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REID IN EUROPE

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For several decades, Thomas Reid enjoyed a wide readership in Continental Europe, and his works contributed much to shape its philosophical ways.¹ This is true for Germany, as Manfred Kuehn has shown in his extended study *Scottish Common Sense in Germany, 1768-1800: A Contribution to the History of Critical Philosophy*.² It is true also for France, although at a somewhat later time. The local adaptations of the Scottish doctrines in France were common to a degree that very few suspect today. In his classical paper "De l'influence de la philosophie écossaise sur la philosophie français"³, Emile Boutroux underlined that in France in the 1870s, Scottish doctrines still dominated the teaching of philosophy at the pre-university level (p.441). They were central to the philosophical climate during practically the whole 19th century. There is a link of some interest between the German and the French reception of Reid in the person of Pierre Prevost (1751-1839), a philosopher and scientist from Geneva. Prevost stayed in Berlin in the 1780s before returning to Geneva to teach a philosophy clearly permeated by Scottish doctrines. I have found some new material on Prevost which has been published recently, but this will not be my topic in this paper.⁴

Germany and France are not the whole of Europe and the title of this paper may thus appear ambitious, not to say scandalous, to some readers. But in fact, given that Scottish doctrines were more popular in France than anywhere else on the Continent, and that it was largely France that contributed to making them known elsewhere, I shall concentrate on that country. And in order to avoid a series of name-dropping generalisations that would say little of substance, I shall restrict my topic even further by trying to explain the relationship between Reid and François Maine de Biran (1766-1824), arguably the most original French philosopher in the early 19th century, and one who exercised a form of intellectual leadership among the philosophers most receptive to the Scottish doctrines. As far as I know, the relationship between Reid and Maine de Biran has not yet been studied in sufficient detail.⁵ Maine de Biran provides extended discussions of important topics in Reid, and these discussions, which are sympathetic to Reid, are bright, challenging and part of a very distinctive philosophical perspective.

The writings of Maine de Biran are in a state that does not facilitate their study however. The parallel with Wittgenstein comes to mind — only three short memoirs have been published by an author who left twelve thousand pages of philosophical notes, often hard to read and patchy. But a new edition of Maine de Biran, directed by François Azouvi for the Parisian publisher Vrin, is coming to completion and will make Biran easily accessible. (It even includes in each volume that facility so rare in French books, indices of names and of topics.) In my view it is time for Reid scholars to get acquainted with Maine de Biran.

Before focussing so narrowly in the second part of this paper, I shall start with

a sketch of the broader philosophical context Reid was born into and of the aims that are constitutive of that context. These aims he himself tried to fulfill in his own way. He belongs to that context in a very specific manner which explains both his relevance and his readership.

I The “philosophical project of the moderns”

In fact, we need some background in the general history of philosophy to understand Reid’s position within it. I shall make a number of claims about philosophers like Descartes and Locke, and all those who followed their inspiration. This I shall call, somewhat grandly, the “philosophical project of the moderns”. This “philosophical project” I shall reduce to two main aspects, one constructive and the other destructive.

1. The constructive aspect

Through the first aspect, the project aims at a legitimation of the mathematical physics that was developed by figures like G. Galilei (1564-1642) and soon spread within the scientific community. This physics was perfectly adequate and may have been able to assert itself in the long run, just as mathematics did most of the time quite apart from philosophy. But a direct legitimation, showing either by Baconian, Popperian or pragmatic means that the propositions of this physics were able to match the experiments, was not deemed sufficient for contextual reasons. It was so new and controversial at the time that it appeared to need a little help from its friends. Thus, the project of legitimation had to be conceived more broadly and somehow indirectly. Now, how was such help to be provided? In fact, a whole way of doing science in a new fashion was outlined. The project of legitimation was to show how scientific results in physics proceed from the power of human reason, once it is put to a disciplined and methodical use. It is a matter of “well conducting one’s reason”, as they said.

Opposition to scepticism: In that respect, the project is oriented against the sceptics — philosophers had to show that propositions of mathematical physics can meet the sceptic’s challenge, and to explain how in general this can be done. This vindication we find most memorably in Descartes’ *Discours de la méthode* and in his metaphysical *Méditations*, but there are many other relevant works among which M. Mersenne’s work entitled *La vérité des sciences contre les sceptiques ou pyrrhoniens* (1625) deserves a mention. Even David Hume, in the introduction to the *Treatise of Human Nature*, pays lip service — or at least, so a Reidian may say — to the legitimation project:

In pretending therefore to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a compleat system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security. (p.xvi)

“Stand with security” - that was what the project was about.

The connection with ‘Enlightenment’: Then, it has to be considered that the vindication of the power of reason was not restricted to properly scientific results: common judgements which intersect most directly with our daily behaviour were supposed also to get a legitimation against the sceptics.⁶ It was expected that reason should be able to demonstrate its power in the various domains of practical life: i.e. Enlightenment, les Lumières, die Aufklärung, a great emancipatory undertaking that spread everywhere amongst scholars, in books, journals, academies, societies, doctors, and also to a great extent throughout the general reading public. Reid, I think, is very much committed to the Enlightenment project.⁷

Seen in this light, the sceptic’s failure to believe in the “revolutionary” power of reason to shape not only the theoretical domain but also practical life, appears conservative.

2. The destructive aspect

To this first, constructive aspect, we must add another, which we may call destructive — its constant shadow. It consisted in stating that previous philosophical efforts, as manifested in natural philosophy and elsewhere, were a failure (remember the much derided “substantial forms”, “occult qualities” and much else).

The moderns were very conscious that they were not starting philosophy; they knew that they were coming after several centuries where philosophy had been cultivated with an extreme intensity and considerable technical skills. Scholasticism was still alive in some quarters, and especially at universities. But the moderns took this background as being one of utter failure. They were longing for less technique and less logic, they sided with the layman and wanted simplicity, accessibility, clarity, straightforwardness.

Relation to scepticism: Here, the philosophical moderns concur with the sceptics, to some extent: they claim that before them and among their enemies, no knowledge was in sight - in philosophy at least. The introduction to the first edition of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* is a good illustration of this. We find parallel observations in the introduction to Hume’s *Treatise*. Both use the *topos* of the dissenting opinions of philosophers. Hume, with biting irony, remarks that “even the rabble without doors may judge from the noise and clamour, that all goes not well within” (p.xiii-xiv). Kant writes: “now the battleground of these endless conflicts has a name, metaphysics” (KrV, A VIII) - and he goes on to explain with a touch of Schadenfreude that this is inevitable. The sceptical position is then rather more revolutionary than conservative. The sceptics boldly maintained that things taken as rationally granted in an earlier context are not in fact sustained by reason. And of course, at the centre of the Enlightenment was the idea that modes of thinking and institutions that cannot be underwritten by reason should disappear. This can be seen in the form of an individualistic “ethics of belief” (to use the much later expression of W.C. Clifford’s), but it has also many social and political ramifications.

Diagnosis of past failures: Of course, an explanation had to be provided for the soon-to-be dissolved errors of the past. The philosophical moderns were keen to provide a thorough diagnosis of what had happened. Generally speaking, for the

moderns, philosophers of a more traditional brand had been trying to do too much: more than was allowed for by our limited human minds. (This is very evident in Reid: “hypotheses are to be avoided”; “analogies are bad”, “observation and induction are not practised enough”, “essences of things we do not know”, etc.) It is under this heading that ideas show up. Ideas are the sub-propositional materials of judgements: it was of paramount significance that ideas satisfy certain requirements of simplicity, clarity and distinction, adequateness, etc. before they were allowed to feature in the propositions of science and in common judgements. Otherwise, everything would be lost again. At a culpable distance from such privileged ideas, the “bad guys” were the words, always suspected of being destitute of any precise meaning. A reform of language was overdue, thanks to which words would get a clear significance only from the domain of the ideas, once it was properly circumscribed.

Reid’s rejection of the “ideal theory”: When we discuss Reid, and especially his rejection of the “ideal theory”, we should not lose sight of the fact that ideas were not introduced in the philosophical project of the moderns in order to account for what goes on in the mind, i.e. for psychological purposes. They do that of course, but they were first of all a means of diagnosing the failures of past philosophers and of preparing a new beginning. When Reid wants to throw ideas overboard and just let our faculties do their job, he is on the verge of an intriguing break with the very philosophical project of the moderns.⁸ The relevance of Reid’s criticism of the “logic of ideas” in favour of a “logic of judgement” described by Emily Michael in this issue of *Reid Studies* and based on some unpublished logic lectures of Reid’s will need further investigation in this context.

The “theory of ideas” is linked to a canonical order of questions, left implicit in general but which was once formulated by Descartes. It had long been remarked that types of inquiries can be specified by various questions.⁹ Two of these questions we raise about things are: whether they are, and what they are. The canonical order of the moderns is the following: first ask *what* some x is — before you ask *if* that x is.¹⁰ (In Descartes, there is only one exception to this canonical order of questions: the “I” itself, since Descartes establishes that he is before asking what he is.) This means that a thing’s intelligibility has to be secured before we take it to exist. Otherwise the failures of past philosophies will remain unavoidable. It’s bad to be stuck with a thing that exists and which is unintelligible. Now, how does one secure a thing’s intelligibility? This is done for the philosophical moderns through the idea we have of that thing, and this must satisfy the requirements the moderns have for ideas — clarity, distinctness, etc.

As a consequence of the criticism Reid makes of the theory of ideas, this canonical order of questions loses its hold on philosophical inquiry. This may be an opting out of an interesting kind, but also a risk. I know of very few comments on this point. There are some interesting passages in the German philosopher J.N. Tetens (1736-1807) in the 1770s.¹¹ Tetens is not convinced that the “ideal system” leads to “idealism” and “egoism”:

What Mr Reid calls “philosophy of ideas”, i.e. the principle that all

objects are only judged by means of the impressions or the representations within ourselves, is certainly quite innocent in this respect. This is a principle which the British philosopher, with his usual insight in the science of things, should not have denied.¹²

As far as the central role of this principle is concerned, Tetens here shows a sure instinct, while Reid was not aware, as far as I know, of the sin he was committing. He firmly believed, I think, he was staying within the “philosophical project of the moderns”.

This is a point which is relevant for Maine de Biran as well¹³ and represents an interesting bridge between them.

3. A common atmosphere

To sum up: the modern project is two-sided. It is like the notion of critique in Kant; it is about justifying and limiting in a principled way. These two aspects, constructive and destructive, somehow define a common atmosphere. Some of the relevant authors were doing work in the new physics, but not all of them were. Even those who were not, however, depended on the philosophical context brought about by the new physics. This common mould was still active and alive during the 18th century, even when ‘the revolution came to eat its children’, that is, when the early revolutionaries became suspected of committing the very errors they were willing to eradicate among their own uncritical predecessors. The permanence of the revolution within a setting of initial constitutive aims accounts for much of the complexities of modern philosophy, but also for its unity.

Psychological asides: The project, such as it emerges from this outline, is oriented towards epistemological questions; it seeks to justify certain judgements, while showing that other judgements lack justification. The old temptation to assert too much and the need to resist this temptation accounts for the theme of the initial examination of our faculties, rational and others.

But this includes many psychological asides: it relies on ideas which were of course taken as psychological realities, it includes a picture of how reason works with such materials, of its connection with the senses, with memory, of the use of signs, of the way judgement has to be accounted for, etc.

And then, the broader world picture, in psychology and elsewhere, had to be adjusted to the mathematical physics that had been legitimized in its own right. The topic of primary and secondary qualities is part of this adjustment, and also the important issue of causality. Accordingly, there was a temptation to theorize what remained outside the scope of mathematical physics while importing the type of causality usual in that field. (This is what is now called “naturalism”, a stance which has a long history.)

In fact, the psychological asides and adjustments raised infinite difficulties. There was a variety of proposals from the 17th century onwards as to how they should be met. Descartes and Locke among others took two different approaches.

Empiricism: The 18th century progressively tended to favour the empiricist

version of this project. A question that was initially quite marginal, and is in fact psychological, became prominent: where do we get our ideas from? (And thus not only: how do we make a proper and justifiable use of those of our ideas that have the epistemologically required characteristics?) An answer came to utmost prominence: we get our ideas from sense experience. Only the ideas we get through sense experience provide the materials upon which we can build good science and sound common judgements (hence Locke's so called "historical" method¹⁴ which in fact was not history at all, but a kind of analytical psychology).

The philosophical means that were involved in the "project of the moderns" had a momentum of their own; after the early empiricist masters, empiricism became more reflective and consistent (the late Lorenz Krüger, a great historian of philosophy who worked in Göttingen and Berlin, has an outstanding paper called "Was Locke an Empiricist?").¹⁵

In two influential cases, later empiricism somehow ceased to serve the aims it was designed for within the "philosophical project of the moderns". Hume in Scotland was an empiricist but also was a sceptic. With Condillac (1715-1780) in France, things were quite different and are a little difficult to explain because unconnected with the issue of scepticism. In several ways, Condillac radicalized the Lockean programme of a "historical" investigation of the mind.¹⁶ In his *Traité des sensations* of 1755, he tried to formulate a psychological derivation of all kinds of mental episodes, processes, and dispositions, starting from simple sensations: this was "la philosophie de la sensation transformée". Now Condillac showed little awareness of the distinction between psychological analysis (can we show that such and such mental item arises from sense-experience?) and its epistemological counterpart.¹⁷ And without explicit epistemological questions, the issue of scepticism does not arise at all. Thus Condillac cannot be counted as a sceptic. But I shall list four characteristic defects of Condillac in the eyes of his critics:

- (i) the psychological implausibility of an account of what went on in the mind on the sole basis of a passive intake of sensations;
- (ii) the more axiological unsuitability — at least for opponents of materialism - of an attempt to explain what goes on in the mind only by the sensations which the mind receives passively and which can possibly be interpreted in a physiological and materialistic way;
- (iii) the implication, morally speaking, that the mind's passivity made man into something like a machine — Condillac's psychology led to an anti-libertarian view of human thinking and behaviour;
- (iv) and as a corollary of the previous point, the appeal to a person's reason as some form of moral teaching became irrelevant within the Condillacian scheme.

The "my money back protest!": Suppose one sticks to "the philosophical project of the moderns", and especially to its constructive part, i.e., mathematical physics and common judgements. The plan to enlighten humanity required one to stick to the "common judgements" part of the project, but it now involved an empiricism which during the 18th century became more and more restrictive in its legitimizing powers. To many philosophical minds, empiricism itself tended to become less

part of a solution within the "philosophical project of the moderns" and more part of a problem. The means invested in the project had ceased to allow the project to fulfill its aims. Such minds were looking for something else to sustain the double-sided project of the moderns. For them, the project, to be sustained, was in need of a new groundwork. Their idea was to change the means. And who was to provide a new groundwork? There was Reid in Scotland, and later there was Kant in Germany. Reid's place in the history of modern European epistemology is firmly grounded in its initial aims and in its historical evolution.

II Reid in Europe

To describe what happened in Germany before Kant, we have the book by Manfred Kuehn already mentioned. Germany had remained more on the side of innate ideas, due to the hold of the Leibniz-Wolf school. (I may recommend, as interesting testimony, a small dialogue published in 1795 by Johann August Eberhard. The dialogue is between Clairsens, a fresh convert to the Scottish doctrines of common sense, and Tiefheim, a follower of Leibnizian rationalism.)¹⁸

In France, things were different, and came later. Concerning what happened after the turn of the century, the book has yet to be written. We have one recent inquiry by James W. Manis, *Reid and His French Disciples*,¹⁹ but interesting though it is, it is centered on the question of realism in aesthetics and of little direct relevance for my topic. There is one older work of significance for such a study: Adolphe Frank's *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, first published in 1843. Frank was a follower of Victor Cousin (1792-1867), the public and sometime governmental voice of philosophy in 19th century France.²⁰ The Preface to the first edition (1843) is very typical of this movement and rehearses the motives of discontent with Condillacian empiricism I have sketched above. In his *Dictionnaire*, Frank lists 26 "spiritualists and eclectics of the 19th century" ("Table synthétique", p.1803). This is the French branch of Scottish philosophy.

What happened is this: in France, Reid was taken seriously not because he had tried to answer scepticism, but because he had provided ways of criticizing empiricism in the version given by Condillac and further developed by the so-called Idéologues at the turn of the century. Of course, as always in France, there is a political side to it: empiricism was taken as individualistic, critical, anti-authoritarian (a study of this point will have to go back to the first book of Locke's *Essay*).²¹ In France, it flourished in pre-revolutionary times, during the Revolution and under the beginnings of Napoleon, while its critics gained considerable influence under the later Empire and especially after the restoration of the monarchy. It is for such deep reasons that in France, the local branch of the Scottish school, as well as Reid himself, have been out of favour and received little scholarly attention for many years.

III Maine de Biran

In my opinion, such judgements have rarely been as misplaced and unjust as in the

case of Maine de Biran to whom I now turn.²² I begin by noting that a proximity between Maine de Biran and Reid was underlined by Biran himself. In one letter, he speaks of Victor Cousin with whom he had many affinities.

My book [a book he planned for decades and which he failed to write] will be much better understood by his followers [i.e. Cousin's] than by those of Condillac. They will see what I have added to the philosophy of Reid, a good and solid starting point.²³

André-Marie Ampère (1775-1836), the physicist who lent his name to the unit of the intensity of electric current, showed much interest in philosophy and was a close friend of Maine de Biran. He once asked him, in a context where Kant was discussed as well: "How can you, my dear friend, (. . .) try to build a system exposed to all difficulties which destroy Reid's, of which yours would only be a badly disguised copy?"²⁴

So there are those (including Biran himself) who think of these two authors as philosophically close. Let us take them seriously. It seems to me that in attempting to give reason a much broader evidential basis than the one it enjoyed in radical empiricism, they are indeed close. The question is then: what is it that singles Maine de Biran out with respect to Reid? What is his point?

The "primitive fact": At the heart of the human predicament, Maine de Biran places something he calls the primitive fact, "le fait primitif". What is this primitive fact? At first, it is something rather bewildering: it is "active power" taken very literally. The primitive fact is the impression of resistance which I get when I move or try to move and have to make an effort. A movement or at least the attempt to move is always implied: when I try to push a table, I touch its surface, making an effort, and there is resistance. Of course, there is the effort we make to move ourselves (Maine de Biran speaks in this case of "relative resistance"), and the effort we make to move other bodies (here there is "absolute resistance"). It perhaps easier to think about absolute resistance here. There are two connected aspects in this circumstance:

(i) a power of mine which is being exerted (and what is meant is primarily the exertion of muscular power)

(ii) the body which is resisting the exertion of this power.

This structure manifests itself through the sense of touch. Maine de Biran belongs to a lineage of philosophers who admitted the primacy of touch in our apprehension of the world: Berkeley, Condillac, and later French *Idéologues* like Destutt de Tracy. The code word for this primacy of touch is the framing of the "judgement of exteriority", which is mainly connected with the sense of touch by these authors. Touch however has to be linked to movement or mobility. Maine de Biran criticizes Reid for having been unaware of this link and for having taken no account of resistance and effort in what he says on touch (see OC, vol.2, p.140 and p.294, note 13).

Perception and sensation: Now according to Maine de Biran, this has a direct impact on perception. Perception is something that gets started only when we make an effort and recognize that something resists. It is only insofar as we move and

experience resistance that we build a conception of something exterior to us and judge it to exist (Maine de Biran agrees with Reid that this is what is involved in perception.) This means that perception is dependent upon the "primitive fact".

Of course, there is what we get when we touch without moving, and which Maine de Biran calls sensations. Sensations are passive. As such, they do not force upon us a "judgement of exteriority" - Sensations are not even linked to an awareness of the self. Biran does not agree that sensations imply that we know there is a sentient self to do the sensing; according to his view, the awareness of self also depends on activity. Here is a rhetorical question Maine de Biran raises in a passage on Reid and the Edinburgh school: "Does the self originally know its existence as a simple sentient power, brought about by the objects, or does it perceive itself as a power productive of certain modes or acts?"²⁵

One sees that, like Reid, Maine de Biran was critical of the way the empiricists had conceived the role of sensations in relation to other mental activities and dispositions. Like Reid, he underlines the contrast between sensation (passive) and perception (active). Maine de Biran's insistence may have been prompted by the analysis given by Reid. But there is an important difference. Perceptions, being implied by our very activity, are not responses to the signs the sensations are supposed to be: here again, Maine de Biran is critical of Reid (OC, vol.3, p.123 n.); this is a point he often restates. He rejects what Reid calls suggestions, and which he calls anticipations. Here's a passage from an early work:

Sensation is not at all the natural sign of an external cause; actually the resistance to our voluntary action (which is not accompanied by sensation) is the sign (natural if one wishes) of the existence of this cause.²⁶

After the fundamental agreement on the distinction between sensation and perception which is of paramount importance both in Reid and in Maine de Biran, there is a remarkable disagreement: Maine de Biran suppresses the role of the "suggestions" which meant so much to Reid.

One of Biran's preferred topics is the role of habits (he maintains Reid had not been sufficiently aware of their impact upon us). In two early dissertations, he distinguishes sensation and perception through the impact habits have on them: sensations tend to go unremarked the more we have them, while perceptions undergo no such attenuation: rather, they become more articulate and precise. Maine de Biran was fully aware, in this context, that Reid had remarked on the difficulty, in many perceptual contexts, of attending to sensations. But Maine de Biran explicitly related this difficulty to the differential effect of habits.

First principles: All this is psychology, of course. Like Reid, Maine de Biran wanted another psychology, and one that would give its proper importance to the active mind. But Maine de Biran also shared the aims of Reid in the domain of epistemology. He was eager to spell out the epistemological aspects of the primitive fact. Through the primitive fact, we judge evidently that we exist as active and that body exists as something which resists our effort. In fact, Maine de Biran maintains that he has located a unique core fact that accounts for the whole of the Reidian

“principles of common sense”. The primitive fact and what is implied by it is the equivalent of the various principles listed by Reid: “In examining the sense of the muscular effort, we find the origin of the ideas Reid wants to admit as primitive and non-acquired principles, intrinsic to the human constitution.”²⁷ Like Reid, he maintains that there are principles of contingent truths and principles of necessary truths, and that they have the features Reid ascribes to them: they are primitive truths, that is, not derived from others, given to everybody’s intuition, assented to as soon as they are spelled out, etc. However, Maine de Biran thinks that Reid left the principles unexplained (OC, vol.8, p.223), and that in contrast he has an explanation for them. He believes that he is able to bring under a common head what tended to be, in Reid, a scattered list of principles.

IV Conclusion

I shall conclude very briefly. I find Maine de Biran’s restatement of Reid’s approach very seductive. Of course it’s only an agenda, but a distinctively neo-Reidian one. If it succeeds:

(i) it is more economical that the list of first principles in Reid (it avoids what Paul Gerner has called “a doxastic crowding”);

(ii) it is speculatively more interesting, since it does not make the basis of knowledge dependent upon a hard-wired constitution; a hard-wired constitution is a source of sceptical questions (does the output of which we are aware actually require the input we take the output to present to us?); we may avoid such questions with a strategy inspired by Maine de Biran;

(iii) it is Reidian in spirit, and also somehow anti-modern, in that questions of existence come before questions of intelligibility. Existential judgements are linked to effort and resistance, prior to any clarification of our ideas about what it is that resists and that makes effort. This allows for a dynamical interaction between common sense on the one hand and philosophy and science on the other hand.²⁸

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¹ This paper is the reworked version of a talk presented at the International Reid Symposium at Aberdeen in 1998. I take this occasion to thank the Symposium organizers for their kind invitation and hospitality, and David Jemielity for helping me to improve the style of my paper.

² Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1987. See also, recently, G. di Giovanni, “Hume, Jacobi, and Common Sense. An Episode in the Reception of Hume in Germany at the Time of Kant”, *Kant-Studien* 89/1 (1998), p.44-58.

³ In his *Etudes d’histoire de la philosophie*, 2e éd., Paris, 1901, p.413-443.

⁴ Cf. “L’école écossaise et la philosophie d’expression française: le rôle de Pierre Prevost”, *Annales Benjamin Constant*, Lausanne, no.18-19, 1996, p.97-105, as

well as “L’impact de la philosophie écossaise sur la dialectique enseignée à Genève: un cours latin inédit (1793-1794) de Pierre Prevost”, in Denis Knoepfler (éd.), *Nomen latinum: Mélanges offerts à André Schneider*, Neuchâtel, Faculté des lettres, Genève, Droz, 1997, p.383-390.

⁵ See F.C.T. Moore, “Une copie mal déguisée”, in J.-P. Cotten (éd.), *Victor Cousin: Les Idéologues et les Ecossais*, Paris, Presses de l’Ecole Normale Supérieure, 1985, p.37-47.

⁶ The domain of religious belief is important in this context, but it is too complex to be considered here.

⁷ See several papers by G.E. Davie in *The Scottish Enlightenment and Other Essays* and in *A Passion for Ideas: Essays on the Scottish Enlightenment II*, Edinburgh, Polygon, 1991 and 1994.

⁸ See my ‘Reid and Lehrer: Metamind in History’, *Grazer Philosophische Studien* 40 (1991), p.135-147.

⁹ A main source for the classical approach to the philosophical analysis of questions is Aristotle, *Analytica Posteriora* II.1, 89b32s.

¹⁰ ‘Iuxta leges verae logicae, de nulla unquam re quaeri debet an sit, nisi prius quid sit intelligatur.’ *Meditationes, Primae responsiones*, ed. Adam & Tannery, vol.VII, p.107, l.26-p.108, l.1. (A prior text had “logicae meae” instead of “verae logicae”; Letter to Mersenne, December 31, 1640, ed. Adam & Tannery, vol.III, p.272, l.25-p.273, l.3.)

¹¹ *Philosophische Versuche über die menschliche Natur und ihre Entwicklung*, 2 vol., 1772, 2nd. ed. 1777, reprint Hildesheim, Olms, 1979.

¹² “Die von Hr. Reid sogenannte Ideenphilosophie oder der Grundsatz: alle Urtheile über die Objekte entstehen nur vermittelt der Eindrücke oder der Vorstellungen von ihnen; ein Grundsatz, den dieser Brite nach seiner sonstigen Einsicht in der Naturlehre nicht hätte leugnen sollen, ist gewiss hieran ganz unschuldig.” (*Versuche*, ed. 1777, Bd.I, p.377; see also p.402-403.) On Tetens and Reid, see M. Kuehn, *op.cit.*, p.119-140.

¹³ See Victor Delbos, *Maine de Biran et son oeuvre philosophique*, Paris: Vrin, 1931, who discusses this point on p.290-291.

¹⁴ *Essay* I.i.2.

¹⁵ ‘War Locke ein Empirist?’, *Studia Leibnitiana* 2 (1970), p.261-283.

¹⁶ A very useful sketch of Condillac’s specificities in respect to Locke is given in L. Krüger, *Der Begriff des Empirismus: Erkenntnistheoretische Studien am Beispiel John Lockes*, Berlin, de Gruyter, 1973, p.56-68.

¹⁷ See the remarks in Krüger, *Locke*, p.60.

¹⁸ ‘Zweites Gespräch: Clairsens und Tiefheim’, *Philosophisches Archiv*, hrsg. von J.A. Eberhard, Band II, 4. Stück, Berlin 1795, p.37-59.

¹⁹ Leiden, Brill, 1994.

²⁰ On V. Cousin and Scottish philosophy, cf. J.-P. Cotten (éd.), *Victor Cousin* (see above, n.5).

²¹ See I.iv.24, and also I.iii.20, and IV.xx.10.

²² I quote Maine de Biran from the *Oeuvres complètes*, dir. F. Azouvi, Paris, Vrin,

- 1984-1998 (hereafter OC).
- 23 Letter quoted by A. de la Valette Monbrun, *Maine de Biran (1766-1824): Essai de biographie historique et psychologique*, Paris, Fontemoing, 1914, p.314.
- 24 Ampère to Maine de Biran, May 3, 1815, in OC, vol.13/1, p.416 (my emphasis).
- 25 "Le moi connaît-il originairement son existence comme simple vertu sentante, effectuée par les objets, ou bien s'aperçoit-il comme puissante productive de certains modes ou actes?" (OC, vol.3, p.123)
- 26 "La sensation n'est pas du tout le signe naturel d'une cause extérieure, mais la résistance à notre action volontaire (non accompagnée de sensation) est le signe (naturel si l'on veut) de l'existence de cette cause." (OC, vol.2, p.308)
- 27 "En examinant le sens de l'effort musculaire, on trouve l'origine de ces idées que Reid veut admettre comme des principes primitifs et non acquis, inhérents à la constitution humaine." (OC, vol.11/2, p.157) - The piece entitled "Conversation avec MM. Degérando et Ampère, le 7 juillet 1813, à Nogent-sur-Marne, sous des berceaux de verdure" has detailed passages on the issue of first principles (OC, vol.8, p.221-234).
- 28 See the "Conclusion" of my *Philosophie et sens commun chez Thomas Reid*, Berne, Peter Lang, 1983, p.359-379.

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