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The Epistemology of Sense from Calvin to Hutcheson

Giovanni Gellera

1 Introduction

The notions of moral and aesthetic sense are characteristic of the philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment and are intimately linked to the name of Francis Hutcheson.[1] The main influences on Hutcheson were Lord Shaftesbury and John Locke, whose importance Hutcheson himself was keen to remark. The name of Shaftesbury appears on the title page of the first edition of *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), where Hutcheson professes to be 'explaining and defending' Shaftesbury's ideas. Accordingly, scholars have mainly focused on the Locke–Shaftesbury–Hutcheson triangle, as the book of a similar title by Daniel Carey exemplifies well.[2] A second influence which has gained recent currency is that of the Cambridge Platonists. According to Michael B. Gill the similarities 'between the Cambridge Platonists and Scottish sentimentalists [are] more important than whether moral judgments originate in reason or sentiment'.[3] Gill refers to the Moral Self-Governance View and the belief in the innate human ability to grasp moral and intellectual truths as two such similarities. Sarah Hutton has

1 This paper was presented at *Francis Hutcheson and the Emergence of Modern Aesthetics. A Symposium*, 23–24 January 2015, Research Institute of Irish and Scottish Studies, University of Aberdeen. I thank the audience for their helpful comments, and Christian Maurer, who kindly suggested important revisions and references. I also thank the Université de Fribourg (Switzerland) for awarding me a postdoctoral visiting fellowship during which the first version of this paper was written. I am grateful to my hosts in Fribourg, Jean-Claude Wolf and Christian Maurer.

2 Daniel Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson* (Cambridge, 2005). Beyond the influence on Hutcheson, Sarah Hutton suggests that Shaftesbury and Locke champion two diverse interpretations of the relations between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries in British philosophy: sentimentalism and anticlericalism vis-à-vis empiricism and natural law: *British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2015), 224.

3 Michael B. Gill, 'From Cambridge Platonism to Scottish Sentimentalism', *Journal of Scottish Philosophy*, 8 (2010), 13–31, 16.

argued that the Cambridge Platonists had a readership already in seventeenth-century Scotland,[4] hence suggesting that the Cambridge Platonists' influence on Hutcheson was not entirely mediated by Shaftesbury.[5]

Less explored, and the object of this paper, is the relationship between Hutcheson and the varieties of early modern Calvinism. Among these and without any pretension of comprehensiveness, I will focus on Calvin and two representative authors of Dutch Reformed scholasticism. It is acknowledged that 'Hutcheson's philosophy developed from a complex group of classical, scholastic, and modern influences in ethics, epistemology, logic, and jurisprudence',[6] and that 'Hutcheson in his presbyterian Academy in Ulster had the advantage of an initial training in the kind of scholastic Aristotelianism which was no longer taught in Scotland … The effect of this upon his later philosophical writing is notable.'[7] While I disagree with the claim that "scholastic Aristotelianism" was not taught in the Scottish universities during Hutcheson's youth,[8] it is my goal to show that the effect of Reformed scholasticism on Hutcheson's thought is, if not notable, at least plausible.

The notion of sense features prominently in the theology and anthropology of John Calvin and makes appearances in seventeenth-century Reformed scholasticism. Calvin believes that men are endowed with a faculty or disposition, which he calls the "sense of divinity" (hereafter SoD), which produces the awareness of the Deity. Later Reformed philosophers incorporated Calvin's view into their scholastico-Aristotelian philosophy. My case studies here are two: first, Franco Burgersdijk's and Adriaan Heereboord's views on the innateness of the idea of God; secondly, Burgersdijk's view on sensibility and moral

4 Sarah Hutton, 'From Cudworth to Hume: Cambridge Platonism and the Scottish Enlightenment', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 42 (2012), 8–26, 14–16. See also Christine M. Shepherd, *Philosophy and Science in the Arts Curriculum of the Scottish Universities in the 17th century*, PhD Diss. (University of Edinburgh, 1975), 201.

5 Another channel of transmission of early modern ideas to Hutcheson is Gershom Carmichael, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, teacher and predecessor of Hutcheson on the same chair. Regarding the topic of this paper, James Moore writes that 'Hutcheson's relationship with Carmichael is complicated by the fact that the distinctive feature of Hutcheson's moral philosophy, as expressed in his English language writings directed to adult readers – his theory of a moral sense which brings ideas of virtue and vice before the mind – has no parallel in Carmichael's work.' James Moore and Michael Silverthorne (eds.), *Natural Rights on the Threshold of the Scottish Enlightenment. The Writings of Gershom Carmichael* (Indianapolis, 2002), xv.

6 Hutton, *British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century*, 153.

7 Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice, Which Rationality* (Chicago, 1989), 260.

8 See Giovanni Gellera, 'Theses Philosophicae in Aberdeen in the Early Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Scottish Thought*, 3 (2010), 109–25.

judgments in his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. The interesting aspect of the Reformed notion(s) of sense is that it is, just like Hutcheson's, a source of ideas quite distinct from reason.[9] On the relation between Hutcheson and Calvinism, Alexander Broadie has written that 'Hutcheson's position is remarkable, given its contrast with the kind of Calvinist Christianity, prevalent in seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century Scotland, that places heavy emphasis on the Fall and on our consequent depravity.'[10] I will suggest that although Hutcheson's anthropology, moral psychology, and warmth for virtue are all elements at odds with the Calvinist view of man, the epistemology of the Calvinist notion of sense might be acknowledged as one of the sources of Hutcheson's sentimentalism.

The paper is divided into four parts. Part (1) is on John Calvin and the *sensus divinitatis*. According to Calvin, all rational beings have an immediate awareness of God, which justifies the belief that God exists but does not produce knowledge of God. Part (2) investigates the background of Calvin's original notion of sense. According to scholastic anthropology, the senses put the knower in direct and immediate contact with the known thing but, unlike Calvin's SoD, do not have propositional content. Part (3) investigates the notion of sense in Reformed scholastic philosophy: natural theology in Franco Burgersdijk and Adriaan Heereboord, and moral philosophy in Burgersdijk. Burgersdijk does not attribute full propositional content to the sense, and sense is not a faculty; yet, he marks a difference from the scholastic notion in that he argues that the sense provides the mind with ideas (of God, and of good and evil) which are not sensible that is, are not ideas of material substances. This survey of scholastic sources might suggest that a novel epistemology of sense started to appear in early modern scholastic philosophy based on Calvin's original Part (4) attempts to highlight the assonances between Hutcheson and the respective philosophical legacies of Shaftesbury and Locke on the one side, and Calvin, Burgersdijk, and Heereboord on the

9 In the seventeenth-century, this distinction is not always as clear-cut. See for example Gill, 'From Cambridge Platonism', 25–9 on the 'sentimentalism' of the Cambridge Platonists, and Laurent Jaffro, 'Émotions et jugement moral chez Shaftesbury, Hutcheson et Hume', in Sylvain Roux (ed.), *Les émotions* (Paris, 2009), 135–59, 146, for a rationalist conception of moral sense in Shaftesbury. I introduce the distinction between sense and reason here in light of the opposition of scholastic intellectualism and (Hutcheson's) sentimentalism. My view is that SoD challenges scholastic intellectualism before early modern sentimentalism does, and that it is plausible to identify anticipations of the latter in SoD.

10 Alexander Broadie, *A History of Scottish Philosophy* (Edinburgh, 2009), 140. See also Gill, 'From Cambridge Platonism', 16.

other. The remarkable legacy of Calvinism and Reformed scholasticism is that 'sense' is a source of knowledge parallel and complementary to reason; later, Hutcheson's genius will establish it as a fully formed 'faculty' of human nature.

2 John Calvin and the *sensus divinitatis*

Calvin does not develop a full epistemology of SoD, but what he has to say about it is very interesting. The central text is the following:

> There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. This we take to be beyond controversy. To prevent any one from taking refuge in the pretence of ignorance, God himself has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty. … Since, therefore, men one and all perceive that there is a God and that he is their Maker, they are condemned by their own testimony because they have failed to honor him and to consecrate their lives to his will… [t]here is, as the eminent pagan says, no nation so barbarous, no people so savage, that they have not a deep-seated conviction that there is a God…there lies in this a tacit confession of a sense of deity inscribed in the hearts of all.[11]

We can gather the following views: (1) the human mind is naturally aware of God, by instinct. This natural awareness grounds universal inexcusability, of believers and deniers of the existence of God alike; (2) the awareness of God defeats the 'pretence of ignorance': awareness is so strong, evident, compelling, that anyone in her normal rational state and intellectual honesty has to accept it (it is epistemically binding); (3) one ought to accept the evidence of God's existence, but also to honour and worship God: a rich notion of knowledge, what Paul Helm calls the 'metaphysical-cognitive and moral-cognitive components' of knowledge.[12] And (4) there is empirical evidence of this awareness in the fact that all cultures in history have a deity (argument from

11 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill (Louisville, 1960; reissued 2006), I, 43–4.

12 Paul Helm, 'The "Sensus Divinitatis", and the Noetic Effects of Sin', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*, 43 (1998), 87–107, 90. See also David Reiter, 'Calvin's "Sense of Divinity" and Externalist Knowledge of God', *Faith and Philosophy*, 15 (1998), 253–70, 254.

consensus). There remain the questions of how this awareness relates to a theory of human mind, and how its content compels our judgment.

Paul Helm argues that Calvin's view is that men do not have a direct experience of God, but that they

> conceive (or perceive) *that there is a God*. … This basic knowledge of God is propositional in content rather than a person to person awareness of God. And Calvin uses the terms 'conceive' and 'perceive' seemingly interchangeably in order to highlight that this knowledge is direct… There is, in the first place, the *sensus*, a human faculty or disposition to interpret certain data in certain ways. It is this faculty that is innate.[13]

On Helm's reading of Calvin's SoD, men are endowed with a faculty or disposition (innate, constitutional) to grasp the propositional content 'God exists'. This proposition compels our belief because it is delivered to us directly and immediately. Three more insights by Helm are important for my analysis. First, 'the *sensus* is thus not immediate awareness, as the awareness of a physical sensation is immediate; rather it is a judgment of a highly unself-conscious and automatic kind, "natural" in yet another sense of that term, based upon an experience of certain features of the physical world, upon its beauty and orderliness and other features'.[14] Secondly, '[Calvin's] natural theology is not one that is based upon discursive proofs, but upon innate, properly functioning capacities common (i.e. natural) to all people.'[15] Finally, Calvin does not hold that men have an innate idea of God.[16] We will see how these views appear in the Reformed scholastic proofs of the existence of God in Burgersdijk and Heereboord.

Before moving on to the analysis of the scholastic background, I would like to remark the difference between the seventeenth-century and the contemporary interests in SoD. The contemporary strand of Reformed Epistemology, whose main proponent is Plantinga,[17] crucially focuses on the reasonableness and rationality of belief in the content accessible to us in virtue of SoD. The SoD is reliable (hence trustworthy) because it is a proper function of the human nature: a warranted belief is a belief for which the knower lacks proofs

13 Ibid., 91. Original emphasis.
14 Ibid., 92. Original emphasis.
15 Ibid., 93. Original emphasis.
16 Ibid., 94.
17 See, for example, Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford, 2000).

but for which the knower has sufficient evidence. The article by Paul Helm cited here is construed as a reply to the main tenets of the contemporary Reformed Epistemology interpretation of Calvin. Calvin is not interested in the rationality of belief (which he assumes) but rather in the knowledge of God,[18] and he is a proponent of weak foundationalism versus the strong foundationalism of the Cartesian and Enlightenment tradition. Calvin's SoD has given origin to the opposite views that natural theology is not necessary, as in contemporary Reformed Epistemology, and that natural theology provides the necessary confirmation of SoD. We will see in section three that Burgersdijk, just like Calvin, focuses on the content of SoD and the modality of its deliverance and that, unlike Calvin, he relies on the rational proofs of the existence of God in his natural theology.

In conclusion to this section, according to Calvin men are directly aware of God, by means of a *sense*, that is a faculty or disposition to believe that God exists. Men do not have an innate idea of God, rather the sense elaborates on the experience of the external world and reaches the conclusion, common to all men, that 'God exists'.

3 Sense in scholastic philosophy

Calvin did not develop a philosophical anthropology around the notion of sense. For example, he did not clarify whether the sense is a faculty or a disposition, a problem which Hutcheson will face with respect to the innateness of the deliverances of sense.[19] Calvin's main preoccupation is theological, not anthropological. In SoD he seeks to combine prima facie opposed views: the inexcusability of the atheist, based on sufficient natural evidence for theism, and belief in the unreliability of the deliverances of natural reason, based on the doctrine of the Fall. Some of the tensions intrinsic to Calvin's SoD surface against the background of the traditional scholastic views of sensibility, immediate knowledge, and self-evidence.

The scholastics divide the senses into external and internal. The external senses are the so-called 'corporal' (smell, touch, taste) and 'spiritual' (sight, hearing) senses. Many considered sight as the most noble sense because it is

18 See Reiter, 'Calvin's "Sense of Divinity"', for an example of the debates internal to Reformed Epistemology. Reiter argues for a robust interpretation of SoD, one in which it delivers knowledge of God, not just justified or rational belief in God.

19 See Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson*, 169.

primarily involved with the process of knowledge. Others considered touch as the archetypical sense because all sensing, including sight, is a form of contact. For either positions, textual evidence in Aristotle was invoked. The internal sense, or sixth sense, is the sense which collects all the inputs of the external senses and delivers a unitary material to the intellect. The faculty of sense is passive, it receives forms from the external objects, and it is about individual things per se and universal things *per accidens*. The senses alone do not deliver conscious propositional content. Prior to the reception of the material by the intellect, it is not possible to speak of knowledge of the sensible species or of the external object. According to the scholastics, knowledge is produced only by a self-reflective act of the intellect: reason is the only faculty of knowledge.

For Hutcheson sense is 'every determination of our minds to receive ideas independently of our will, and to have perceptions of pleasure and pain. In accordance with this definition, the five external senses determine us to receive ideas which please or pain us, and the will does not intervene.'[20] Here, a scholastic philosopher would take exception with 'ideas' (or concepts) being received by sense because only the 'sensible species' are received by the senses: ideas are a product of the intellect's acting on the species. One of Hutcheson's assumptions is the 'ideal theory' or the 'way of ideas', that is, the view that the first immediate cognitive content presented to our minds are simple ideas. What is common to the scholastic view and to Hutcheson is the (very) general agreement about sense being an original epistemic source of material for the intellect. Without the senses the mind lacks cognitive inputs: the scholastics would say that it lacks *notiones*, Hutcheson would say that it lacks simple ideas.

The scholastics did not have to wait for John Locke to produce a critique of innate ideas. Thomas Aquinas writes that:

> [First] if the soul has innate ideas of all things, then it is not possible that such awareness is shrouded in such a forgetfulness that the soul does not even know that it possesses it; no man can forget those things which he knows naturally, such as that the whole is bigger than its parts. Second,…if one lacks some senses, he also lacks the corresponding

20 Alexander Broadie, 'Scottish Philosophy in the 18th Century', *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (2013), ed. Edward N. Zalta, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/scottish-18th/, accessed 1 October 2015.

> knowledge of them, which one apprehends in virtue of them; so that someone born blind from birth cannot have any awareness of the colours.[21]

If innate ideas exist in our mind, Aquinas reasons, then it is impossible to explain why we ignore some things, because we would know all things naturally, and to make sense of the commonsensical assumption of a connection between sensing and knowing. Aquinas's remark that we have *notitiam de coloribus* only via the senses is particularly important. *'Notitia'* is translated with both awareness and knowledge. *Notitia* is something which is *notum* to a knower either *per se* or *per aliud*. Something is known *per se* when it is self-evident. In the case of a proposition, when the predicate belongs to the definition of the subject or follows immediately from it, for example in 'the whole is bigger than its parts'. The proposition is self-evidently upon the simple understanding of the words 'whole' and 'parts'. Something is *notum per aliud* when its evidence is based on something else, which is more evident: for example when a proposition follows by way of argument from other propositions. Aquinas acknowledges that the awareness of colours provided by sight is original, pretheoretical and not otherwise available to the mind. The *notitia de coloribus* is not a Hutchesonian simple idea, but it is nonetheless a distinct (potentially cognitive) content which does not originate in the intellect.

In conclusion to this section, the ideal theory stands between the scholastics and Hutcheson. The scholastics did not conceive of the faculty of senses as the source of simple ideas of the external things. Though, they held that the senses furnish the mind with sensible original content, which is cognitive in potency. The Reformed scholastics sought to combine the Calvinist intuition of the sensible origin of the idea of God and traditional scholastic rationalism. We now move on to the Reformed scholastic uses of SoD and the debates on whether the idea of God is innate and self-evident.

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21 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I, 84, a. 3 co.: '*Si habet anima naturalem notitiam omnium, non videtur esse possibile quod huius naturalis notitiae tantam oblivionem capiat, quod nesciat se huiusmodi scientiam habere, nullus enim homo obliviscitur ea quae naturaliter cognoscit, sicut quod omne totum sit maius sua parte … Secundo … deficiente aliquo sensu, deficit scientia eorum, quae apprehenduntur secundum illum sensum; sicut caecus natus nullam potest habere notitiam de coloribus.*' (All translations are my own) www.corpusthomisticum.org, last accessed January 2016. All translations are my own.

4 Sense in Reformed scholastic philosophy

A minority of the scholastics believed that the idea of God was innate, while the majority did not. Thomas Aquinas is an authority in the latter camp. In *De Veritate* 10, 12 the only innateness that he accepts is that of the faculty which enables men to know that God exists. Likewise, John Locke argues for the innateness of the faculty of reason and not for the innateness of the content of the mind. So do Hutcheson and, arguably, Descartes.[22] Eustachius a Sancto Paulo (1573–1640), celebrated professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, holds the standard view that the idea of God is self-evident but not innate:

> This proposition, *God exists*, from the nature of things and by itself is most known and known by itself, because the predicate is the same as the subject. … Nonetheless, we do not know what God is, [the proposition] is not known to us by itself, and it requires a demonstration by means of those things which are better known to us, that is, by way of effects.[23]

The distinction is between a proposition which is self-evident absolutely speaking and one which is evident with respect to us. 'The whole is bigger than its parts' is self-evident absolutely and with respect to us. 'God exists' is self-evident absolutely, because the predicate of existence is the same as the subject, God's essence. Though, it is not evident with respect to us because we need an argument for it, such as the a posteriori proof favoured by Eustachius.

I investigate the views of Franco Burgersdijk (1590–1635), influential Reformed Aristotelian professor of Logic and Ethics at the University of Leiden, and his pupil Adriaan Heereboord (1613–1661), Reformed Cartesian professor of Logic at the University of Leiden. Very influential in the Dutch universities, they were taught in the Scottish universities for their importance in the Northern European Reformed scholastic curriculum.[24] Though prompted by historical evidence, the aim of the investigation is primarily

22 Peter Kivy, *The Seventh Sense. Francis Hutcheson and Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics* (Oxford, 2003), 28; Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson*, 161ff.

23 Eustachius a Sancto Paulo, *Summa philosophiae quadripartita* (Paris, 1609), Disp. Tertia, quaestio II: '*Utrum, Deum esse, demonstrari possit; et quomodo*: *Haec propositio, Deus est, a parte rei et secundum se est notissima seu per se nota, quia praedicatum idem est cum subjecto; … tamen non scimus de Deo quid est, non est nobis seu quoad nos per se nota, sed indiget demonstrari per ea quae sunt magis nota quoad nos, i. e. per effectus.*'

24 Hutton, *British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century*, chapter 2.

analytic. Burgersdijk and Heereboord hold different views over the innateness of the idea of God. Burgersdijk's externalist argument shows the credentials of the empiricist approach characteristic of late-Renaissance Aristotelianism, while Heereboord's belief that the idea of God is in us as a *notitia innata* bears a Cartesian mark. Both philosophers believe that SoD is in some way naturally innate in men and formulate an epistemology of sense. In the latter part of this section I will investigate the epistemology of sensibility in Burgersdijk's account of moral judgments.

Burgersdijk's natural theology is in *Institutionum metaphysicarum Libri II* (Leiden, 1640), part II, chapter IV: *Utrum Deum esse*. The opening passage is mindful of Thomas Aquinas's position: Burgersdijk answers negatively to the question whether 'God exists' is self-evident in the way 'the whole is bigger than its parts' is. The reason is that

> when one says that '*God exists*' is naturally known [*notum*], one does not mean that an awareness of this proposition and a sort of assent to it are inscribed and engraved in the minds of the newborn; rather one means this: the first notion of God, by which we establish that God exists, does not come from Revelation but from reasoning and argument.[25]

The Aristotelian theory of science dictates that no discipline provides the evidence of the existence of its own subject matter. Hence, evidence that God exists is not within the remit of theology.

Burgersdijk further remarks that 'it is not possible that the mind is not affected by some sort of sense and awe of Deity; this is granted. Nonetheless, it does not follow that the proposition *God exists* is known to us in the same way as the proposition *The whole is bigger than its parts* is. No one can seriously deny this';[26] and 'wherever there is a sense of Deity, there some religion is established; and, conversely, where religion is established, there is some sense of Deity'.[27] Central to the demonstration of the existence of God is

25 Burgersdijk, *Metaphysicarum institutionum*, II, IV.II: '*Cum dicitur, Deum esse, nauraliter esse notum, non dicitur, huius propositionis notitiam atque assensum animis nascentium inscriptam atque insculptam esse sed hoc dicitur; primam illam Deitatis notionem, qua statuimus Deum esse, non ex revelatione proficisci, sed ex ratiocinatione et discursu*.'

26 Ibid., II, IV.I: '*Fieri non potest, ut mens non afficiatur aliquo sensu ac metu Deitatis: esto sane; at tamen hinc sequitur, non ita notam esse propositionem hanc, Deus est, quam, Totum est majus sua parte: nam posterius hoc nemo serio negare potest*.'

27 Ibid., II, IV.V: '*Ubi enim sensus est Deitatis, ibi et religio aliqua viget; et vicissim, ubi religio viget, ibi aliquis sensus est Deitatis*.'

the awareness that God is a being '*quod religiose colendum sit*', which ought to be worshipped. The idea of God is unlike any other idea: it is not merely theoretical knowledge but a thought immediately connected to a feeling, or a sentiment. Like Calvin, Burgersdijk regards SoD as the universal marker of religiosity. Unlike Calvin, Burgersdijk believes that it is reason, and not an independent faculty/disposition of sense, which delivers the idea of God. The central text on SoD and natural theology is in thesis IV, which refers to the famous passage in Paul's *Letter to the Romans* I, 19–20:

> In fact, there are so manifest evidences of God in almost all the creatures, and in particular they are so ingrained in this whole world, that those who do not gather from these that God exists and that He is to be worshipped, are committing injustice towards the truth.[28]

The experience of the external world is sufficient to compel our judgment that God exists and hence to ground inexcusability. Burgersdijk draws a distinction between reason, the faculty which provides the idea of God, and the sense of deity which immediately accompanies the experience of the external world and which, crucially, precedes the rational proofs. Reason alone is the faculty of knowledge, and SoD is constituted as a quasi-*sentiment* of God, not as a faculty. What we call 'sense' is not what originates the idea, rather the disposition of reason to produce the idea of God and to accompany it with an emotional reaction. For Burgersdijk, SoD is important for the proofs of the existence of God but does not replace in any way natural theology. The success of the proofs is independent of the sense: what the sense does, is to give moral and epistemic strength to the proofs, and to incline the believer towards assenting to them.

Adriaan Heereboord's views of SoD are quite different from Burgersdijk's. Heereboord treats natural theology in *Meletemata philosophica*, chapter II and following.[29] In 1644 Heereboord met Descartes and converted to Cartesianism.[30] This might explain Heereboord's acceptance of innate ideas in what is, arguably, a misrepresentation of Descartes' own arguments. Descartes argues that the idea of God which we find in us reveals perfections which

28 Ibid., II, IV.IV: '*Nam tam manifesta Deitatis indicia omnibus pene creaturis, ac imprimis toti mundo insculpta sunt, ut, qui ex iis non colligant, et esse Deum, et Deum religiose colendum esse, dicantur veritatem in injustitia detinere.*'

29 Adriaan Heereboord, *Meletemata philosophica* (Leiden, 1659).

30 Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch. Early Reactions to Cartesian Philosophy 1637–1650* (Carbondale, 1992), 37ff.

exceed our finitude; hence, God alone, not us, can be the maker of such an idea. As John Locke acknowledged, the idea of God is the most plausible candidate for innateness: were it not innate, no other idea could be.[31] Nonetheless, Descartes never claimed that the content of the mind is innate in the sense of being always present or pre-existing in the mind. Heereboord seems to defend precisely this view, famously criticised by Locke.[32]

According to Heereboord the *notitia Dei naturalis* is innate in our minds. He compares it to the seminal roots of the Stoic and Augustinian traditions, as remnants and reminders of the light which shone in men's mind before the Fall. By these roots the famous preconceived notion *'That God exists'* is naturally inscribed in the minds of all men. It is naturally innate and inscribed that *'God exists'*, as well as that *'God is to be worshipped'* and that *'God punishes the sinners'*.[33] So, Heereboord believes that the practical principle that God is to be worshipped is innate along with the idea of God.[34] Heereboord interestingly refers to the propositions: 'God exists' and 'God is to be worshipped' with the scholastic term *notiones*. By this term Thomas Aquinas refers to the awareness of colours in our mind in virtue of the sense of sight. Burgersdijk uses it in the traditional meaning of awareness (*hujus propositionis notitia*, 'the awareness of this proposition'). Heereboord's original use of the term might originate in his own reading of Descartes. *Notio/notus* occurs only twice in the *Meditations*. In the title of *Meditation II 'De natura mentis humanae: quod ipsa sit* notior *quam corpus'* (my emphasis), with the meaning of 'more known to us', and in paragraph 11 of *Meditation III*, where Descartes simply refers to 'innate notions'. These uses are traditional. According to Descartes, a proposition can be immediately evident to the mind, as in the paradigmatic case of the *Cogito*: arguably, Heereboord attributed the epistemic feature of the immediate awareness of the idea of God to the proposition 'God exists'. Upon grasping the term 'God' one can conclude that God exists because the essence of God includes existence: hence, one has immediate awareness of (the proposition)

31 John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (London 1690), I, iv, 7.

32 Heereboord, *Meletemata Philosophica*, VII: '*Et Dei notitiam insitam, ex Dei idea per creationem nobis indita, tanquam nota artificis operi suo impressa, subtilissime probat Renatus Des-Cartes, in sua primae Philosophiae meditatione tertia.*'

33 Ibid., ch. II: '*rudera ac vestigia et amissae illius lucis, quae in hominis mente ante lapsum fulgebat, superstites quaedam ac sopitae scintillulae, per quas communis ille et anticipata notio, Quod sit Deus, omnium hominum mentibus naturaliter est insculpta. … omnibus naturaliter est insitum et insculptum, Deum esse, Deum esse colendum, Deum esse scelerum vindicem.*'

34 Daniel Carey discusses this point in relation to John Locke's criticism, see *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson*, 40.

'God exists', not just of (the idea of) God. In Thomas, Burgersdijk, and Descartes *notio* refers to content or awareness; in Heereboord, it also refers to propositions as content of which we are aware.

Heereboord contends that the idea of God is in our mind in different ways, which suggest different origins: 'The notion of God is [in us] in different ways and degrees: it can be confused in common, distinct in particular, salvific or non salvific. I am discussing the notion of God which is confused and non salvific, because in no way the distinct and salvific notion can originate from nature.'[35] The innate idea of God is confused because we do not know God's essence, nor can we go beyond a mere grasping of the divine perfections (the Cartesian distinction between grasping and understanding). It is not sufficient for salvation because, according to Calvinism, salvation does not come as a reward for men's efforts, let alone for the universal possession of the idea of God. From an epistemic point of view, more than the grasp of the divine character of the idea is required for a theological and religious understanding of it; one which grounds faith, and moves the will and the passions. What the idea conveys, as stated by Heereboord in chapter II, is the awareness of the existence of a deity worth of worship.

The following passage contains Heereboord's argument from universal consensus:

> *That there is such an innate notion is proved by*: (1) universal and perennial consensus of all people, because of a sense of divinity naturally innate in all men. (2) the beneficial moral rules and institutions present among the Gentiles, which originated only in the light of nature. (3) the awe of a supreme deity which rushes forth out of men's hearts.[36]

Here, SoD is the source of the consensus among men that God exists, although Heereboord does not describe it as a specific feature of human nature, nor makes he any reference to a faculty of sense. Mankind has an innate faculty, arguably reason, which grasps the innate idea of God: both faculty and idea are present in all men.

35 Heereboord, *Meletemata Philosophica*, IV: '*Ratione modi et graduum notitia Dei est: confusa in communi, distincta in particulari, salutaris vel non salutaris. De notitia Dei confusa et non salutari quaestio est. (distincta et salutari ex natura nullo modo hauriri potest).*'

36 Ibid., V: '*Notitiam innatam probant. 1) universalis et perpetuus omnium populorum consensus. sensus divinitatis naturaliter omnibus insitus. 2) salutaria morum praecepta et institutiones apud Gentiles, quae ex lumine naturae profluxerunt. 3) timor supremi alicujus numinis naturaliter ex corde hominis prorumpens.*'

Heereboord and Burgersdijk alike adhere to the Calvinist tenets of the immediateness of the idea of God, his worthiness of worship, and the inexcusability of those who deny it, but the philosophical differences are profound. In chapter V, Heereboord attacks his master's view:

> Against those who deny this conclusion [that the idea of God is innate], as Burgersdijk, in book II of his *Metaphysics*, chapter 4, thesis 1 and 2: from Aristotle, he gathers that *the soul is a tabula rasa, on which nothing is written, and on which anything can be written*. He is not careful enough when he dismisses the view that this proposition, *God exists*, is known by itself, and by the very grasping of the words, which, once it is brought forth, compels our assent in the same way as *the whole is bigger than its parts* does. That *God exists* is equally known to us in virtue of the knowledge of the terms, if not of the simple awareness of them; the latter conclusion seems to be more compelling to us because its truth is closer to our senses, whereas the truth of the former is closer to our intellect.[37]

Hence, 'the whole is bigger than its parts' is confirmed by (the evidence of) the senses; 'God exists' is confirmed by (the evidence of) the mind: 'in the same way as we know that *the whole is bigger than its parts* once we see and understand what *whole* and *part* are, likewise we know that *God exists* once we understand what the name of God means.'[38] Heereboord draws an interesting distinction between two grounds of evidence: the senses and the mind. What is remarkable is that the traditional example of an analytic judgment ('the whole is bigger than its parts') is claimed to be grounded on sensible experience as well as on reasoning. Perhaps Heereboord was influenced by Burgersdijk's empiricism that even principles have to be inductively tested on the ultimate truth-maker: the regular course of nature around us.

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37 Ibid., V: *'Burgersdicius lib. 2* Metaph. *c. 4 th. 1 et 2.: ex Arist.* animam esse tabulam rasam, in qua scriptum nihil est, sed quidvis inscribi potest. *Non satis caute dicitur hanc propositionem,* Deus est*, non esse per se notam, nec intellecta significatione vocum, qui effertur, assensum imperare, sicut haec facit,* Totum est majus sua parte. *Aeque notum est ex terminis cognitis, si non notis,* Deum esse*, quam alterum istud; nam postremum hoc notius esse videtur, quia sensibus ejus veritas est vicinior: at prioris veritas intellectui est proprior.'*

38 Ibid., V: '*et sicut viso aut cognito, quid sit totum, quid pars, statim scitur, totum esse majus sua parte, ita etiam, intellecto quid significet hoc nomen*, *Deus*, statim habetur et scitur, quod *Deus est*.'

Burgersdijk and Heereboord agree on the immediateness of the awareness of the idea of God but disagree on how to understand its innateness. Calvin himself did not speak of an innate idea, but of an immediate conclusion produced by an innate faculty or disposition. Analogue positions to those held by Burgersdijk and Heereboord will feature in the discussions on innateness by John Locke, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, including the famous image of the *tabula rasa*. I am referring to passages like the following in Locke's *Essay*: 'If it were true in matter of fact, that there were certain truths, wherein all mankind agreed, it would not prove them innate'; or that '[a]ssenting as soon as proposed and understood, proves them [the ideas] not innate.'[39] John Locke seems to be speaking Burgersdijk's language in these passages: they agree that a shared faculty among men is a better explanation for universal consensus and immediate awareness than innate ideas are. There is thus a similar intent in Burgersdijk and Locke to deny innate ideas and pursue an empiricist theory of knowledge. On the contrary, Heereboord's argument marches in the direction of Locke's criticism, for he holds that the idea of God is innate, not only the process or faculty by which we obtain it.

Burgersdijk's moral philosophy is in the *Idea Philosophiae Moralis*, published in Leiden in 1623. The *Idea* is a typical example of early seventeenth-century textbooks. While it retains the structure of a commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, it arranges the chapters thematically and goes beyond the textual interpretation of Aristotle. Burgersdijk's own voice can be heard at crucial instances. In chapter I, paragraph XVII, Burgersdijk endorses the Aristotelian and scholastic conviction that good and evil are apprehended and judged by *recta ratio*, right reason: a tenet of intellectualism in moral philosophy, which was the dominant paradigm in pre-Enlightenment philosophy. Hutcheson was schooled in this tradition which was still strong in the Scottish universities in the late seventeenth century. Alasdair MacIntyre contends that this tradition played a great influence on Hutcheson, though he famously departed from it in favour of sentimentalism. Hutcheson, following Shaftesbury, placed the original of moral perceptions in a faculty of sense, rather than in reason, as in the Aristotelian and scholastic traditions. MacIntyre also argues that Hutcheson was keen to minimise the disagreement between Aristotle's and his own views. He remarks that 'intellectualism had already been rejected to a significant degree at quite another level [other than Shaftesbury's], that of the practices of seventeenth-century religion'; and that, according to Henry

39 Locke, *Essay*, I, ii, 3 and 17.

Sidgwick, 'the duality of the regulative principles in human nature … marked "the most fundamental difference between the ethical thought of modern England and that of the old Greco-Roman world"'.[40] Leaving aside the oblique remark to 'England' which arguably stands for England and Scotland, the quote by Sidgwick hints at a fundamental shift in moral conceptions taking place thanks to, among others, Hutcheson: from scholastic intellectualism to the sense–reason dualism. As a testimony of the longer influence of Aristotle on moral subjects than on physical ones in the modern period, MacIntyre believes that much of the issue here is still on how the *Nicomachean Ethics* was interpreted.

If we accept that 'Hutcheson [saw] in Aristotle's text what eyes informed by Shaftesbury's vision of the moral life allowed him to see',[41] and that Hutcheson's persuasion that his views coincided with Aristotle's is incorrect,[42] one interesting place to look at in Aristotle is the role of perception and sensibility in moral judgments. Is Aristotle's sensible perception of the morality of particular actions similar or comparable to Hutcheson's moral sense? What Reformed scholastic philosophers understood Aristotle to be saying on these matters can also suggest to what extent intellectualism has already been rejected. We can now look into the role of sensibility in Burgersdijk's commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book II of the *Idea* is on the definition of *bonum*. The good is defined as that which is *congruum et conveniens* (fitting, agreeable) to someone, and that which gives rise to desire and love by its own nature (paragraph III). Burgersdijk addresses the question of how this good is apprehended:

> And indeed there are things which are drawn towards the good by an innate appetite, without a previous understanding of it, and which run away from the bad: they do so, striving for the good and restraining from the bad, by elicit appetite, in virtue of the presented notion of the objected thing … Such innate appetite cannot diverge from its goal, and it flows from the nature of each individual thing.[43]

40 MacIntyre, *Whose Justice*, 269, 268.

41 Ibid., 269.

42 Maria Elton, 'Moral Sense and Natural reason', *Review of Metaphysics,* 62 (2008), 79–110, 83.

43 Burgersdijk, *Idea*, III. V–VI: '*Etenim res quaedam sunt, quae innato appetitu, sine praevia cognitionem in bonum feruntur, aut a malo refugiunt: sunt, quae in bonum feruntur, et a malo refugiunt appetitu elicito, praeeunte objectae rei notitia. … appetitus innatus non possit a scopo aberrare. Fluit enim a cujusque rei natura.*'

This interesting passage is balanced by the remark, in chapter X.V, that our moral virtue cannot be exerted without dianoetic virtue, because our appetite is blind without the light of reason which judges the objects. Burgersdijk is still within the intellectualist approach of Aristotelian and scholastic philosophy, and we have here no interpretation of a sense in Hutchesonian fashion. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that Burgersdijk argues for the existence of a specific innate appetite towards good and evil which activates itself upon the simple presentation of an object, without the intervention of reason. Such an innate appetite is both descriptive and normative, because it furnishes the mind with a perception that a certain thing is good (or bad), that the thing ought to be desired (or loathed), and that finally inclines the will towards (or away from) it. Though it is reason which judges the good, it is a sensible faculty which first perceives it, and already apprehends it as good – once the virtuous habit takes hold of one's character.

Burgersdijk's position seems to be of a mixed nature: on the one side, reason necessarily supports our appetite and presents it with the natures of good and evil; on the other, men have an innate appetite towards good which is not simply an inclination towards good, rather it is an immediate perception of the goodness (or badness) of an object. The underlying debate is on synderesis as the universal grasp of moral principles. Let us see the difference between Burgersdijk and Aquinas on this matter. In order to account for the universal grasp of moral principles and the actuality of practical error, 'Aquinas . . . identifies synderesis with the Aristotelian intellect that grasps first principles. He believes that Aristotle himself recognizes this function for practical intellect. Synderesis is always correct because it grasps the ultimate first principles, and we cannot be mistaken about them.'[44] A remarkable difference from Hutcheson:

> Practical *nous* grasps the relevant features of particular cases … and allowing the application of universal principles. This distinction marks a very important difference between Hutcheson and Aristotle, because from Aristotle's point of view, it means that the morality of actions is known by understanding – that is, *nous* –, a principle of knowledge that is intellectual, not sensible like Hutchesonian moral sense.[45]

44 Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics. From Socrates to the Reformation* (Oxford, 2007), 574.

45 Elton, 'Moral Sense and Natural reason', 88.

What is the role of sensibility? Simply to convey by means of sensible perception the particular actions in which the principles are intuited. Like Aquinas, Burgersdijk believes in the guiding role of reason in moral philosophy. Nonetheless, he seems to attribute a richer role to sensibility in the judgments of practical reason. The sensible appetite evaluates the object in a conscious way, and moves the will accordingly. Burgersdijk's position seems to anticipate the awareness among later British philosophers that the 'experience of virtue is sensory as well as intellectual'.[46] Arguably, this reflects the evolving epistemic status of the Calvinist sense in the seventeenth century.

5 From Calvin to Hutcheson: a comparison

The conclusive part of the paper seeks to highlight the assonances between the Reformed scholastic views and Shaftesbury, Locke, and Hutcheson. The most immediate source for Hutcheson's Calvinism is the teaching he received in his youth. As mentioned above, MacIntyre and Broadie have commented on the philosophical formation of Hutcheson as one dominated by the relation with Calvinism, often in the form of a constant struggle with its negative understanding of human nature. The universities and academies of the period in Scotland and Ulster were Reformed institutions where the Westminster Confession of Faith (1648) was an influential document. The regents taught a form of Reformed scholasticism which, after the 1660s, was heavily influenced by Cartesianism.[47] The young Hutcheson was taught a combination of Aristotelian intellectualism in moral philosophy and the Calvinist doctrine of the Fall with the addition, later at university, of Carmichael's lectures on natural law. The extent of Hutcheson's own departure from the Aristotelo-Reformed scholastic teaching is remarkable, though I wish to suggest that there are assonances between Hutcheson's sense and the Calvinist sense. I am not aware of a specific treatment of SoD in the philosophy curriculum of the universities, although some theses introduce the concept. Robert Forbes, regent at King's College, Aberdeen, in his *Theses philosophicae* (1684) criticises the Cartesian a

46 Hutton, 'From Cudworth to Hume', 11. Hutton refers in particular to the Henry More and Adam Smith.

47 See Shepherd, *Philosophy and Science*, 337; Giovanni Gellera, 'The Philosophy of Robert Forbes: a Scottish Scholastic Response to Cartesianism', *Journal of Scottish Philosophy*, 11 (2013), 191–211; and idem, 'The reception of Descartes in the Seventeenth-Century Scottish Universities: Metaphysics and Natural Philosophy (1650–1680)', *Journal of Scottish Philosophy*, 13 (2015), 179–201.

priori demonstration of the existence of God and contends that 'it is necessary that those who approach God also believe that God exists.'[48] This seems to be a reference to Calvin's SoD, a point reinforced by the fact that the overall thrust of Forbes's critique of Descartes is the belief that Cartesianism is at odds with Calvinism. Forbes seems to contend that belief in God has logical and chronological priority over any rational proofs. Descartes' proofs fail because a sense of deity is necessary to complete the rational argument. Only a prior 'belief that God exists' can produce 'knowledge that God exists', reason alone cannot. Regent John Loudon in his *Theses philosophicae* (1697) writes that: '*God exists*, and his light, without any other arguments needed, seizes the mind and compels its assent.'[49] Loudon's point is that the idea of God innate in our mind compels our assent to the existence of God.

In what follows, I first draw a comparison between Hutcheson's main influences (Shaftesbury and Locke) and Calvin and Burgersdijk; then I draw a closer view of the epistemology of sense in Hutcheson, Calvin, and Burgersdijk.

The first possible assonance is, perhaps surprisingly, about the positive conception of human nature. In Shaftesbury, Hutcheson must have seen a confirmation of the ideas that our nature is God-given, and that we have good affections and the natural capacity to feel attraction for them.[50] The central aspect here is a normative view of human nature: how we are dictates what good and evil are, not just what is beneficial and hurtful to us. Shaftesbury and Hutcheson were following a long-held scholastic view, albeit admittedly not a Calvinist view. Burgersdijk is willing to accord importance to reason and to its accompanying sentiment in natural theology, and to reason and sensibility in moral judgments. Calvin's negative understanding of human nature limits his acceptance of the role of sense to the inexcusability of the atheist. Burgersdijk seems to hold a more positive account of human nature in coping with his Reformed faith. Hutcheson might have picked on this Reformed scholastic anthropology, as well as on the Cambridge Platonists' 'affirmation of the

48 Section VI: '*Accedentem ad Deum, oportet credere Deum esse*.' I have analysed this text and remarked its vicinity to Burgersdijk's proof elsewhere: Gellera, 'The Philosophy of Robert Forbes', 200–1.

49 Section XII: '*Deus existit*, ut luce sua, absque argumentis aliunde adductis, mentem in assensum rapiat.'

50 The exposition of the key features of Hutcheson's sense are taken from Luigi Turco, 'Moral Sense and the Foundations of Morals' in Alexander Broadie (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2003), 136–56, 136.

innate human ability to grasp important truths independent of the benefit of Christian revelation'.[51]

A second possible assonance is on what counts as 'innate'. From Descartes and Locke, Hutcheson took the ideal theory. From Locke he also took the fundamental assumption that innate ideas are dead to philosophers. Hutcheson extensively worked on how to combine his belief in a normative sense (hence in a normative human nature) and the implausibility of innate ideas.[52] Burgersdijk seems to be on Lockean ground when he rejects innate ideas and seeks to frame SoD within an empiricist theory of knowledge. As remarked above, the innateness of the idea of God was always spelled out in terms of the innateness of a faculty or disposition which produces such an idea, and not of the innateness of the actual idea (with the exception of Heereboord). Notwithstanding the corruption caused by the Fall, human nature is capable of at least belief in God, because both SoD and reason are 'innate' in men. The Calvinists were far from the internal harmony advocated by Hutcheson but Hutcheson could have felt for the potentialities of the Calvinist sense freed of the Calvinist negative conception of human nature. A second decisive Lockean influence on Hutcheson is the idea that pleasure and pain always accompany our thoughts. We can trace, again, a possible assonance with Reformed scholasticism. Burgersdijk argues that in the perception of the idea of God we are immediately moved by piety, respect, and awe. Likewise, in moral matters, sensibility delivers to us an immediate perception of good and evil within the habit of virtue.

Hutcheson's (moral and aesthetic) sense(s) is characterised by the following: (1) it is internal and produces simple ideas (of beauty, of good and so on); (2) it is independent of our will, immediate, and common to all mankind; (3) it cannot find further justification (in reason) than can the sense of taste for distinguishing between sweet food and bitter food; and (4) reason can correct the sense, but it is not reason which perceives the simple ideas which are the

51 Gill, 'From Cambridge Platonism', 21. Gill calls this affirmation the 'platonism' of the Cambridge Platonists.

52 The Scottish universities were less impressed than Hutcheson with Book I of Locke's *Essay*. John Locke is rarely cited in the graduation theses only to criticise his rejection of innate ideas as a favour to the atheists. See for example Alexander More, *Theses philosophicae* (Aberdeen, 1691), III; and John Loudon, *Theses philosophicae* (Edinburgh, 1697), X; George Peacock, *Theses philosophicae* (Aberdeen, 1711), V. What the regents defend is a version of Cartesian innatism.

object of sense.[53] Let us now look at these points in Calvin, Burgersdijk, and Heereboord.

(1) Hutcheson's sense furnishes the mind with simple ideas. Likewise, in Aquinas the notions/awareness of colours only originate in the senses. Yet, the traditional scholastic senses, either external or internal, are only conducive of sensible species, not of Hutchesonian simple ideas. Senses are not a faculty of knowledge. Calvin's influential intuition is that the idea of God arises from *sensing* that the experience of the external world is incomplete without transcendence. This sensing is irresistible, immediate, spontaneous, original. It is a principle of the unity of experience. 'Sensing' is now suggestive of propositional content. Similarly, in Burgersdijk the experience of the external world raises a sentiment for the deity which directs towards, and gives strength to, the proofs of the existence of God. With Calvin, we see the introduction of a source of truth other than reason, although human nature is not yet conceived of as a duality of reason and sensibility in the early modern sense. The natural idea of God, as opposed to the theological/religious idea, is produced immediately by SoD. It is not an object of experience: rather, our experience of the external world is such that the idea of God is naturally inferred. In the same way as Hutcheson's sense is internal because it arises only if certain other ideas have arisen in the external senses, SoD produces an idea only on the experience of the external world, without which it would be a blind sense. On Burgersdijk's view, the 'internal' aspect lies in that the sense accompanies the inference of a novel idea (of God) on the grounds of external experience. On Heereboord's innatist view, on the contrary, the word 'God' is enough for us to grasp its self-evidence, and the sense amounts to this immediate awareness.

(2) It is crucial to Calvin that SoD is universal and beyond our will in order to ground theism's appeal to universality and its epistemic force on both the believer and the atheist. Similarly to Hutcheson, Calvin believes that the deliverances of sense are natural to mankind because the sense is one of men's faculties/dispositions. Burgersdijk and Heereboord have a more modest understanding of sense. There is no faculty of sense at work: reason is the true universal principle of human knowledge and sense is understood in relation with the activity of reason. All agree that SoD is beyond our will: because sense is part of our nature (Calvin), because it is how the mind works (Burgersdijk), or because the mind is compelled by the self-evidence of the idea of God (Heereboord). SoD is not vincible: the denier of SoD is not

53 Turco, 'Moral Sense', 136–8.

in a justifiable epistemic condition because her only ground for denial is a malevolent disposition, and not lack of evidence. SoD is original, although it requires illumination by faith (and, on Burgersdijk's and Heereboord's views, arguments by natural reason) to guide from 'belief that God exists' to 'knowledge that God exists'.

(3) In Hutcheson, sense is justified without appeal to reason. Matters of sense are not of reason to judge on. The belief in God produced by SoD, according to Calvin, is strong enough to be invincible (hence inexcusably rejected), but also weak enough not to argue against the total depravity of the human faculties. SoD has to provide awareness of God but no proper knowledge of God. As a 'judgment of a highly unself-conscious and automatic kind' as Paul Helm describes it, SoD is a judgment which is foundational but not rational. In Hutchesonian terms, the 'independence from reason' of sense does not seems to apply to Reformed scholasticism. Burgersdijk and Heereboord are foundationalists of the rationalist kind within their respective Aristotelian and Cartesian positions. In varying degrees, sense always refers to the activities of reason. Reformed scholasticism and Hutcheson display fundamentally different anthropologies here, whereas more common ground can be found between Hutcheson and Calvin.

(4) In Hutcheson, sense is constantly engaged in practical judgments. This contemplates the possibility of error, which is corrected by reason.[54] In Calvin, Burgersdijk, and Heereboord SoD is a quasi-background awareness which sets a fuller understanding of God in motion. SoD is not 'constantly engaged in practical judgments' because it is limited to the specific and individual relation to the deity and to the understanding of the external world from this perspective only. SoD is constitutional of human nature but not all-encompassing in our perceptual life. SoD makes a "new" idea, that of God, available to us: the harmony and design of created things, as well as the impossibility that they constitute the whole of reality, direct the mind towards the idea of God. This idea is later refined by study of the Scriptures, practice of faith, natural theology, but it is not 'corrected' by reason in any meaningful sense.

54 See Alexander Broadie, 'Hutcheson on Connoisseurship and the Role of Reflection', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 17 (2009), 351–64. Broadie investigates reflection as the 'antedote to associationism' in that it corrects the intellectual and practical harmfulness of the associations of ideas. Reflection takes part in the formation of moral and aesthetic judgments, it works on the deliverances of the sense, its role is different from the sense's and it is not always beneficial. There are two concepts of reflection: it is a notice we take of something in the mind, or it is a discursive cognitive act. In the latter sense, it is comparable to scholastic reason.

6 Conclusion

The influences of Shaftesbury and Locke on Hutcheson are well documented and are acknowledged by Hutcheson himself. He is indebted with respect to the fundamental intuitions of sentimentalism and the novel epistemology of ideas. The role of Henry More and of the Cambridge Platonists has attracted recent attention, in the direction of the Moral Self-Governance View and the stress on the importance of sentimentalism. Regarding religion, the traditional narrative tells us of Hutcheson's rejection of certain aspects of Calvinism: if not of Calvinism as a private matter of faith, certainly of Calvinism as a philosophical source.

Contrary to this interpretation, I hope to have shown that Calvin and Reformed scholasticism played a role in shaping Hutcheson's philosophy along with Descartes, the Cambridge Platonists, Shaftesbury, and Locke. Hutcheson rejected the Calvinist negative account of human nature, with all its implications in moral psychology, anthropology, and epistemology. My contention is that his rejection of Calvinism was not a wholesale rejection. Calvinism was a lively and fecund tradition and Reformed scholastics such as Franco Burgersdijk, arguably guided by philosophical as well as by religious concerns, gave a philosophical mould to Calvin's intuitions which produced more moderate (and more systematic) views on human nature, natural reason, psychology, and epistemology. Hutcheson was acquainted with Reformed scholasticism as the dominant philosophy in the seventeenth-century Scottish universities. Hence, aspects of the original intuition of Calvin and the epistemology of sense developed by the Reformed scholastics, such as Burgersdijk and Heereboord, might well be a so far unrecognised thread in the complex fabric of Hutcheson's sentimentalism.

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