

‘An Ancient Sage Philosopher’: Alexander Ross and the Defence of Philosophy

There was an ancient sage philosopher
That had read Alexander Ross over
Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*

Fleetingly immortalised by Butler and again briefly disinterred by Dr Johnson, Alexander Ross remains largely a forgotten figure.¹ An early seventeenth-century Scot who spent much of his career within the Laudian Church of England, his *oeuvre* was cuttingly dismissed by Anthony Wood, in *Athenae Oxoniensis*, as comprising ‘many books in Latine and English, and in Prose and Verse, the titles of which are now too numerous to insert’.² Before the end of the century, where remembered at all, he had already become a figure of ridicule: his nit-picking pedantry, his bombast, his combustibility, his sheer wordiness in publication and, perhaps not least, his irritating Scottishness, all combined to make Butler’s Ross a recognisable symbol of arcane learning and mis-placed scholarly *hubris* among English-speaking readers. Subsequently, he disappeared almost entirely from view. His principal historical function today is to serve as a gratifyingly *ersatz* natural philosopher, one of the ‘blindly intolerant reactionaries’ whose contribution to seventeenth-century culture had been rashly to defend an outdated Aristotelian cosmology in the face of compelling scientific contradiction.³

Wider interest in Ross, then, has not survived the loss of a certain contemporary notoriety. Yet there remain plausible grounds for regretting the almost complete obscurity into which this most idiosyncratic and versatile of seventeenth-century scholars subsequently fell. During an exile in rural England which spanned the Civil Wars and Revolution, he produced an impressive array of publications, ranging from ingenious speculations in comparative religion and a ground-breaking first English translation of the *Qur’an* (which caused England’s outraged republican Parliament in 1649 unsuccessfully to order the seizure of both text and printer) to less contentious works of reflective pastoral poetry.⁴ Even more importantly,

the secular philosophical treatises, which are the central achievement of Ross's lifetime of obsessive authorship, have an overlooked intellectual significance. Strongly conservative in ways reflecting the political and theological commitments which the exile carried with him from the north-east of Scotland, his philosophical fixations starkly illuminate the mental furniture of a man who, like the better-known 'Aberdeen Doctors' who resisted the imposition of the Covenant in the later 1630s, felt it necessary to articulate a defence of revered tradition in the face of unwelcome contemporary change.⁵ It is with the investigation of Ross's long-forgotten career, and his creative philosophical response to the innovations of the time, that this essay is chiefly concerned.

I

Alexander Ross was born at Aberdeen on 1 January 1591 into a local family about which nothing of significance is known.⁶ The evidence suggests, however, that he was of reasonably respectable stock, for he was dispatched at an early age to Aberdeen Grammar School, the principal educational institution in the district. There he would have been taught by David Wedderburn, one of Scotland's major early-seventeenth-century poets, who was active at the school throughout Ross's childhood. Whilst Wedderburn achieved a higher public profile as poet-laureate to the town of Aberdeen (which even presented a copy of his *Vivat Rex* to Charles I during his coronation visit to Scotland in 1633), he would certainly have been a most distinguished teacher for the callow boy.⁷ He was the author of several outstanding pieces of neo-Latin verse, as well as of an English grammar for use by teachers; and it seems more than likely that Ross's later expertise in classical languages, together with his complete command of Greek and Roman literature, will have received powerful early encouragement from this pedagogic influence.

Although the most substantial discussion of Ross's life and works, an unpublished 'Account of Ross and His Bibliography' by J. F. K. Johnstone, confidently asserts that Ross's higher education took place at Marischal College in Aberdeen, as the talented *protégé* not only of Wedderburn, who was concurrently professor of the college, but also of another notable neo-Latin poet, Thomas Reid, then a regent at Marischal, the *Dictionary of National Biography* offers a strikingly different view.⁸ Indeed, it seems to be on firmer ground in opting for an education at King's College – for this claim is supported both by the weight of earlier commentary and by the clinching evidence that there was in fact a contemporary graduate of the same name. King's was also, as it happens, widely known, during Ross's adolescence, for institutional conservatism. This manifested itself *inter alia* in a tendency towards lingering Catholicism after the Reformation, but also, as the seventeenth century opened, an increasing reputation for obdurate Episcopalianism.

Furthermore, the senior north-eastern college, in the heart of Old Aberdeen, was at this time embroiled in a continuing dispute over the New Foundations, the model for Scottish university reform promoted during the dominance of the newly-reformed Kirk by Andrew Melville and the presbyterian party in the 1570s and 1580s. Not least associated with the enthusiastic importation of the ideas of the Huguenot educationist Pierre de la Ramée, which also found favour at St Andrews and Glasgow, these had initially been adopted by Alexander Arbuthnot, Principal of King's from 1569 to 1583.⁹ Yet suspicion of the accompanying curricular novelties, whose pedagogic advantages over the tried-and-trusted ways of orthodox scholasticism were not always clear, and whose strident assault on previously-venerated educational practice in any case savoured unattractively of presbyterian iconoclasm, had never been overcome to local satisfaction: it is, as has been well said, worth remembering that 'academic conservatism played its part in keeping the scholastic mode alive', and few academic communities were more conservative than King's.¹⁰ From around 1600, it was discernibly travelling backwards 'towards a Protestant version of the Aristotelian scholasticism which had previously been denounced', reflecting a growing tendency to regard 'the more radically anti-scholastic ideas as politically suspect'.¹¹ As the surviving undergraduate class theses confirm, Aristotle was the cornerstone of an increasingly conservative philosophical education.¹² Ross would therefore have been exposed to an arts curriculum at King's in which an ultra-orthodox scholastic reaction was being triumphantly re-asserted.¹³

Ross graduated MA in 1608 and subsequently completed a DD before entering upon his intended career as a churchman and a teacher. He was even briefly a minister in Aberdeen. But in 1616, for reasons that are obscure though about which one can make an educated guess, he left Scotland for good, accepting the Mastership of the Free School at Southampton in England, now King Edward VI School. It may be that Ross's departure from the north-east was for positive reasons alone: this appointment was, after all, a fine opening for a young man, and Hampshire could well have seemed a land of limitless opportunity for an ambitious Aberdonian in his mid-twenties – indeed, he would have been merely one of many Scots after 1603 to share his sovereign's good fortune and seek greater profit and preferment in the southern kingdom. However, what it is possible to reconstruct of Ross's personality suggests that this might not be the whole story: certainly Wood's elliptical comment that Ross left Aberdeen 'upon what account I know not' tantalisingly provokes more questions than it provides answers.¹⁴

Ross was, through all his life, a man with strong opinions strongly held. His entire later literary career, propelled by a taste for scholarly controversy and characterised by successive attempts to engage eminent opponents in single intellectual combat, suggests an irascible personality given to the dissipation of his talents on angry and fruitless exchanges with more able minds. It is also clear, from the trajectory of his English career, that the young Ross had

emerged as an unreconstructed Episcopalian, like many others produced by his Aberdonian *alma mater*, at precisely the time when Scottish public life as a whole was turning increasingly towards staunch Presbyterianism. It is at least possible, then, that his hasty departure from Scotland, and his decamping to the south coast of England, may have been occasioned by something rather more unpleasant than the appealing possibilities afforded by the wider horizons of Jacobean England: a falling-out, a professional slight or a feeling of growing personal isolation within a radicalised Kirk would each have been consistent with Ross's distinctly peppery nature.

Whatever its immediate Scottish context, Ross's appointment on 22 April 1616 was, initially at least, greeted with understandable self-satisfaction by the burgesses of Southampton. As the school's modern historian remarks, 'Alexander Rosse, who succeeded John Twisse in the mastership of the school in 1616, was the most distinguished of our headmasters as a man of letters'.¹⁵ The *Assembly Books for Southampton* also contain a pleasing account of the Scottish schoolmaster's transient moment of glory:

This day, M^r Alexander Rosse, a Scottish man (uppon a L^re of Commendac'on from the right honourable the Earle of Hertford) was entertayned, and allowed by M^r May^{or} and the Assistants present in the Awditt Howse, to be our Schoolemr of the Free grammer schoole, at w^{ch} time the said M^r Rosse did p[ro]mise that if at anny time hereafter, either by means of better p^rferment or otherwise howsoev^r, he shalbe occasioned to leave the place: he shall not, nor will not remove, under six moneths warning at the least, first geven to the mayor for the time being, that p[ro]vision may be made of another sufficient Schoolem^r.¹⁶

The young Aberdonian doctor was undoubtedly a fine catch for a provincial English town – or so it seemed. Perhaps those who selected Ross, and who prudently incorporated specific guarantees of good service within the terms of his appointment, had an inkling of his headstrong temperament, sensing a latent capacity for wilful misbehaviour. Certainly, if that is true, the reservations of the corporation were to be fully justified by events.

Ross in fact devoted his early years in England not to dutiful schoolmaster-ship but to secluded scholarship, ruthlessly treating the post as a sinecure and using it as a solid financial platform upon which to begin an ambitious literary career. Often Ross had the effrontery to leave an unqualified assistant to take charge of his classes. The Court Leet record for May 1620 duly reveals a sorry tale of neglect and carelessness brought by the concerned parties:

Wee prte [present] A verie greate neglecte in the Schole master in not geveinge due attendance in teacheinge the Children, his attendaunce in his owne p^erson is founde to be verie Seldome but referre them to the teachinge of a Stranger unexamined and unripe of yeres insoemuche That it is lamentable to see the losse of tyme That the poore pupills Consumes, A Thinge of great moment and waighte, And therefore we wishe yo^u to have especiall Consideracon beinge a matter that Concerns generallie all mens goode and to yo^r wisdomes wee referr it.¹⁷

Ross, either shortly before or shortly after this damning deposition to the court in Southampton, seems to have done the decent thing, resigning his post rather than face the humiliating possibility of dismissal.¹⁸ He may in any case by now have been confident enough in his literary abilities to risk losing this source of regular income. Certainly it is clear that Ross, who had secured the schoolmastership not least through the patronage of Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, had not been slow to promote his clerical career in England with the assistance of other influential connections.

It is known, for example, that in 1622 he secured for himself one of the royal chaplaincies to Prince Charles. This sinecure, which did not require relocation to London, was supposedly obtained through the patronage of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose involvement in Ross's original appointment as schoolmaster in Southampton has even been claimed.¹⁹ A more plausible explanation, however, for the Aberdonian's successful insertion into the ecclesiastical establishment of the southern Stuart kingdom lies in his lifelong acquaintance with Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, tutor to the 13th Earl of Sutherland and a major influence in Scotland's north-east. A trusted courtier of both James and Charles (whose marriage to Henrietta-Maria he helped broker), Sir Robert was married to the daughter of his own kinsman, the Scottish cleric and one of James's trusted pro-unionist propagandists, John Gordon, Dean of Salisbury, and he also kept a house in nearby Wiltshire.²⁰ Not least because of these powerful friends at the heart of the Anglo-Scottish court, Ross was able to enjoy a perfectly agreeable living in Hampshire, first at St Mary's Church in Southampton and later at All Saints'.²¹ Furthermore, the town, like his native Aberdeen, long retained a distinctively conservative character, an ancient market town and port which loyally supported King Charles in his initial disagreements with Parliament and bent largely without disquiet to the Arminian policies pursued by Laud: one scholar therefore seems justified in surmising that Ross would have had every reason to be 'comfortable in his surroundings'.²²

Nevertheless, Southampton was not immune to the growing disaffection with royal government which scarred the later 1630s and early 1640s. By March 1641, an indication of the changing mood may just be hinted at in the hostile deposition which is known to have been submitted against the Aberdonian minister as 'an extortioner and an usurer'.²³ Whether well-founded or merely malicious, this wounding accusation levelled against a prominent royal chaplain and local minister marked the beginning of the end of Ross's long sojourn in Southampton. Next year, the town was itself secured to Parliament as the English Civil War began in earnest. Probably with a heavy heart, but bowing to the mood of the times, Ross in 1642 moved as vicar to the isolated parish of Carisbrooke on the Isle of Wight, to whose benefice he had been presented by Charles in 1634.

Ross's ecclesiastical career here – despite St Mary's Church being the most important of the island's churches, despite Charles's own incarceration in the

neighbouring castle by 1647 – was marked by few major perturbations which have left their mark on recorded history. These years were initially as personally undemanding for a remote rural clergyman as they were increasingly perplexing for a heartfelt Royalist. But some time between 1645 and 1650 (probably closer to the earlier date, though the evidence is annoyingly incomplete), Ross was physically ejected from his Carisbrooke fastness by Puritan inquisitors and his living subsequently placed in Parliamentary sequestration.²⁴ He moved once more, this time into the house of his long-time friend Sir Andrew Henley at Bramshill in Hampshire. And it was there, in ‘the Park-house’, that, on 24 February 1654, Alexander Ross expired.²⁵ He was buried in the neighbouring parish church of Eversley, where two memorial tablets mark his final resting place – which he shares with a better-remembered man of letters, a nineteenth-century rector of the parish, the novelist Charles Kingsley. In his will, made on 21 February, Ross scattered his estate widely among those to whom he felt most indebted. The Senate of the University of Aberdeen, the Free School in Southampton (evidently Ross bore no grudges), the parishes of Carisbrooke and All Saints’, and those great scholarly institutions, the university libraries of Cambridge and Oxford, all benefited from his generosity. It was an act of kindness which provides a precise and unambiguous footnote to an otherwise obscure seventeenth-century life.

II

The earliest work published by Ross, *Rerum Judaicarum Memorabilium*, appeared in 1617. It was, presumably, the first fruit of his stolen hours in Southampton, written when he ought in all conscience to have been instructing the pupils in the Free School.²⁶ The piece, initially a double-volume, was not one of Ross’s more eye-catching efforts. An uninspiring rumination on Jewish history, it attracted no great contemporary comment and seems rapidly to have slipped from view. Nonetheless undeterred, Ross provided a third volume in 1619, issuing the fourth as late as 1632.²⁷ Continuing the biblical theme, he also spent his early years in Southampton writing *The First and Second Book of Questions and Answers upon the Book of Genesis*, which appeared in 1622. But both this and the Jewish study are unremarkable works. They reveal a mind steeped in scriptural scholarship though offering nothing of real distinction or quality to the study of holy texts. It is possible that Ross realised this himself: publicly self-confident, it may be that privately he understood better than his detractors his own strengths and weaknesses. Plainly he devoted the next several years to the cultivation of rather different intellectual pursuits, perhaps beginning to write some of the many works which were published later, and certainly also turning decisively away from prosaic biblical learning to the more exciting secular and philosophical studies for which his volatile temperament and scholastic education had fitted him.

Ross's hunger for intellectual recognition was responsible, in James Bruce's words, for 'an uncommon desire of appearing as a corrector and improver of other people's writings'.²⁸ This passion to some extent lay behind the major treatises eventually delivered to the world by Ross in the 1630s and 1640s. And in these, Ross's mature years, it is also clear that the intellectual influence of Aberdeen, and especially of his time at King's College, was beginning to make itself strongly apparent in his work. For the most obvious feature of Ross's energetic contributions to secular philosophy was a determination to re-assert the pristine, unsullied integrity of Aristotelian scholasticism – precisely the body of knowledge over whose retention, against the competing claims of other systems of thought, the great curricular battles at King's had been fought during Ross's youth.²⁹ The adult scholar similarly sought, in his own words, to defend the '*Peripatetick verities*, which hitherto have been the proper and wholesome food of our Universities'.³⁰ Not only did this emphasis on plain scholasticism, embodying the traditional academic virtues and values, run counter to the vulgar revisionism against which the Aberdeen college had itself made such an energetic stand – part of what John Trentman has identified more widely as 'a self-conscious and deliberate Aristotelian reaction to Ramists, humanists, and the like'.³¹ It turned out, as Ross's carefully-chosen grounds of argument in these texts make clear, to involve a full-frontal assault on the new physiological, psychological, metaphysical and cosmological systems of the early seventeenth century.

Ross's counter-offensive in the cause of the peerless Aristotle, in effect continuing from Southampton the pattern of conservative Aberdonian resistance to unsettling philosophical innovations, began with the striking *Commentum de terrae motu circulari* (1634), a tract extravagantly dedicated to none other than Archbishop Laud, pillar of the Stuart ecclesiastical establishment. Ross sought in this work flatly to deny the claims of Copernicus and his latter-day followers – among them influential contemporaries like Nathanael Carpenter and Philip Lansberg – that the earth rotated around the sun. He predictably upheld instead the doctrine of geocentrism. Inevitably he also rejected the recent claims of Johannes Kepler that each of the planets orbited in a distinctive ellipse rather than in the uniform, perfect circle insisted upon by the scholastics.³² It is, of course, tempting to see this tenacious attachment to conventional Aristotelian cosmology as foolish; or, at best, as incorrigibly quaint. Indeed, Frank Johnson, the historian of English Renaissance astronomy, loftily dismisses Ross as 'the last voluble champion of bigoted Aristotelianism', condemned out of his own mouth by arguments which 'betray a complete ignorance of the demonstrable truths of physics and astronomy'.³³

It is nevertheless important to note that such views, however empirically flawed and colourfully-expressed, still enjoyed wide currency among European intellectuals in the 1630s and 1640s. Certainly no broad consensus of opinion had yet emerged as to the veracity of the observational claims which

would later be acknowledged as the cornerstones of the ‘Scientific Revolution’. Opposition to the Copernican theory, as Thomas Kuhn reminds us, came from many quarters at this time, not merely from the more obdurate and oppressive elements of the Catholic Church so famously provoked into action by Galileo. Conservative Protestant theologians were no less willing than the Papacy to view the new cosmology with suspicion. Nervous at its very obvious challenge to biblical literalism, as well as at its destabilisation of a settled scholastic educational curriculum (an objection which, it will be remembered, had already proven particularly influential at King’s), ‘some men whose first interests were religious, moral, or aesthetic, continued to oppose Copernicanism bitterly for a very long time’.³⁴ Thus Ross’s defiant stance, proudly flourished before the Primate of All England, is important for what it might confirm about the deep philosophical conservatism inculcated by certain early seventeenth-century curricula such as that at King’s, even as his specific cosmological beliefs inevitably invite modern ridicule.

A later text, *The New Planet No Planet: or, The Earth No Wandring Star; Except in the Wandring Heads of the Galileans* (1646), directed at the astronomy of John Wilkins, merely re-affirms Ross’s strongly traditional intellectual commitments which the new cosmology appeared so obviously to jeopardise. Ross conceived his work in bristling opposition to ‘Copernicus his Opinion’, advanced by Wilkins’s work, which he believed could be shown conclusively to be simply ‘erroneous, ridiculous and impious’. Heliocentrism, he insisted, was the foolish and misguided confection of one who could be dismissed (though with a geographical imprecision which is sadly characteristic of Ross) as ‘that heavie Prussian’.³⁵ The source of cosmological truth, on the contrary, lay in warmer, more familiar climes:

our earth must be in the center, because it is in the lowest plane, or midst of the world; this *Aristotle* proves by the descending of all heavy to the center, and the ascending of light bodies from it.³⁶

Quod erat demonstrandum, insisted Ross: Aristotle’s deduction from one of the demonstrable effects of gravity patently showed the speciousness of the modern Galileans’ heliocentrism, the manifest perversity of Wilkins’s claims.

Such orthodox philosophical stances, reflecting the continuing influence of his Aberdonian education, informed Ross’s other prose works in the mid-1640s. The most interesting of these, *Medicus Medicatus: or The Physicians Religion Cured ... With Some Animadversions Upon Sir Kenelm Digbie’s Observations on Religio Medici* (1645), was ostensibly, as the title hints, a riposte to an English scholar.³⁷ Something of an amateur scientist and later an early member of the Royal Society, Digby had written his own work as a detailed critique of Sir Thomas Browne’s more celebrated *Religio Medici*, which had appeared in 1643. The resulting three-sided controversy is especially curious, however, because, whilst the participants actually shared both political Royalism and religious conservatism during the first years of a

painfully divisive civil war in Britain (indeed Digby was another intimate of Laud), Ross was actually preoccupied with the more narrowly philosophical problem of how far the other two had managed to uphold strict Aristotelian teachings. Indeed, it was the Aberdonian's considered opinion, liberally and noisily repeated throughout his own work, that Sir Thomas and Sir Kenelm had allowed themselves to depart dangerously from the approved principles of scholastic learning.

In spite of the avowed focus on Digby's supposed errors, it was Browne's treatise which in fact attracted much of what has been fairly described as Ross's 'self-righteous vituperation'.³⁸ *Religio Medici*, claimed Ross, showed its author to have been dangerously attracted to the Arabic commentaries through which many Europeans had interpreted ancient Greek doctrines. As a result, it had been insufficiently attentive to the true meanings of the major Western authorities, such as Plato, St Augustine, and, above all, Aristotle, which could only be revealed by stripping away medieval accretions and returning to a close study of the original texts. Specifically, on the burning question of the immortality of the soul, Browne had been far too feeble in his attempts to distinguish original Greek wisdom from erroneous, essentially Islamic doctrine. The author of *Religio Medici* was rewarded with a basic lesson from the schoolmasterly Ross:

... if you have forgot, reade over againe *Plato*, and you shall find, that *Philosophy* can throughly prove the soules immortality: reade also *Aristotle*.³⁹

Similarly, Ross commended to his careless rival 'the Schooles' and 'Aristotle in his *Topicks*', as the surest foundations for a definition of 'Nature'.⁴⁰ And Browne was also taken to task for disregarding the orthodox scholastic teaching on the distinctions between souls and angels:

The Schooles will tell you, that the *Angels* differ *specifically* one from another, how then can they and the soules of men differ only *numerically*: But this will not relish with you, who loves *allegoricall* descriptions better than *metaphysicall* definitions.⁴¹

The reprimand, of course, is typically insulting, adopting the patronising tone towards an errant pupil which Ross perhaps first perfected when browbeating the youth of Southampton. But its philosophical content is also revealing. It underlines once again his fundamentally conservative position as an advocate of pure Aristotelianism – an inflexible insistence on scholasticism originally drummed into him many years before in the disputatious environment of King's College.

Another work, *The Philosophicall Touch-stone*, also published in 1645, saw Ross challenging two more of Digby's recent interventions, the *Discourse of the Nature of Bodies* (1643) and *Discourse of the Immortalitie of the Soule* (1643). Predictably, and despite Digby's broad conformity with much of Aristotelian tradition, Ross's principal objection again appears to be

that the Englishman had been insufficiently careful in his exposition of scholastic psychology and metaphysics. Ross describes his own position in a typically unrestrained prologue, dedicated to John, 8th Earl of Rutland:

Here you may see what odds there are between naturall *gems*, and counterfeit *stones*; between solid wholesome meats, and a dish of *Frogs* or *Mushrooms*, though made savoury with French sauce, to which that ingenious rather than (in this Discourse) judicious Knight doth invite us ... We that have eat plentifully of the sound and wholesome viands which are dressed in *Aristotle's kitchen*, are loth now to be fed, as the *Indian gods* are, with the steem or smoak of meats; or, as those – *Umbræ tenues, simulachraque, luce carentum*, those pale ghosts in *Proserpine's Court*, to champ Leeks and Mallowes.⁴²

A slightly self-conscious yet absolutely uncompromising approach to the scholastic heritage thus once again determined Ross's philosophical judgement: as he put it more plainly, this work contained 'some passages in it *Heterodoxall*, and not consonant to the principles of Divinity and Philosophy'.⁴³ Digby's refusal to adhere with the necessary strictness to Aristotelian tradition, and especially his hint of beguiling French (i.e. Ramist or perhaps Cartesian) revisionism, was what had offended. Professed accounts of nature needed to be judged, it was strongly implied, by the demanding yardstick of scholastic orthodoxy. Modern treatments were especially to be suspected. And even those who shared Ross's political and religious conservatism were, in this time of acute ideological crisis, to be treated with appropriate circumspection when their philosophical pronouncements deviated to any degree from what he regarded as a uniquely reliable point of reference.

Resolute Aristotelian orthodoxy continued to be Ross's consistent response to cultural and political change for the rest of his days. Indeed, he was to force himself to the passing attention of a slightly bemused posterity with his most remarkable late work, *Leviathan Drawn Out With a Hook* (1653), yet another combative volume of polemic hurled defiantly in the face of an innovator, this time Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury.⁴⁴ Dedicated to Francis Lucy, kinsman of William, Bishop of St David's and another Laudian ecclesiastic whose scholasticism would soon give rise to a strongly-worded attack on Hobbes, the work allowed Ross to represent Aristotle this time as the voice of common sense against his opponent's more unreasonable and unpalatable assertions.⁴⁵ Ross took particular issue with Hobbes for his materialism, insisting that 'God made the world perfect, consisting both of material and immaterial substances'.⁴⁶ Other miscellaneous objections, again drawing heavily upon scholastic orthodoxy for their authority, included that Hobbes had excused princes from obedience to the law; that he had denied the meaningfulness of covenants; and that he had refused to accept the primacy of moral conscience over judicial coercion. In essence, Hobbes, by so brazenly assaulting philosophical convention, had also deviated wildly from the Aristotelianism which underlay it: he had thereby forfeited any right to

be taken seriously. Such a reaction from Ross is scarcely surprising. Under the Republic, with what Ross considered eccentric political ideas everywhere indulged by a fanatic and regicide state, *Leviathan* must have appeared one further destabilising influence – a most unwelcome symptom of disordered times – which could be neither tolerated nor excused. Aristotle, his constant companion throughout a fluctuating career, the familiar embodiment of tradition as well as a useful fund of widely-credited intellectual commonplaces, still provided Ross, in the last two years of his life, with his well-rehearsed response to novelty.

III

Ross's rigid defence of scholasticism gave specific expression to a philosophical conservatism which was inspired by revulsion at increasing political and religious change. But a second strand of polemic running through his work, related to but very different from the first, was no less indicative of Ross's growing alienation, as a Royalist and Episcopalian, from contemporary developments. This was his emerging commitment to neo-Stoicism, the body of ancient moral and political thought – based particularly on authorities such as Seneca and Tacitus – whose great popularity in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries has usually been explained by the marked instability of this period in European history.⁴⁷ Certainly, where French, Flemish, German and English exponents were attracted to the study of such texts by their peculiar usefulness in helping make sense of what Ross himself called the human propensity to 'turn the World upside-down', so too were many of their Scottish counterparts, unnerved by political turbulence and growing religious extremism at large in Stuart Britain.⁴⁸

Gordon of Gordonstoun, royal courtier and Ross's patron, was prominent among them. His magnificent *Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* (c. 1620), full of practical advice for difficult times and strongly indebted to the raging fashion for Tacitean observation, was, as a result, quite the most intellectually challenging family history to be composed in seventeenth-century Scotland.⁴⁹ Ross's neo-Stoicism emerged by a slightly different route, first in experimental flights of poetic fancy and then interwoven with the scholastic polemic which filled the substantial prose treatises of his mature years. But even here, as with Justus Lipsius's scholarship in the war-torn Netherlands, in Pierre Charron's work amid the French Wars of Religion, or in Sir Walter Raleigh's historiography, shaped by its author's familiarity with the lethal snares of the Jacobean court, the background to this philosophical journey – which, despite the innovations in literary expression which it could stimulate, was in ideological terms characterised by a deeply conservative yearning for moral order and political stability, entirely reconcilable with the conformist impulses of an Aristotelian scholastic – was

again formed by Ross's personal recoiling in the face of conflict, turmoil and, increasingly, bitter worldly disappointment.⁵⁰ As with the cult of Aristotle, which was wholly conventional, so with neo-Stoicism, classically-inspired and yet something of a fashionable statement in its own right, Ross found in his philosophical interests a valuable defence against the more alarming aspects of modernity.

His intellectual conditioning in early seventeenth-century Aberdeen appears once again to have been the crucial factor in his initial exposure to this swelling cultural tide. For Ross's schoolteacher Wedderburn was a significant contributor to neo-Stoicism, responsible for numerous poems deferring to the new philosophical vogue, including 'Aberdeen in Mourning', a late work composed after the death of King James in 1625 and arguing (unconvincingly, it must be said) that the deceased monarch had been a paragon of Stoical virtue, literally *rex stoicus* personified amid the European wars, both prudent and pacific.⁵¹ Further evidence of Aberdonian attachment to a philosophical impulse which combined stylish literary articulation with profound moral and political conservatism is provided by Thomas Reid. Educated at Marischal College, in France and then at Louvain where Lipsius had recently taught, Reid, who was another master at Aberdeen Grammar School during Ross's last two years as a pupil, went on to write many poems reflecting impeccably conventional values before eventually becoming James's Latin Secretary, putting his classical expertise at his monarch's service.⁵² Thomas Dempster was yet another Aberdeenshire scholar drawn into the neo-Stoical nexus: he studied in the Netherlands under Lipsius before devoting a richly idiosyncratic career to jurisprudence (a key discipline in the re-popularisation of Stoical teachings) and to an elegantly philosophical poetry which reflected wistfully upon the delicious uncertainties of public life.⁵³ No less beguiled, though earlier, was Arbuthnot, the controversial Principal of King's who had first introduced the New Foundations: his 'Miseries of the Pure Scholar' (1572) had already captured, in authentic Scots vernacular, the sentimental self-analysis and noble resignation of reviving Stoicism; his book collection, moreover, left to the university's use after his death, must have provided Ross's generation of students with increased access to some of the movement's key texts.⁵⁴

Ross's own active explorations in neo-Stoicism were, however, a comparatively late development, a fact which supports the view that, in his case as in others like Lipsius's, they formed a coherent response to worldly adversity and personal disappointment, of a piece with his increasingly desperate advocacy of Aristotle.⁵⁵ There had been a brief early flirtation with the characteristic tropes of this most fashionably philosophical of literatures, best seen in the engagingly naive *Three Decades of Divine Meditations* (1630), a collection of pastoral verses in which Ross, then still a prominent Southampton clergyman, allowed himself to revel in the moral advantages of secluded rusticity in a world otherwise dominated by urban sophistication and political crisis:

O Hills and dales, woods, groves, and christall springs,
 I more esteeme your Tempe shades and flowers,
 Then Princes Courts, proud townes, & lofty towres ...⁵⁶

The trope of Arcadian remoteness and distaste for public life, however, sat ill beside the professional comforts of a Laudian ecclesiastic ensconced in a prestigious parish post in a bustling English port; and the distinctly wooden *Three Decades* in any case did not presage Ross's public recognition as a great poet. Instead it was to be in the animated prose works from the early 1640s onwards – ostensibly the vehicles for the preservation of strict scholasticism, but written, significantly, after the shattering onset in Britain of what Lipsius in the Netherlands had already aptly described as 'the scorching flame of civill warres' – that Ross's emergent interest in philosophical neo-Stoicism as a reflection upon contemporary public affairs actually began to coalesce.⁵⁷

Medicus Medicatus, that ripe attack on Browne's and Digby's supposed deviations from Aristotelian orthodoxy, provides some evidence of this development in Ross's thought. In particular, it suggests that an important part of Stoicism's attraction for him was its potency as a defence of traditional moral values – abstemiousness, rectitude and self-control – in the face of what Ross, like that other Stoical ecclesiastic, Guillaume du Vair, Bishop of Lisieux, before him, believed to be 'the licentious loosenes of our times'.⁵⁸ Thus he sought in this work not just to uphold the orthodox teachings of Aristotle but to rebut the corrupting doctrines of Epicurus, whom he accused Browne of slavishly following. This philosophical critique, moreover, also had far-reaching ideological resonance. For within the intensely accusatory public discourse of Charles I's Britain, the notion that a Baroque royal court, in ostentatiously embracing masques, revelries and sumptuous artistry, had willingly succumbed to Epicurean hedonism, had long been given credence: the outbreak of war merely served to justify the suspicion of many.⁵⁹ Ross's assaults on what he readily conceived as Epicureanism, not least because it seemed to him embedded in the writings of men who otherwise shared his Royalist commitments, might thus be read as confirmation of his very worst fears: that political and religious authority was by the mid-1640s under threat not only from the expected sources – a motley assortment of firebrand republicans and Puritans – but from insidious philosophical errors loose within the conservative community itself.

Consequently *Medicus Medicatus* may well be as significant for its flashes of violent anti-Epicureanism as for the resolute scholasticism which gives the text its principal flavour. Ross, for example, considered that Browne had been disastrously mistaken in thinking 'Epicurus to be no Atheist, for denying Gods providence over the trivial actions of inferiour creatures'. This apparent *longueur* needed specific correction. It was, implied Ross, merely limp acquiescence in immoral and atheist apologetic:

I say, hee is no lesse an *Atheist* that denies Gods providence, or any other of his Attributes, then hee that denies his Essence. Though *Epicurus* and *Democritus* babbled something of a Deity, yet in holding the world to be casually and rashly agglomerated of small *atomes*, they were very *Atheists*. And so were *Diagoras*, *Milesius*, *Theodorus*, *Cymensis*, and many others. Reade *Tully*, and hee will tell you, whether *Epicurus* was not an *Atheist*, who wrote against the gods; & that both he & *Democritus* were *Atheists*, for denying that the gods did either help or shew favour to men.⁶⁰

Only by taking Cicero's *De natura deorum*, the greatest Latin contribution to Stoic providentialism and the patent remedy for Epicurean dogma, might Browne come to appreciate his impiety and save himself from mortal contamination by these virulent and morally-corrupting doctrines.

The sequel of 1645, moreover, revealed the same preoccupations, Ross's stock Aristotelianism being supplemented by polemical diversions deep into Stoical territory. Indeed, his underlying ideological conservatism was by now issuing in a veritable obsession with disorder and instability, as Ross found himself, probably in the months between Marston Moor and Naseby, cast adrift upon 'the verie sea of calamities' – as Lipsius had evocatively observed the public scene from his own bolt-hole during the Dutch Revolt.⁶¹ This is clearly seen, for example, in the first pages of *The Philosophicall Touchstone*, where the 'Gentry of our Nation' – the political community of Britain which had brought about the civil wars – were condemned for abandoning their public spiritedness, that quintessential Stoic virtue so valorised by the Roman moralists, which had previously shored up the established order. Indeed, they had come to believe that they were

born meerly for themselves and their pleasures, whose time is spent either *idlely*, *wickedly*, or *impertinently*, as *Seneca* complains, *Eorum vitam mortemque juxta existem ...*⁶²

By 1646 and 1647, however, stripped even of his position at Carisbrooke (which he had in any case despairingly taken to describing as 'this place of exile') and observing the military eclipse of Royalism whilst living on the charity of his friend Hensley, Ross's faith in neo-Stoicism as a response to political disappointment had begun increasingly to colour his philosophical thinking.⁶³ In composing a succession of late works devoted substantially to the lessons of the Stoics, and to the task of ironing out the inconsistencies between this most apposite form of pagan wisdom and his own Christian beliefs, Ross used his last years not simply to construct a forthright defence of philosophy for the wider benefit of his readers but to equip himself with a series of introspective reflections which might offer succour specifically to a dejected and marginalised Royalist.

The first of this group of works, *Mystagogus Poeticus, or The Muses Interpreter* (1647), although based on Ross's much earlier *Mel Heliconium, or Poeticall Honey gathered out of the Weeds of Parnassus* (1639), emerged in

the untidy aftermath of the First Civil War and allowed him to address a set of philosophical issues raised directly by his own straitened circumstances at Bramshill, ejected from his parish and forbidden from taking any further public role.⁶⁴ There is ‘no studie’, he suggests in a plainly self-referential early remark, ‘that sutes better with the disposition of a Gentleman, then ancient Poetry’.⁶⁵ Thereafter, in what is supposedly a lexicon of the Greek and Roman deities, Ross adapts this conventional project to an unexpected purpose, transforming the explanation of certain characters into penetrating explorations of key Stoic themes. Diana, for example, becomes an opportunity to re-affirm the superiority of rural retreat: ‘They that will live chast’, he cautions, ‘must with *Diana* live on Hills and Woods, and use continual exercise; for idleness and great Cities, are enemies to Virginitie’.⁶⁶

Similarly the example of Deucalion is used to investigate the qualities required by those engaged in public duties and, in particular, the benefits bestowed by learning and scholarship. Ross claims, however, with another glance at his own circumstances, that a private scholarly life is preferable:

It is not the least happinesse to hide ones selfe in *Parnassus* amongst the Muses; for a Scholar to spend his time privately and quietly in his study, whilst the tumultuous floods of troubles and crosses prevaile abroad in the world.⁶⁷

Indeed, it is the very insulation from the horrors of public life which makes solitariness, in a classic Stoic claim, so much superior:

for the Scholar is more comforted in his own private and solitary life, with a competency, than the richest men that are with their outward pomp and variety; and what greater joy can there be, then in those Companions, who both take us off from unlawfull and wicked delights, which shall end in sorrow, and fill our minds with knowledge of heavenly things, and sweet contentment; therefore the Muses were held perpetual Virgins, and they still preserved their chastity against all the assaults of *Venus*. For men, that delight in learning, scorn fleshly lusts, which prevail most in ignorant idle men: and because Poets and learned men love a retired life, therefore the Muses were said to dwell in desart woods and hills; for this cause their Temples were built remote from Cities: and they were described sitting on the tops of *Parnassus* ...⁶⁸

In *Mystagogus Poeticus*, then, the ethics of an Aberdonian life reduced to private retreat in rural Hampshire are bravely, even heroically, asserted. Ross in effect is able to employ neo-Stoicism so as to make a virtue out of unfortunate political necessity.

Yet Ross was not unaware of the problems involved in reconciling Christian faith with Stoical philosophy – especially, as sixteenth-century predecessors like Calvin and Knox had noticed, in the awkward matter of metaphysics.⁶⁹ For many ancient Stoics were believed to have endorsed a fatalism which, if embraced by modern Christians, would ascribe everything (including even sin) to God’s providential role and, what was worse, would appear to deny free will and so the possibility of meaningful moral choice to

men.⁷⁰ Ross's *The Marrow of Historie, or An Epitome of all historical passages from the Creation to the end of the last Macedonian War* (1650), was published in the disorienting aftermath of King Charles's execution and the creation of the Republic. Written probably just after Ross had completed his translation of the *Qu'ran*, a text whose prefatory address had also scoffed at a Cromwellian regime which he believed was inspired by a series of murderous heresies, *The Marrow of Historie* sought to re-interpret the Stoics' providentialism in such a way as to rid it of the lethal stigma of fatalism, rendering it peculiarly useful in the deeply unpropitious circumstances faced by British conservatives after the regicide.⁷¹ Interestingly the work is also a direct challenge to Sir Walter Raleigh, whose Stoically-inspired *History of the World* (1614) had failed, at least in Ross's severe judgement, to avoid the slur of fatalistic necessity. As he explained his own preferred formulation, an obvious attempt at compromise between pagan fatalism and theological free will:

In this question of Fate, the middle cours is to be followed, that as with the Hea-then, wee do not binde God to his Creatures in this supposed necessitie of Des-tinie, so on the contrarie, wee do not rob those beautifull creatures of their powers and offices.⁷²

At least to Ross's own mind, in improving on Raleigh's careless discussion, he would be dispatching one of the perennial objections to those who drew upon the moral content of Stoicism – making it useful to good Christians by ridding it forever, he hoped, of the invidious charge of fatalism.

Ross's enthusiasm to improve on Raleigh's treatment, and so to enhance the modern utility of Stoicism, is also seen in *The History of the World: The Second Part in Six Books* (London, 1652), itself supposedly a continuation of the Englishman's work: 'like a piece of bad Gothick tacked to a magnificent pile of Roman architecture ...', said a later detractor.⁷³ In the preface Ross's philosophical commitment to neo-Stoicism is explained in another probably autobiographical reflection:

I have hitherto been a *carefull dispenser* of my time, and a *Niggard* of my dayes, having imployed as few of them as I could in *Idllesse*, and even from my youth I have been more conversant among the *dead* then the *living*, though I have seemed to some of *Epicurus* his swinish *Schollars*, no better then one of those *mad men* in the *Gospell*, who dwelt among the *Graves*.⁷⁴

As one might by now expect, moreover, Ross had no qualms about making explicit his own strong philosophical preferences:

I have been content hitherto, rather to converse in the *Stoicall* School of *Zeno*, then in the *voluptuous Garden* of *Epicurus*.⁷⁵

Thereafter, in a work which often follows Gordon of Gordounstoun in its reliance upon the gloomy political analysis found in Tacitus's *Annals*, Ross explores the potential for human reason to impact beneficially upon the public

scene. History, he suggests, is a crucial support to practical political conduct, and in this capacity it is obviously ‘necessary to us all’. Yet in the final analysis, Ross offers only caution to those who expect to change things for the better:

In Histories, great Men will find what uncertainty and vanity there is in outward splendour; what it is that makes true and genuine Nobility, and discriminates it from that which is suppositious and adulterate; and it will shew them that there is no confidence to be given to humane strength, Policy, nor Actions.⁷⁶

Such grim assurance, mimicking Lipsius not just in its educational preference for historical literature but in its ultimate suspicion that political rationality will often not be wholly effective, confirms once more Ross’s Stoical affiliations.⁷⁷

Yet despite this qualified pessimism about public life, in a last prose work, *Som Animadversions and Observations upon Sir Walter Raleigh’s Historie of the World* (1653), published in one volume alongside *Leviathan Drawn Out With a Hook*, Ross was at least able to complete his investigation into the modern viability of Stoic moral prescriptions which seemed so reliant upon a controversial pagan metaphysics.⁷⁸ Once again the unfortunate Raleigh, whose own close encounter with Stoicism clearly fascinated the Aberdonian, provides Ross with his starting-point, the purpose being to interrogate (using, of course, the pedantic reasoning of a skilled scholastic logician) the key terms incautiously employed by the author of *The History of the World*:

If by Fortune here is understood that blinde Idol of the Gentiles, then to ascribe the effects of Virtue to Fortune is not so much malice as madness: for such a Fortune is nothing.⁷⁹

Ross manages to develop this semantic analysis in such a way as to suggest that Fortune was indeed reconcilable with Christian Providence, providing that :

... if, with wise men, wee mean by Fortune God’s Providence, then to ascribe the effects of virtue to Fortune, is not malice but wisdom. For even the Gentiles did acknowledg (I mean the wiser sort) that Fortune ruled all things. * *In omni re dominatur Fortuna*.⁸⁰

Quoting from Sallust’s *De coniuratione Catilinae*, itself a major source for Lipsius’s influential *Politica* (1589), Ross’s invocation of the Stoics – ‘the wiser sort’ – allows him to elide Fortune and Providence, once again resolving the inconsistency between faith and philosophy. Ross, presumably to his own satisfaction, had found a way of fusing the two bodies of thought which gave him personal consolation in these most difficult of times.

IV

Alexander Ross’s chief philosophical inspiration was undoubtedly derived from his Aberdonian roots: like a near-contemporary from King’s College,

David Leech, he looked back fondly to the days when his masters had ‘first taught me philosophy from the learned page of Aristotle’.⁸¹ Blisteringly critical even of moderate revisionism, let alone of the growing weight of contradictory evidence furnished by observational and experimental science, Ross was one of the last defenders of a scholasticism, wholly untainted by recent modifications, which seemed to him to embody absolute certainty in a world of unpredictable change. A crucial reason for this defensiveness, of course, takes us back to Ross’s curious biography, which combined exile with growing disappointment and ultimate defeat. Furth of Scotland, expelled as a schoolmaster, hounded out of Southampton, marooned on the Isle of Wight, sequestered and finally confined to the house of a friend in rural Hampshire, his personal experiences were a peculiar distillation of that progressive marginalisation which was doubtless shared by many other Royalists and Episcopalians – including poets like Ross’s friend Edward Benlowes and the great Welsh muse Henry Vaughan – amid the depressing events of Charles I’s last years.⁸²

Ross’s philosophical scholarship reflected this deepening sense of impotence and exclusion. His early commitment to Aristotle hardened into desperate resistance. But his fascination with neo-Stoicism also grew, as uncontrollable forces seemed to threaten the moral and political order, and then even overwhelm it, in an unprecedented period of public crisis. Representing the conservative mentality of early seventeenth-century King’s College with perhaps less decorum than the ‘Aberdeen Doctors’, but also intriguingly anticipating the stubborn resistance to intellectual novelty adopted in the next century by a new generation of Aberdonian thinkers like Thomas Reid and James Beattie, the celebrated exponents of ‘Common Sense philosophy’, Alexander Ross’s mature scholarship, shaped by his regional origins and beleaguered circumstances, deserves better than the ridicule to which it has commonly been subjected.⁸³

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Notes

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- 1 Samuel Butler, *Hudibras*, ed. J. Wilders (Oxford, 1967), p. 29. The sage philosopher in question was probably Empedocles of Acragas. Johnson’s thoughts on Ross are found in *Early Biographical Writings of Dr Johnson*, ed. J. D. Fleeman (Westmead, 1973), pp. 426, 430.
- 2 Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensis. An Exact History of all the Writers and*

- Bishops Who have had their Education in The most ancient, and famous University of Oxford*, 2 vols (London, 1691–2), I, 372.
- 3 F. R. Johnson, *Astronomical Thought in Renaissance England: A Study of English Scientific Writings from 1500 to 1645* (New York, 1968), p. 277.
 - 4 See, for convincing evidence of Ross's versatility, *Πανορεβεία; or, a View of All Religions in the World* (London, 1653); *The Alcoran of Mahomet, Translated out of Arabique into French* (London, 1649); and the early verse collection *Three Decades of Divine Meditations, etc.* ([London], 1630). Whilst the modern silence on Ross's sometimes startling originality is positively deafening, his achievement has recently been acknowledged by an Islamic scholar: N. Matar, 'Alexander Ross and the First English Translation of the *Qur'an*', *The Muslim World*, 88 (1998), 81–92; also his 'Islam in Interregnum and Restoration England', *The Seventeenth Century*, 6 (1991), 57–71.
 - 5 For the 'Doctors', see especially David Stevenson, *King's College, Aberdeen, 1560–1641: From Protestant Reformation to Covenanting Revolution* (Aberdeen, 1990), pp. 94–123; and D. Macmillan, *The Aberdeen Doctors: A Notable Group of Scottish Theologians of the First Episcopal Period* (London, 1909). On John Forbes, William Leslie and the other 'Doctors', and on the town of Aberdeen itself as 'a bastion of conservatism guarded by some very acute minds', see for example Edward J. Cowan, *Montrose: For Covenant and King* (London, 1977), p. 54; also John M. Lang, 'Hector Boece and the Principals', in P. J. Anderson (ed.), *Studies in the History of the Development of the University of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen, 1906), pp. 21–56 (esp. pp. 36–40).
 - 6 In what follows I rely principally upon the *Dictionary of National Biography*: Alexander Ross (1591–1654), supplemented by other sources as indicated.
 - 7 On the gift to Charles, see T. A. Birrell, 'Some Rare Scottish Books in the Old Royal Library', in A. A. MacDonald, M. Lynch and I. B. Cowan (eds), *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History and Culture Offered to John Durkan* (Leiden, 1994), p. 406. The only surviving copy of Wedderburn's textbook, *A Short Introduction to Grammar, Compyled for the Instruction of Youth* (Aberdeen, 1632) is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and was used for a widely-available Scholar re-print (Menston, 1970). Several of his poems are translated in *Musa Latina Aberdonensis*, ed. and trans. Sir William Duguid Geddes and William Keith Leask, 3 vols (Aberdeen, 1892–1910), Vol III (hereafter MLA). See also Wedderburn's piece on the death of Prince Henry, *In obitu summae spei Principis Henrici Jacobi VI* (Edinburgh, 1613).
 - 8 For Johnstone's unpublished notes, see Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Library, MS.1093. The claim relating to Marischal College also surfaces in Johnstone's essay 'The Aberdeen University Educator', in Anderson (ed.), *Studies*, pp. 319–68.
 - 9 Stevenson, *King's College*, pp. 23–6. On the Ramist educational movement the best modern study remains Walter J. Ong, *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue: from the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Cambridge, MA, 1958), and, for Scotland particularly, J. Kirk, 'The New Foundations', in J. Kirk and J. Durkan (eds), *The University of Glasgow, 1451–1577* (Glasgow, 1977), pp. 276–9, 290–1; but see also Frank P. Graves, *Peter Ramus and the Educational Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1912).
 - 10 J. H. Burns, 'Scholasticism: Survival and Revival', in J. H. Burns and Mark Goldie

- (eds), *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450–1700* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 132–55 (quotation at p. 132).
- 11 Stevenson, *King's College*, pp. 2, 52–3.
 - 12 *Ibid.*, p. 85.
 - 13 For the purposes of this discussion, my definition of scholasticism, because it closely approximates to that defended by Ross, is that of Charles B. Schmitt: ‘the approach to the study of philosophy developed in the medieval universities’ – but especially, of course, as applied to and derived from Aristotle: *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), p. 4.
 - 14 Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensis*, I, 372.
 - 15 C. F. Russell, *A History of King Edward VI School, Southampton* (Cambridge, 1940), p. 156. Wood, who seems in this detail to be the authority followed by the *DNB*, erroneously states that Ross succeeded Thomas Parker as master.
 - 16 Russell, *History*, p. 156.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, p. 157.
 - 18 Another historian of the School, who agrees that Ross was indeed ‘a very great scholar’, confirms that he ‘neglected his duties’ and was forced to resign in 1620: F. L. Freeman, *A Short History of King Edward VI School, Southampton* ([Southampton], 1954), p. 3.
 - 19 For example, having gone to England as a Southampton schoolmaster and chaplain to the future Charles I, ‘it is believed that he obtained these appointments through the influence of Archbishop Laud. To this bigoted prelate, the Torquemada of the English Church, Ross very properly dedicated a treatise against the Copernican system ...’: James Bruce, *Lives of Eminent Men of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen, 1861), p. 226. Bruce offers no hard evidence for the suggestion that Laud was the prime mover behind the 1616 appointment and there appears to be none to substantiate it.
 - 20 Relations between Gordonstoun and Ross were always close, as can be verified, for example, in Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, Adv. MS. 34.1.6, the latter’s Latin translation of the nobleman’s own scholarly study ‘The Genealogie and Pedigree of the Most Ancient and Noble Family of the Earles of Sutherland’, as well as in Ross’s handwritten dedication of a copy of his short poetic work *Three Decades* to Sir Robert’s wife Louisa: the volume survives as NLS classmark Hall.149.h.
 - 21 Russell, *History*, p. 158.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, p. 158.
 - 23 *Ibid.*, p. 159.
 - 24 On the living see Bernard Woodward, *History of Hampshire*, 3 vols (London, 1861–67), II, 360. On the termination of Ross’s career at Carisbrooke, see *Walker Revised, Being a Revision of John Walker’s Sufferings of the Clergy During the Grand Rebellion 1642–60*, ed. A. G. Matthews (Oxford, 1948), p. 189. Ross is thought to have spent at least some of 1645 in London, and the vicarage was certainly vacant and in Parliamentary sequestration by 1650, whereafter The Queen’s College, Oxford, was given the patronage. It was only permitted to find a new incumbent, in the person of Samuel Smith, a Fellow, in 1654.
 - 25 Wood, *Athenae Oxoniensis*, I, 372.
 - 26 Russell drily remarks: ‘It is possible that this and other literary work interfered with his attention to his duties at the school’, *History*, p. 157. Full bibliographical

- details of Ross's output are conveniently accessible in J. F. K. Johnstone and A. W. Robertson (eds), *Bibliographia Aberdonensis*, 2 vols (Aberdeen, 1929).
- 27 Bruce, *Lives*, p. 229.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 235.
- 29 For the history of philosophical Aristotelianism during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a good starting point is Schmitt, *Aristotle*, and P. O. Kristeller, 'Renaissance Aristotelianism', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 6 (1965), 157–74. For a study of the robust state of scholastic philosophy during Ross's period – constantly under threat but constantly fighting back – see John Trentman, 'Scholasticism in the Seventeenth Century', in Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny and Jan Pinborg (eds), *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 818–37. On the inevitable conflict between ebullient forms of unreconstructed Aristotelianism and the latest innovations in European philosophy, see, for example, Leonora C. Rosenfield, *Peripatetic Adversaries of Cartesianism in Seventeenth-Century France* (New York, 1957).
- 30 Alexander Ross, *The Philosophicall Touch-Stone: or Observations Upon Sir Kenelm Digbie's Discourses of the Nature of Bodies, and of the Reasonable Soule etc.* (London, 1645), sig. a3r.
- 31 Trentman, 'Scholasticism', p. 818.
- 32 For the contemporary impact of Kepler's cosmology on earlier systems of thought, see S. J. Rabin, 'Kepler's Attitude Towards Pico and the Anti-Astrology Polemic: An Examination of Early Seventeenth-Century Celestial Physics and Copernican Cosmology as Modifiers of Medieval Astrological Thought', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 50 (1997), 75–90.
- 33 Johnson, *Astronomical Thought*, pp. 277–82.
- 34 Thomas Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution: Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought* (New York, 1957), esp. pp. 193–7; also J. Dobrzycki, *The Reception of Copernicus's Heliocentric Theory* (Dordrecht, 1972).
- 35 Alexander Ross, *The New Planet No Planet: or, The Earth No Wandring Star; Except in the Wandring Heads of the Galileans* (London, 1646): sub-title; p. 1.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- 37 For a recent discussion of the text which initiated the controversy, with particular emphasis upon its Scottish reception, see D. Haverstein, 'Religio Writing in Seventeenth-Century England and Scotland: Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici" (1643) and Sir George Mackenzie's "Religio Stoici" (1663)', *Scottish Literary Journal*, 25 (1998), 17–33.
- 38 Leonard Nathanson, *The Strategy of Truth: A Study of Sir Thomas Browne* (Chicago, 1967), p. 74. For another scholar primarily interested in Browne, the Scotsman is simply 'the absurd Alexander Ross': William P. Dunn, *Sir Thomas Browne: A Study in Religious Philosophy* (Minneapolis, 1950), p. 150.
- 39 Alexander Ross, *Medicus Medicatus: or The Physicians Religion Cured, By a Lenitive or Gentle Potion: With Some Animadversions Upon Sir Kenelm Digbie's Observations on Religio Medici* (London, 1645), p. 11.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 42 Ross, *The Philosophicall Touch-stone*, sigs a3r–v. The reference is to Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 472.
- 43 Ross, *The Philosophicall Touch-stone*, p. 2.

- 44 See, for example, John Bowle, *Hobbes and His Critics* (London, 1951), esp. pp. 17–21, 61–71; Samuel A. Mintz, *The Hunting of Leviathan: Seventeenth-Century Reactions to the Materialism and Moral Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1962), esp. pp. 67–8, 149–50.
- 45 William Lucy, *Observations, Censures and Confutations of Notorious Errors in Mr Hobbes His Leviathan* (London, 1663).
- 46 Alexander Ross, *Leviathan Drawn Out With a Hook* (London, 1653), p. 35.
- 47 On European neo-Stoicism, see Herschel Baker, ‘Sixteenth-Century Ethics and the Development of Neo-Stoicism’, in his *The Dignity of Man: Studies in the Persistence of an Idea* (Cambridge, MA, 1947), pp. 293–312; Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the Early Modern State* (Cambridge, 1982); Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572–1651* (Cambridge, 1993); J. H. M. Salmon, ‘Cicero and Tacitus in Sixteenth-Century France’, *American Historical Review*, 85 (1980), 307–31; Audrey Chew, *Stoicism in Renaissance English Literature* (New York, 1988); R. C. Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius and the Politics of Renaissance Stoicism* (Durango, Col., 1992); Robert Hoopes, *Right Reason in the English Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA, 1962); and, most recently, Adriane McCrea, *Constant Minds: The Lipsian Paradigm in England, 1584–1650* (Toronto, 1997).
- 48 Alexander Ross, *The History of the World: The Second Part in Six Books* (London, 1652), sig. b2v. On the Scottish encounter with this major European philosophical movement, including a setting of Ross in a much wider context, see David Allan, *Philosophy and Politics in Later Stuart Scotland: Neo-Stoicism, Culture and Ideology in an Age of Crisis, 1540–1690* (East Linton, 2000).
- 49 Gordon lacks modern biographical treatment, though see Sir William Fraser (ed.), *The Sutherland Book*, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1892), I, 192–205, and also Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Sixth Report* (London, 1877), pp. 681–8 for his correspondence with the Earl of Dunfermline, James VI’s Chancellor. His neo-Stoical interests are confirmed by the evidence of his now-dispersed book collection: see *Catalogue of the Singular and Curious Library of Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun* (London, 1816) and also ‘Catalogue of Books Belonging to Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, Bt. (c. 1743)’ (Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, MS. 3804). His great work, long suppressed because of its relish for unlovely political truths, eventually appeared as Sir Robert Gordon, *A Genealogical History of the Earldom of Sutherland* (Edinburgh, 1813).
- 50 See J. L. Saunders, *Justus Lipsius: The Philosophy of Renaissance Stoicism* (New York, 1955); Leonard Forster, ‘Lipsius and Renaissance Neostoicism’, in Anthony Stephens, H. L. Rogers and Brian Coghlan (eds), *Festschrift for Ralph Farrell* (Bern, 1977), pp. 201–20; and J. D. Charron, *The ‘Wisdom’ of Pierre Charron: An Original and Orthodox Code of Morality* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1960). On Raleigh’s connections with the neo-Stoicism of Lipsius, based on his potential authorship of *The Cabinet Counsell* which is indebted to the latter’s celebrated *Politica*, see Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 116.
- 51 *MLA*, III, 403–4. For Scottish attempts to re-cast the contemporary monarchy in Stoical vein, see R. A. Mason, ‘*Rex Stoicus*: George Buchanan, James VI and the Scottish Polity’, in J. Dwyer, R. A. Mason, and A. Murdoch (eds), *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh, n.d.), pp. 9–33.
- 52 An example of Reid’s adept versifying, his theme nicely reflecting the pastoral

- themes through which neo-Stoical sentiments were often explored, is 'On Sidney's *Arcadia*', *MLA*, III, 317–9. On Reid's career, see James K. Cameron, 'Aberdeen Students on the Continent in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', in Paul Dukes (ed.), *The Universities of Aberdeen and Europe: The First Three Centuries* (Aberdeen, 1995), pp. 66–8.
- 53 On the relationship which emerged between the key Stoic texts and modern legal study, especially in natural jurisprudence and international law, see C. A. Ford, 'Preaching Propriety to Princes: Grotius, Lipsius and Neo-Stoic International Law', *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*, 28 (1996), 313–67; Charles S. Edwards, *Hugo Grotius, The Miracle of Holland: A Study of Political and Legal Thought* (Chicago, 1981), esp. pp. 31–4, 40–1, 51–3; and Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, pp. 34–7. Dempster's similarity to Wedderburn as a neo-Stoic poet can be seen in a piece such as his 1615 composition 'Panegyric to the Most August and Mighty Prince, James I, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland': *MLA*, III, 44–50. The connections between neo-Latin poetry (especially the panegyric genre favoured by authors like the incorrigibly obsequious Dempster) and neo-Stoic philosophical sentiments are brilliantly laid bare in David Halsted's recent study *Poetry and Politics in the Silesian Baroque: Neo-Stoicism in the Work of Christophorus Colerus and His Circle* (Wiesbaden, 1996).
- 54 *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed on the Continent of Europe, 1501–1600, in Aberdeen University Library*, ed. H. J. H. Drummond (Oxford, 1979), p. 295.
- 55 It is a regrettable aspect of an otherwise excellent discussion that the *Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450–1700*, locates Peter Burke's succinct review of neo-Stoicism within a section headed simply 'The End of Aristotelianism'. The precise nature of the presumed link between the rise of Stoicism and the decline of scholasticism is not made explicit. An implicit corollary of my own discussion, however, is that, whilst neo-Stoicism was in many ways a different enterprise from the defence of Aristotelianism, the two projects were fully capable of co-existing, even of co-operating. As Ross's works during the 1640s demonstrate, both traditions, at least when reconciled with Christian teachings, seemed to yield conventional arguments in support of apparently threatened philosophical truisms such as the immortality of the soul or the human propensity for social engagement.
- 56 Ross, *Three Decades*, p. 30.
- 57 Justus Lipsius, *Two Bookes of Constancie*, trans. Sir John Stradling (London, 1594), reprint ed. Rudolf Kirk (New Brunswick, NJ, 1939), p. 87. That Ross also commented very directly upon Britain's developing political crisis, about which he felt so strongly, is likely, for there exist several anonymous tracts addressed to public affairs which have often been attributed to him: see, for example, *Religion's Lotterie; or, The Churches Amazement* (London, 1642), a compendium attacking numerous groups, ranging from Papists to Anabaptists, for 'striving to shake the whole foundation and destroy both church and kingdom'; *Absalom's Rebellion ... With Some Observations Upon the Severall Passages Thereto* (Oxford, 1645), with the biblical text adapted 'too fit a patterne for the present times, whereinto we are fallen'; and *England's Threnodie; or, A Briefe and Homely Discoverie of Some Jealousies and Grievances, Under Which the Kingdom at Present Groaneth* (London, 1648), which bears the intriguing signature 'A.R.'. My own argument about Ross's philosophical inquiries, however, rests solely upon a reading of those of his works which can securely be identified.

- 58 Guillaume du Vair, *The Moral Philosophie of the Stoicks*, ed. and trans. Thomas James (London, 1598), sigs A5r–v.
- 59 The claim that early seventeenth-century Stuart court life had been overtaken by Epicurean hedonism was heard from Scottish sources such as Simione Grahame, who was already lamenting in 1609 that James's court had been captured by 'this miserable sect of Epicurians, who onely loves to eate, sleepe, and drinke': *The Anatomie of Humours, and the Passionate Sparke of a Relenting Minde*, ed. R. Jameson (Edinburgh, 1830), sig. G1r. Such cultural criticism has recently attracted scholarly attention, as, for example, in Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture* (Amherst, MA, 1998); her 'The Early Stuart Epicure', *English Literary Renaissance*, 23 (1993), 170–200; and, even earlier, T. F. Mayo, *Epicurus in England 1650–1725* (Dallas, 1934). The slur of Epicureanism was, however, just part of the wider criticism attracted by a Stuart British court whose Baroque aesthetics and other seemingly Continental affectations and aspirations increasingly alienated traditional political communities: see, for example, R. Malcolm Smuts, 'The Political Failure of Stuart Cultural Patronage', in Lytle and Orgel (eds), *Patronage in the Renaissance* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 165–87; his 'Court-Centred Politics and the Uses of Roman Historians, c. 1590–1630', in Kevin Sharpe and Peter Lake (eds), *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (London, 1994), pp. 21–43; P. W. Thomas, 'Two Cultures? Court and Country under Charles I', in Conrad Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (n.p., 1973), pp. 168–93; many of the essays in Linda Levy Peck (ed.), *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991); Roy Strong, *Splendor at Court: Renaissance Spectacle and the Theatre of Power* (Boston, 1973); Roy Strong and Stephen Orgel, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court* (London, 1973); and Kevin Sharpe, 'The Image of Virtue: The Court and Household of Charles I, 1625–1642', in David Starkey (ed.), *The English Court: From the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London, 1987), pp. 226–60.
- 60 Alexander Ross, *Medicus Medicatus: or The Physicians Religion Cured* (London, 1645), pp. 33–4.
- 61 Justus Lipsius, *Sixe Bookes of Politickes, or Civill Doctrine*, ed. and trans. William Jones (London, 1594), p. 187.
- 62 Ross, *The Philosophicall Touch-stone*, p. 1. On this occasion Ross appears to be mistaken: the *Concordantiae Senecanae*, eds R. Busa and A. Zampolli, 2 vols (Hildesheim, 1975) contains no such complaint. But on Seneca's re-emergence as a major influence by the early seventeenth century, see G. M. Ross, 'Seneca's Philosophical Influence', in C. D. N. Costa (ed.), *Seneca* (London, 1974), pp. 116–65; G. Braden, *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition* (New Haven, 1985); G. Williamson, *The Senecan Amble: A Study in Prose from Bacon to Collier* (London, 1951); A. Chew, 'Joseph Hall and Neo-Stoicism', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 65 (1950), 1130–45; and T. S. Eliot, 'Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca', in his *Selected Essays*, 3rd edn (London, 1972), pp. 126–40.
- 63 Ross, *Medicus Medicatus*, sigs a3r–v.
- 64 *Mel Heliconium* gave rise, more than two centuries later, to a minor scholarly controversy played out across the pages of *Notes and Queries*, 2nd series, 8, (1859), 344–5. William Tite MR, finding a sonnet inscribed to Ross and signed 'J. M.' in his copy of the 1639 edition, maintained that the admirer was none other

- than Milton. A critic from the *Aberdeen Herald*, however, attributed the doggerel, very much more plausibly, to Ross's fellow conservative, the minor Oxford poet and Royalist preacher, Jasper Mayne.
- 65 Alexander Ross, *Mystagogus Poeticus, or The Muses Interpreter*, 2nd edn (London, 1648), sig. A3v.
- 66 *Ibid.*, p. 99.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 96.
- 68 *Ibid.*, pp. 299–300.
- 69 Knox had attempted to exculpate Calvin himself from the charge, levelled against him by rival theologians such as Hieronymus Bolsec and Sebastian Castellis, that his system of divine providentialism amounted to nothing more than 'the fatalism of the Stoics': John Knox, *Works*, ed. David Laing, 6 vols (Edinburgh, 1890), V, 12. The allegation of crypto-Stoicism was not entirely without foundation: Suzanne Selinger, for example, has referred to his 'highly Stoic mentality': *Calvin Against Himself: An Inquiry in Intellectual History* ([Hamden, Conn.], 1984), p. 6. Many other post-Reformation Christians had found themselves as attracted to Stoic morality as they were repelled by Stoic metaphysics: see, for example, M. O. Boyle, 'Stoic Luther: Paradoxical Sin and Necessity', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 73 (1982), 69–93; Margo Todd, 'Seneca and the Protestant Mind: The Influence of Stoicism on Puritan Ethics', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 74 (1983), 182–200; and Geoffrey Aggeler, "'Sparkes of Holy Things": Neo-Stoicism and the English Protestant Conscience', *Renaissance and Reformation*, 26 (1990), 223–40.
- 70 Examples of modern Europeans who admired the Stoics but felt the need to distance themselves from their fatalism included Joseph Hall, Bishop of Exeter (with whom it is at least possible that an important Hampshire minister like Ross would have been personally acquainted), the Flemish scholar Justus Lipsius, and the great Scottish humanist George Buchanan. See Audrey Chew, 'Joseph Hall and Neo-Stoicism', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, 65 (1950), 1130–45; Lipsius, *Two Bookes*, e.g. Book One, caps. 13–18; and Buchanan's discussion, in the 1558 panegyric 'To the Most Invincible King Henry II of France, After the Capture of Calais', which begins with the startling assertion 'It is not Fate, aware of what is ordained, nor the unstoppable wheel of slippery Fortune, nor the course of the stars, but the creator of the universe alone who governs the world': Philip J. Ford, *George Buchanan: Prince of Poets* (Aberdeen, 1982), p. 133.
- 71 For example, Ross encouraged his 'Christian Reader', as 'a true votary to orthodox Religion', to keep himself 'untainted of their follies' and to reject the republicans' creed: *Alcoran*, sig. A3r. On Ross's *Qu'ran* as an implicit political and religious attack on Charles's killers, see Matar, 'Alexander Ross'.
- 72 Alexander Ross, *The Marrow of Historie, or An Epitome of all historical passages* (London, 1650), p. 10.
- 73 James Granger, *A Biographical History of England from Egbert the Great to the Revolution*, 2 vols (London, 1769), II, 19.
- 74 Alexander Ross, *The History of the World: The Second Part in Six Books* (London, 1652), sig. a3v.
- 75 *Ibid.*, sig. a3v. The horticultural reference is an odd and somewhat anachronistic one. The garden (symbolising privacy and seclusion) had traditionally been

- regarded as the haunt of Epicurus, but it had been the influential achievement of Lipsius to capture it for Stoicism, for whose latter-day devotees it came to represent virtuous innocence and moral cultivation: see Mark P. O. Morford, 'The Stoic Garden', *Journal of Garden History*, 7 (1987), 151–75; and David Allan, "A Commendation of the Private Countrey Life": Philosophy and the Garden in Seventeenth-Century Scotland', *Garden History*, 25 (1997), 59–80.
- 76 Ross, *History*, sig. b2v. On Tacitus's emergence as a principal influence on modern European authorship at the turn of the seventeenth century, see C. O. Brink, 'Justus Lipsius and the Text of Tacitus', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 41 (1951), 32–51; A. Momigliano, 'The First Political Commentary on Tacitus', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 37 (1947), 91–101; J. H. Whitfield 'Livy > Tacitus', in R. R. Bolgar (ed.), *Classical Influences on European Culture, AD1500–1700* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 281–93; Peter Burke, 'A Survey of the Popularity of Ancient Historians, 1450–1700', *History and Theory*, 2 (1966), 135–52; and his 'Tacitism', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Tacitus* (London, 1969), pp. 149–71; also R. C. Schellhase, *Tacitus in Renaissance Political Thought* (Chicago, 1976).
- 77 In *De Constantia* (1584), Lipsius had memorably defended the consolations of private solitude in the face of insuperable misfortune in the public domain, particularly casting the garden as 'a wholesome withdrawing place from the cares and troubles of this world': *Two Bookes*, ed. Kirk, p. 135. On Lipsius and the soothing balms of constancy, see Morford, 'Stoic Garden', esp. p. 166.
- 78 Some confusion has arisen over the date of publication of *Som Animadversions*, unfortunately not printed on the original title page. *Wing STC*, 1st edition, gives 1648; the 2nd edition helpfully differs, suggesting 1650. However, the *DNB* seems correct to attribute this work to 1653: internal evidence, notably the reference, at p. 39, to a prior discussion in *The Marrow of Historie* (itself published in 1650), strongly supports the latter judgement.
- 79 Alexander Ross, *Som Animadversions and Observations upon Sir Walter Raleigh's Historie of the World* (London, [1653]), p. 39. The Bodleian pressmark is Wood 225(2).
- 80 *Ibid.*, p. 39; compare *De coniuratione Catilinae*, VIII,1. An English translation of this influential work for seventeenth-century neo-Stoicism, by the hand of Thomas Heywood, dates from 1608. On Lipsius's reliance upon the Latin original, see Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 40.
- 81 P. J. Anderson, *Officers and Graduates of the University and King's College of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen, 1893), p. 180.
- 82 Ross had contributed a preface to Benlowes's *Theophila, or Love's Sacrifice: A Divine Poem* (1652), a work aptly judged 'one of the most important retirement-poems of this period': Maren-Sofie Røstvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal, 1600–1700*, 2 vols (Oslo and Oxford, 1954), p. 186. He had also dedicated *Medicus Medicatus* to this English friend, an ex-Catholic and staunch Royalist. For Vaughan, see his great poem on rustic retreat, itself probably inspired by Royalist alienation from the Cromwellian state, *Flores Soletudinis* (1654), which appears in *Works*, ed. L. C. Martin, 2 vols (Oxford, 1914), I, 211–309.
- 83 R. F. Stalley, 'Common Sense and Enlightenment: the Philosophy of Thomas Reid', in Peter Gilmour (ed.), *Philosophers of the Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 74–90; P. B. Wood, 'The Hagiography of Common Sense:

Dugald Stewart's Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Reid, in A. J. Holland (ed.), *Philosophy: its History and Historiography* (Dordrecht, 1985), pp. 305–22; Joel Weinsheimer, 'Reid on Common Sense', in his *Eighteenth-Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven, 1993), pp. 135–65.

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