de résumer tous les aspects des transferts de cultures et de techniques dans la monarchie autrichienne au XVIII siècle. Il faut conten- ter de quelques considérations générales.

1. Pour estimer le rôle de l’ar-mée il faut le comparer aux éléments civils. L’administration militaire ne fonctionnait qu’au début de la domination des Habsbourg, après plusieurs années (au Banat après plusieurs décennies) on changea le régime et on donna le pouvoir à des forces civiles régionales. La seule exception était la frontière militaire qui avait existé comme territoire spécial jusqu’au milieu ou jusqu’à la deuxième moitié du XIXe siècle. L’armée ne conserva qu’un temps le privilège de jouer un rôle dominant dans les transferts. Ils faisaient certainement exception les individus qui voulaient se porter au service des provinces orientales.

2. Le transfert de cultures et techniques vers les provinces orientales de la monarchie autrichienne par les éléments civils passaient ou par des relations logic clauses qui se liaisaient au hasard. Ils existent une fois deux grâce à des initiatives des habitants des provinces occidentales, une autre fois de ceux des pro- vinces orientales, ou grâce à des groupes, comme les autorités centrales de la monarchie, les états d’une province, un certain groupe de professions ou de simples individus. L’église catholique d’une part (évêques et autres ordres) et les étrangers d’autre part avaient un poids assez important. Un des exemples les plus concrets d’étrangers ayant joué un rôle à cette époque est François Étienne, le mari de l’impératrice Marie-Thérèse, qui emmena de Lorraine et de Toscane un cercle de spécialistes qui furent responsables d’un grand nombre d’innovations scientifiques et économiques.14

3. Il se pose la question de savoir s’il y a des exemples semblables dans d’autres pays où l’armée jouait le même rôle que dans les provinces orientales de la monarchie autrichienne en ce qui concerne le transfert des cultures et techniques. On peut supposer qu’il y a des situations comparables en Russie, dans son expansion vers le sud (Ukraine) et vers l’est (Sibérie), mais aussi dans les régions d’outre-mer de la France et des autres puissances coloniales.

4. En général dans l’histoire de l’Europe les transferts de l’occident vers l’orient dominent. Il faut néanmoins noter des exceptions. Un exemple, déjà de la fin du XVIIe siècle, qui se rapporte à la frontière militaire en Croatie, montre le transfert d’un élément culturel non seul- lement aux provinces occidenta- les de l’Autriche, non seulement à l’occident de l’Europe, mais à tout le monde: c’est le port de la cravate, à l’origine un foulard que les soldats croates portant de la frontière militaire portaient autour du cou lorsqu’ils se bataillaient au sein des armées impé- riales sur le sol français au temps de Louis XIV.15

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12 Des exemples ont donné d’une somme de transferts du Banat au sud-est de la Hongrie historique qui fut dirigé pendant deux générations par la cour de Vienne et non par l’administration hongroise. Les dix première- res années sous un régime militaire on a utilisé cette région

13 L’empereur avait donné d’une somme de transferts est le Banat (au sud-est de la Hongrie historique) qui fut dirigé pendant deux générations par la cour de Vienne et non par l’administration hongroise. Les dix premières années sous un régime militaire on a utilisé cette région


15 Gallier, p. 39.


La Société d’Études des Pratiques et Théories en Traduction

The first conference organized by the Société d’Études des Pratiques et Théories en Traduction (SEPTET) took place in Strasbourg on 9-11 March 2007. It gathered a numerous and very attentive public around twenty-one specialists. Among them were Henri Meschonnic (Paris VIII) as a plenary speaker, Lawrence Venuti (Temple University, Philadelphia), Jean-Jacques Lacarrère (Paris X) et Jean-René Ladmiral (ISIT in Paris and the University of Geneva). The conference began with the first morning devoted to delineate a general approach, and to initiate a debate, about translation in general. The next three sessions were respectively devoted: a) to historical and contemporary attitudes to translation; b) to the problem of rendering Paul Valéry’s philosophical language into different foreign languages (including English, German, Japanese and Spanish); c) to the translation of poetry into Chinese and Japanese, in particular The Divine Comedy. The fields covered by the speakers were consequently very varied and sometimes startlingly different. Translating from one language into another one that stems from allied linguistic origins, and rendering a European text, poetry as a matter of fact, into Japanese or Chinese, are in fact two entirely different things, but certain aspects kept coming back under different guises and provided a sort of theoretical background that unified the conference as a whole.

The question of otherness

A key question was naturally that of otherness, at once a cultural and a linguistic one, and the nearly unavoidable ethnocentrism of any response to it. The proposed approaches varied from the very theoretical — with or without a specific text in mind —, to the very particular and prosaic. It is a test of the success of the conference that the act of translation seemed more and more unified in its fundamental mode as the meeting progressed to its final synthesis. Due to their clearly theoretical stances, the presentations and debates of the first morning must somehow be given pride of place, for they allowed the four speakers (H. Meschonnic, L. Venuti, J. J. Lacarrère, J. R. Ladmiral) to lay the ground for all the major questions later discussed in the meeting, each in her or his specific field of expertise. The unity, if unity there was, was not in terms of contents and solutions advocated, but of diachronic, the diagnostic of the central difficulties translation has to face, and of the grounds for disagreement between distinct approaches and schools of thought. As J. R. Ladmiral put it, “traductologie” is indirectly hemmed in by theology, translation being possibly felt as a profanation of the revered sacredness that remains attached to language itself. The first implicit debate concerned the possibility of the impossibility of translation. If all four speakers were united in the suggestion that there is an ethical if not political dimension to translation, a clear difference emerged between their conceptions of translation as the rendition of a voice, a tone, a rhythm, this referring us to the last resort to the poetic in the special case of the Bibel (Meschonnic) and translation as that which conceals and reveals at one and the same time.

A hermeneutics of translation

There is indeed a hermeneutics of translation, in relation to the unavoidable proliferation of differences between varied languages (Venuti). Transparency in matters of translation was thus repeatedly shown to be a major danger since passing from one language to the other is an intervention and a decrating at one and the same time (Lacarrère), and thrives on the beneficence of Babel in opposition to a wished for Pentecostal transparency (Ladmiral). All four speakers agreed in saying that translation is crucial as an abstract site returning to us the problem of truth, even though the first speaker focused on the tentative definition of an ideal adjustment to the source-text, whereas the other three insisted on translation as the historically situated field of an ongoing ideological combat. The possibility of an agreement between them all was eventually acknowledged by J. R. Ladmiral when he spoke of lack as a challenge, and a blessing in disguise, returning all translators to their more, or less, deficient capacity of reading in felicitous adequacy with the text. The morning’s intellectual journey thus led from the rendering of the voice heard in the text, and its uniqueness, to the difficult joys of relativity, the common ground being that failure and success are closely related in such matters of equivalence and difference, and that what makes a circle vicious can also make it virtuous, and vice versa.

The individual presentations that followed were extremely varied: in a first series, we heard about the status of translation, translation and fiction, translation and exegesis, Biblical translation, translating with the body, obviously the opposition between theory and practice. The first morning having been devoted to theorizing translation, that is the line that was taken up in the afternoon. Translation became a model paradigm for thinking and managing otherness, particularly through the notion of excess. Yet a pronounced difference appeared between those who on one side referred themselves to the letter in their culturally codified approach to the sacred text (this in matters of Biblical translation), and the relativists for whom translation was even shown, in one case, to flirt with fiction. As to those interested in practice itself, they more modestly referred to specific problems they had met in their effort to render particular effects: such as affects which ask of the translator that they should somehow work with their bodies; or again, the next day, concerning the rendering of the concept of “godlesse”, which connotes the presence of a more or less explicit metaphorical dimension, and the repression of the conception of language. The messianic dimension of that pure language, which, according to Walter Benjamin, successive translations progressively fore-shadowed, was referred to several times. The relativists insisted on their part on the “enlightened” dimension of the act of translation, on the variety of the subjec-tive treatments of varied voices and genres. And yet, all present considered that translation was anything but ancillary, though on opposing grounds. These two dominant approaches might be referred to the series which J. F. Lyotard speaks of: in the case of the translation of the Bible, and of any major text, one is con-cerned with a “parallel arrangement” (always striving to return to a unique original), whereas the relativists seem to favour the second type of series, the “serial arrangement” based on an endless and unavoidable deformabil-ity. The first kind could be said to strive for the absolute, the second one to just-ness and the relative. This is far from indifferent in terms of translation. It is also strikingly in terms of one’s place in the contemporary episteme: the first alternative dreams of an ideal return, an origin, whereas the second tends to come up against the impossibil-ity of a perfect adjustment, striv-ing for such nothing more believable absolute: the second, tends to favour the creative slippage from one version to the other, the slow drift from one text to another translation to another, and sees in such dynamism the laying bare of the (ideological) processes at stake.
The translator as creator

Another common point which surfaced several times during the debates was the status of the translator as creator. If, as Valéry suggests, all poets are translators, could the reverse be said to be true? Several participants addressed the difficult question of the rendering of poetry into different languages. In which case, the translator has to force the target language, to resort to coinage and to the invention of new words paradoxically revealing the host language to itself. This was particularly clear in the case of the linguistic bridge-builders who explore the nearly impossible transfer from western languages to eastern ones. In the same way, the concentration on the voice of the text, hence on singing and music, suggested that the achievement of translation is not intellectual but mimetic and body-rooted. It promoted a commitment, and a kind of return, to the flesh inscribed in language. The partnership with the love relationship came back several times, a love “not belied with false compare” as Shakespeare says in Sonnet 130, but rather modelled on the separateness in togetherness that D. H. Lawrence frequently advocated. Finally, the restraints which afflict the translator were also touched upon, the fact that impassable bounds limiting his creativity are imposed on him, if only by the editor. A final point could be made concerning distance, and what could be called the near-theological unconscious of translation. The frequent referring to the myth of Babel in the presentations suggested this was the core itself of the problematic discussed during the conference. As a metaphor, the idea of the interlacing of languages that supposedly befell humanity, not a curse but a potential richness, suggests a gesture in faith, not a curse but a potential that supposedly befell humanity or, at least, to send a cheque to the

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**Book in review**


Le plus fédéral des américainistes français, Daniel Royot, auteur distingué d’une multiplicité d’ouvrages sur la civilisation, sur la culture, sur la littérature de l’Amérique du Nord, et tout récentement d’un somme admirable sur les Indiens d’Amérique, donne ici une étude historique qui fera date. Fruit d’années de recherches, notamment sur le terrain au Canada et aux États-Unis, et nourri d’une érudition monumentale ce _Divided Loyalties in a Doomed Empire_ brosse un tableau exhaustif de ce que fut la présence française sur le nouveau continent des origines jusqu’à l’expédition de Lewis et Clark en 1804-1806 — quelques mois après que l’Empire français eut vendu la Louisiane aux jeunes États-Unis.

Le lecteur sera surpris d’apprécier à quel point le comporte ment des premiers Français partis pour l’Amérique, fixés sur les rives du Saint-Laurent d’abord, se démarque de celui de leurs parents restés en Europe, qu’ils fussent aristocrates ou toru tins. On voit au fil des pages s’affirmer le caractère indépendant du coureur des bois parti des deux adversaires européens (en gros, les Flurons celui de la France et les Iroquois celui de l’Angleterre) au long des décennies et plus particulièrement au cours des conflits armés entre les deux nations. Si l’auteur se garde d’entrer dans tout le détail événementiel de ces opérations militaires, ce qui n’est pas son sujet, il énrichit constamment son propos de témoignages et d’anecdotes qui donnent son caractère si vivant au livre.

L’une des grandes vertus de ce livre est de donner la mesure de ce que la France, mauvaise gestionnaire de ses ressources démographiques plus encore qu’elle n’a joué de malchance, a perdu quand elle s’est dessaisie, après avoir perdu le Canada, de la vaste mais presque videLouisiane. L’Amérique, qui a si bien réussi aux Espagnols, au Portugal, aux Britanniques n’était pas pour elle qui l’a mésétiquée et sous-estimée. Une France que l’histoire a comme décrite maudite en Amérique, où ses Canadiens qui se sont à juste titre sentis abandonnés par elle se sont retrouvés fortifiés par leur histoire et leur culture.

Serge Soupel