

The Collected Works of Bernard Mandeville

Volume I: THE WORLD IS BEING RUINED BY VIRTUE

Volume II: PEOPLE DO NOT SPEAK TO BE UNDERSTOOD

Translated by Liz Waters

*Opinionum enim commenta delet dies;
naturae iudicia confirmat.*

Cicero, DE NATURA DEORUM, LIB. 2

Time destroys the figments of the imagination,
while confirming the judgments of nature.

INTRODUCTION

by Arne C. Jansen

“What! Don’t men speak to be understood?” Horatio asks his friend Cleomenes scornfully. How can he say that, when they have just been talking to each other for almost six dialogues?

They do and they don’t, Cleomenes replies. Of course we want the meaning of the words we use to get across – we want people to comprehend what we say. But at the same time we do not want to be understood such that others can see our true thoughts and feelings.

“I am of the opinion,” says Cleomenes, “that the first design of speech was to persuade others, either to give credit to what the speaking person would have them believe or else to act or suffer such things, as he would compel them to act or suffer, if they were entirely in his power.”

Words, no matter how they sound, help to maintain a comfortable distance between people. We need words in order to live in a civilized manner in larger groups. Even terms of abuse are a product of civilization. A wild man does not curse or scoff, he persecutes, oppresses or kills.

The things Horatio and Cleomenes say to each other about language and speech are part of a debate on an extremely important issue. Are we humans naturally suited to living together with others, or are we of all animals the least equipped by nature to be social beings?

The dialogues between Horatio and Cleomenes were written by Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), a Dutch physician and philosopher who lived and worked for most of his life in eighteenth-century Puritan England. The dialogues are Mandeville’s answer to attacks he faced after the publication in 1723 of the second edition of *The Fable of the Bees: Private Vices, Public Benefits*, especially

those passages included in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue*, the first volume of the Dutch edition of his *Collected Works*.¹

The powerful English clergy in particular rounded on Mandeville, taking draconian measures against him. There were even attempts at prosecution by the courts, as he tells us in *A Vindication of the Book* (1723), included in this second volume of the *Collected Works*.

The situation Mandeville found himself in was not very different from that of the famous physicist, philosopher and astronomer Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) a century earlier. Galileo, the founder of modern astronomy, had made discoveries that he believed demonstrated the miraculous workings of God's created universe. He did not regard what he had discovered as incompatible with the faith, but the Roman Catholic Church took a different view and demanded he distance himself from his findings.

Mandeville's own revelation was that civilized human societies do not grow and flourish because of their virtues but because of their vices, so long as these are prudently managed by competent people in authority. Like Galileo he was branded a heretic, even though as a believing Christian he did not regard what he was doing as in any way damaging to the faith.²

This degree of misunderstanding was impossible for Mandeville to ignore. How could he explain any more clearly the things he had begun to uncover? Taking his lead from Galileo's *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo* (*Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*) of 1632 he decided to try again.³ Six years later, in 1729, the dialogues between Horatio and Cleomenes appeared as *The Fable of the Bees, Part II*. The title suggests this is a sequel to *The Fable of the Bees, Part I*, but in fact the dialogues are a book in their own right, an extremely important work now published for the first time in Dutch, Mandeville's mother tongue, under the title *People do not Speak to be Understood*.⁴

To demonstrate the enormous importance of Mandeville's work we first need to look more closely at Galileo. In *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* he introduces three characters: two friends, one of whom represents Galileo himself, and a philosopher. They spend four days discussing two great rival conceptions of the world. Does the sun orbit the earth, as humanity had believed since Ptolemy (87-150 AD), or does the earth orbit the sun, as Copernicus (1473-1543) claimed and Galileo worked out in more detail?

We all know the outcome. Ptolemy's defeat meant that the earth, now one of several planets in solar orbit, had to cede its central place to the sun. This was problematic enough, but while our little pinhead of a planet held its own in an infinity of space and time, something else changed: the ancient concept of heaven, along with the afterlife it implied, was fatally undermined. It was brought down to earth with a bump. Over many years it came to be realized more generally that in an infinite and inhospitable universe, human happiness could not exist anywhere except here, on earth.

Dethroned by the sun, the earth became central to human concerns. Our planet lost its status as the here below but rose to become the site and source of happiness. If mankind were ever to experience happiness, it would have to be found – or rather created – here and now, in a heaven on earth. The great global project of man-made happiness had begun. Today, five centuries later, it is still a work-in-progress that dominates our lives.⁵

In Mandeville's day, as in Galileo's, a large number of Spaniards, Portuguese, Dutch, English and other West Europeans set out to explore the world. They crossed every ocean and every continent, discovering new lands, conspicuously enriching themselves in the process. Science and the arts flourished along with them. Discoveries were made in many different fields as travellers collected specimens from remote regions of the planet and researchers watched wriggling bacteria for the first time, using a new invention, the microscope, the credit for which goes in no small part to Dutchmen like Antonie van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723).

It was during this explosion of discovery and research, which we still find so impressive, that the Dutch doctor Bernard Mandeville, an expert on human nature, set out to explore human society.⁶ It turned out to function very differently than was generally assumed, and human beings as such appeared very different as well. Mankind did not seem to fit the religious mould of piety, meekness and virtue and, more importantly still, failed to match the freshly emerging self-image of “modern” man.

Modern man? Certainly, because the more he conquers the earth and the more his prosperity grows, the higher western man’s opinion is of himself and his civilization. He feels pity for his mediaeval forebears and looks with even more condescension on the people he encounters in other parts of the world. It was the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, rather than the rediscovery of the forgotten world of the Greeks, Romans and Arabs during the Renaissance, that did most to banish the last remnants of humility from western man’s outlook on life.

The project of man-made happiness required a different, better type of human being. The mediaeval man of old, still living in his earthly vale of tears, had in practice simply made the best of things. What else could he do? He knew exactly what people were capable of and did not close his eyes to individual differences or human weaknesses, and the official church adjusted accordingly.

This form of human being was as ill suited to the project of creating heaven on earth as a tramp at a ball. Aware that people often change their behaviour when they rise to high office, those with the greatest sense of self-importance promoted humanity to the status of *homo sapiens*, the highest being. This wise, rational being is a person who must never in any way remind us of his animal nature. He is a messenger from heaven, an earthly incarnation of God, and preferably male.

Bernard Mandeville argued against those who took such an unrealistic, rosy view of humanity. What was he trying to achieve and what were his research methods? In describing his approach it is useful to look at a statement of intent in a book by

Mandeville's academic supervisor, the physicist Wolferd Senguerdus: "Whatever kind of books I may write, you must read them with this in the back of your mind: that I am still looking for the truth, do not have a lease on it, indeed am searching for it with grim determination. I have not made myself into a spokesman for anyone, nor do I seek to perpetuate anyone's reputation. I have enormous faith in the judgment of great men, but I also set great store by my own. Because those great men have not bequeathed us any discoveries, only research projects."⁷

This perfectly describes Mandeville's own investigative approach. In his study of society he does not allow himself to be led by what others have written in the past. He carries out his own research. For Mandeville every cultural phenomenon is a form of expression directly related to one or more of man's natural characteristics.

If we look closely at any such cultural expression (the language of the quotation with which this introduction opens, for instance) and then at the person behind it, we will discover its direct cause in human nature. This was also the method Mandeville used as a doctor. He treated his patients with extreme care and attention to detail, because every person, every complaint, is different. He made logical connections and drew conclusions without ever stepping beyond facts observable by anyone trained in the field, strictly excluding anything based on imagination. In other words he was a true scientist.

This scientific method governed everything Mandeville did, including all his medical and literary work, from his time as a student in Rotterdam to his death in London in 1733.

In his *Dialogue* Galileo had contrasted two rival astronomical systems. Mandeville's dialogues between Horatio and Cleomenes demonstrate the contrast between two systems used to explain human society, over which the two friends cross swords.

Initial resistance must be overcome before the six conversations between the two men – briefly accompanied in the first dialogue by Cleomenes' niece Fulvia⁸

– can get underway. Horatio is so appalled by what he has heard about Mandeville and his *Fable of the Bees* that at first he prefers to keep his distance from his friend Cleomenes, to avoid being troubled by any of the devilish ideas in that devilish book by Man-Devil.

At the same time they remain friends and each knows that in practice the other's behaviour has not changed, at least not outwardly. Cleomenes knows exactly what Horatio thinks, but does Horatio really know what Mandeville is talking about? Once they begin discussing the subject – after Cleomenes has used a rhetorical trick in the first few pages of the book, saying that he too wants nothing further to do with Mandeville, indeed condemning him in even stronger terms than Horatio – Mandeville's outlook gradually starts to seem quite acceptable to Horatio and he even claims to be feeling more and more in sympathy with it.

Horatio's conception of how society works is akin to the social system so elegantly described and advocated by the influential writer Lord Shaftesbury. Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), had published his *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* in 1711.⁹ According to Shaftesbury, nature has endowed human beings with a moral sense, a kind of pituitary gland for norms and values, an instinct for telling good from evil.¹⁰

Mandeville calls Shaftesbury's system the affective or social system, social in the sense that human beings naturally live together with others in a civilized and orderly manner, just as nature or providence has seen to it that bees and ants live according to systems that operate to perfection. Compared to the animals, humans are endowed with great talents of head and heart. Earthly happiness can only be collective.

At one point Mandeville has Cleomenes paraphrase Shaftesbury: "Wise men never look upon themselves as individual persons, without considering the whole [...] Ought it not to be everyone's endeavour to increase this common stock of happiness and, in order to it, do what he can to render himself a serviceable and useful member of that whole body which he belongs to?" In Shaftesbury's system

the type of human being so highly spoken of here is the enlightened jewel of creation. Poor and unschooled people do not qualify.

Cleomenes, a friend of the author of *The Fable of the Bees*, is convinced that society actually works quite differently. In reality he is Mandeville's alter ego and he refers to the author's conceptual framework as the scheme of deformity or the sociable system. Here the word sociable means that humans are not designed by nature to live together in a civilized manner and it takes a great deal of effort to make them do so. Man is like a wild horse, but with rather more brains and therefore more cunning. At the first opportunity he will break out and grab his chance, no matter to which social class he belongs. People seek their own happiness. Collective happiness does not exist.

Mandeville's tamed barbarian has no innate values or norms. We all begin with a clean slate, without any conception of good and evil. "The brain of a child, newly born, is *tabula rasa*; and, as you have hinted very justly, we have no ideas, which we are not obliged for to our senses."

Of the many subjects broached by Horatio and Cleomenes, a few deserve special mention: death, good manners, castrati, the ten commandments, children, childrearing, honour, duelling, art, science, women and government. Everything they talk about is as topical as ever, since the human species has not changed, indeed has no means of changing itself.

The highpoint of the dialogues in psychological terms is their treatment of what Mandeville calls "self-liking". Self-liking is not the same as self-love, which instinctively drives an individual to satisfy his own essential needs, to protect himself against the climate, and to ensure his own security, all in the interests of self-preservation. Self-liking encompasses self-preservation and therefore has a broader meaning; it causes an individual to draw attention to his own sense of superiority through gestures, looks and sounds.

Cleomenes puts it like this: "I fancy, that, to increase the care in creatures to preserve themselves, nature has given them an instinct by which every individual

values itself above its real worth; this in us, I mean, in man, seems to be accompanied with a diffidence, arising from a consciousness, or at least an apprehension, that we overvalue ourselves: it is this that makes us so fond of the approbation, liking and assent of others; because they strengthen and confirm us in the good opinion we have of ourselves.”

What happens to a person who is confirmed in his self-liking? “The inward pleasure and satisfaction a man receives from the gratification of that passion is a cordial that contributes to his health,” says Cleomenes. On the other hand, feelings of inferiority and worthlessness are also caused by self-liking. People suffer terribly if this particular passion is not satisfied. It is often quite literally the end of them. And because a person is a mass of contradictions, self-liking is often partly satisfied and partly not.

All humans are born with self-liking, Cleomenes says. It may be observed in infants even “before they can speak or go”. Everything revolves around the self-liking of each individual, but it is precisely this fact that must be concealed if we are to live in a civilized society, because the unrestrained self-liking of one person is by definition detrimental to the self-liking of another.

There are numerous ways in which our desire for attention and success may be packaged in a culturally correct manner, but through all our talk and preaching about love of others, self-liking clamours to be heard. Self-liking is present even where feigning the opposite is held up as an ideal. Neither togas nor other uniforms can quite conceal it. Consider the election of a new Pope, for example. “In conclaves more especially nothing is carried on without tricks and intrigue, and in them the heart of man is so deep and so dark an abyss that the finest air of dissimulation is sometimes found to have been insincere, and men often deceive one another by counterfeiting hypocrisy.”

Mandeville traces even suicide back to self-liking. “Nothing seems to be more certain, than that whoever kills himself by choice, must do it to avoid something, which he dreads more than that death which he chooses. Therefore, how absurd

soever a person's reasoning may be, there is in all suicide a palpable intention of kindness to oneself."

Self-liking, man's basic passion in Mandeville's view, is the molten core within each individual. It is natural and involuntary, and we must temper its effects to some degree in order to live together in a civilized manner. But if self-liking as such is impeded, it will burst out like hot lava somewhere else.

The body goes its own way to a great degree. It is a piece of living nature over which our own powers of reasoning have little influence. Given the choice, for example, you can decide to some extent what to eat and drink and how much, but as soon as you swallow, Mandeville points out, every inch of your being is subjected to the completely autonomic digestive processes of your body.

What is the position of man in the cosmos? Does the cosmos revolve around *homo sapiens*, the eternally wise, rational being who is not subject to nature? Or does each individual merely spin on his own axis, an inexplicable component of a vast cycle that he will never be able to comprehend, a cycle of birth, life and death? What do you see when you look in the mirror? Who is lying next to you in bed? One person or another – that matters a great deal.

If an individual human being is a little spinning cosmos in and of himself, then the image becomes infinitely more complex when we consider that people also whirl around each other, attracting and repelling each other, as can be seen in every social grouping large or small, be it a family, a circle of friends, a business, a nation, or all of humanity. To complicate matters even further, Mandeville regards the human being as only one of innumerable creatures that inhabit the earth. Individual people on earth are no more than flecks of stardust in the universe.

In our dizzying cosmos there are now billions of people who, whether they like it or not, are sociable beings. They are not pre-modern, modern or postmodern. In this hectic world, social life is no longer particularly social. Is any

conclusion possible other than that all projects aimed at creating individual or collective happiness, at creating perfection, are doomed to failure?

Mankind has taken as long to absorb this Copernican twist to Mandeville's work as it took to absorb Copernicus' cosmography, and it is no less fundamental. In the development of human thought, Mandeville is a trailblazer of global significance; his paradigm is slowly but steadily becoming common currency across the scientifically oriented world.¹¹

In 1966 the Austrian economist and Nobel Prize winner Friedrich A. Hayek (1899-1992) called attention to Mandeville as a man who had refuted the notion that human beings can create the society of their choice. With this insight, Hayek claims, Mandeville heralded "the definite breakthrough in modern thought of the twin ideas of evolution and of the spontaneous formation of an order". Hayek's essay, *Dr. Mandeville, a Master Mind* is among the best ever written about Mandeville and it is included as an epilogue to the second volume of the *Collected Works*.¹²

Historically the project of creating a new society has had disastrous consequences. In the twentieth century, advocates of collectivist utopian ideals satisfied their self-liking without restraint, staining the earth an indelible red and causing indescribable personal suffering. So far, the twenty-first century does not look any better in this respect.

Another epidemic that shows no sign of abating is that of the desire to become a "better" human being at a personal level, or to demand this of the children we are responsible for raising, in other words an open or secret longing or need to be somebody else, as a means of securing personal happiness. This is an impossibility, "unless you wished for annihilation at the same time," Mandeville says, because another person includes that other person's self, and the desire to become better off was targeted at your own self.

If on the one hand all projects aimed at creating heaven on earth are doomed to failure and attempts to bring them to fruition have such horrifying consequences,

and if on the other hand the big bang caused by Copernicus and Galileo is irreversible, what exactly remains to us, our children and our grandchildren?

It is the paradoxical question of a bird whose wings have been clipped and has no idea what it means to fly with unclipped wings. The answer is that everything remains, but everything has changed.

Anyone trying to form his own opinion on the matter will find Mandeville's work an enjoyable source of inspiration. We should not forget that he was a medical man, a psychiatrist *avant la lettre*, and that his work was inspired by his belief that the most valuable thing in life is the interrelated mental and physical health of the individual.

“Every individual is a little world by itself, and all creatures, so far as their understanding and abilities will let them, endeavour to make that self happy.” At a personal level this means we can make do with whatever is achievable for us as sociable beings, and that our self-liking does not necessarily mean we have to make an absurd song and dance about things. The outcome is a tonic of various sorts, reducing sickness, melancholy and fear of failure, while promoting relaxation, energy and authentic behaviour.

Mandeville's ethical and political ideas about childrearing, civilization and government are aimed at enabling people to live, and live together, healthily.¹³ This requires us to be conscious of our natural character traits, to learn to accept their consequences and keep them under control. It is also the main requirement we should bear in mind in governing others, when concrete social problems need to be addressed. An interesting illustration of what this might mean is Mandeville's *A Modest Defence of the Public Stews*. (*Collected Works, Volume I*, pages 159ff).

How, then, does Horatio fare? As we have seen, he gradually becomes more sympathetic to Mandeville's way of thinking.

After six dialogues he is delighted to be able to reassure Cleomenes: “I am your convert, and shall henceforth look upon *The Fable of the Bees* very

differently from what I did, for” – he adds, making use suddenly of the aestheticizing jargon typical of Shaftesbury – “tho’ in the *Characterisics* the language and diction are better, the system of man’s sociableness is more lovely and more plausible, and things are set off with more art and learning; yet in the other there is certainly more truth, and nature is more faithfully copied in it, almost everywhere.”

The truth and nature Shaftesbury writes about are different from those of Mandeville. Horatio’s loquaciousness is no mere rhetorical device; he is not just seeking to retaliate against Cleomenes for the way he drew him into the dialogues at the beginning. To Cleomenes all that matters is that for everyone (including a friend in an aesthetic frame of mind) an existential matter is at issue here that has nothing to do with whether things are beautiful or ugly, pleasant or unpleasant, cosy or uncomfortable. At this crucial juncture we are faced with a stark and simple choice: either human beings are social by nature, or they are sociable by nature. The friendly advice Cleomenes gives Horatio, and by implication the reader, speaks volumes: “I wish you would read them both once more, and, after that, I believe you’ll say that you never saw two authors who seem to have wrote with more different views.”

EPILOGUE

Dr. Bernard Mandeville: Lecture on a Master Mind

by F.A. Hayek¹⁴

1.

It is to be feared that not only would most of Bernard Mandeville's contemporaries turn in their graves if they could know that he is today presented as a master mind to this august body,¹⁵ but that even now there may have been some raising of eyebrows about the appropriateness of such a choice. The author who achieved such a *succès de scandale* almost 250 years ago is still not quite reputable. Though there can be no doubt that his works had an enormous circulation and that they set many people thinking on important problems, it is less easy to explain what precisely he has contributed to our understanding.

Let me say at once, to dispel a natural apprehension, that I am not going to represent him as a great economist. Although we owe to him both the term "division of labour" and a clearer view of the nature of this phenomenon, and although no less an authority than Lord Keynes¹⁶ has given him high praise for other parts of his economic work, it will not be on this ground that I shall claim any eminence for him. With the exception I have mentioned – which is a big one – what Mandeville has to say on technical economics seems to me to be rather mediocre, or at least unoriginal – ideas widely current in his time which he uses merely to illustrate conceptions of a much wider bearing.

Even less do I intend to stress Mandeville's contributions to the theory of ethics, in the history of which he has his well-established place. But though a contribution to our understanding of the genesis of moral rules is part of his achievement, it appears to me that the fact that he is regarded as primarily a moralist has been the chief obstacle to an appreciation of his main achievement.

I should be much more inclined to praise him as a really great psychologist, if this is not too weak a term for a great student of human nature; but even this is not my main aim, though it brings me nearer to my contention. The Dutch doctor, who in about 1696,¹⁷ in his late twenties, started to practise in London as a specialist in the diseases of the nerves and the stomach, that is, as a psychiatrist, and continued to do so for the following thirty-seven years, clearly acquired in the course of time an insight into the working of the human mind which is very remarkable and sometimes strikingly modern. He clearly prided himself on this understanding of human nature more than on anything else. That we do not know why we do what we do, and that the consequences of our decisions are often very different from what we imagine them to be, are the two foundations of that satire¹⁸ on the conceits of a rationalist age which was his initial aim.

What I do mean to claim for Mandeville is that the speculations to which that *jeu d'esprit*¹⁹ led him mark the definite breakthrough in modern thought of the twin ideas of evolution and of the spontaneous formation of an order, conceptions which had long been in coming, which had often been closely approached, but which just then needed emphatic statement because seventeenth-century rationalism had largely submerged earlier progress in this direction. Though Mandeville may have contributed little to the answers of particular questions of social and economic theory, he did, by asking the right questions, show that there was an object for a theory in this field. Perhaps in no case did he precisely show *how* an order formed itself without design, but he made it abundantly clear that it *did*, and thereby raised the questions to which theoretical analysis, first in the social sciences and later in biology, could address itself.²⁰

2.

Mandeville is perhaps himself a good illustration of one of his main contentions in that he probably never fully understood what was his main discovery. He had begun by laughing about the foibles and pretences of his contemporaries, and that poem in Hudibrastic verse which he published in 1705 as *The Grumbling Hive*:

or, Knaves Turned Honest, was probably little more than an exercise in the new language he had come to love and of which in so short a time he had acquired a remarkable mastery. Yet though this poem is all that most people today know about him, it gives yet little indication of his important ideas. It also seems at first to have attracted no attention among serious people. The idea that

The worst of all the multitude
Did something for the common good²¹

was but the seed from which his later thought sprang. It was not until nine years later when he republished the original poem with an elaborate and wholly serious prose commentary, that the trend of his thought became more clearly visible; and only a further nine years later, with a second edition of the *Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices Public Benefits*, a book about twenty times as long as the original poem, that his ideas suddenly attracted wide attention and caused a public scandal. Finally, it was really only after yet another six years, when in 1728,²² at the age of 58, he added a second volume to it,²³ that the bearing of his thought became quite clear. By that time, however, he had become a bogey man, a name with which to frighten the godly and respectable, an author whom one might read in secret to enjoy a paradox, but whom everybody knew to be a moral monster by whose ideas one must not be infected.

Yet almost everybody read him²⁴ and few escaped infection. Though the very title of the book, as the modern editor²⁵ observes, was apt “to throw many good people into a kind of philosophical hysterics which left them no wit to grasp what he was driving at”,²⁶ the more the outraged thundered, the more the young read the book. If Dr. Hutcheson²⁷ could give no lecture without attacking *The Fable of the Bees*, we may be sure that his student Adam Smith²⁸ very soon turned to it. Even half a century later Dr. Samuel Johnson²⁹ is said to have described it as a book that every young man had on his shelves in the mistaken belief that it was a wicked book.³⁰ Yet by then it had done its work and its chief contributions had

become the basis of the approach to social philosophy of David Hume³¹ and his successors.

3.

But does even the modern reader quite see what Mandeville was driving at? And how far did Mandeville himself? His main general thesis emerges only gradually and indirectly, as it were as a by-product of defending his initial paradox that what are private vices are often public benefits. By treating as vicious everything done for selfish purposes, and admitting as virtuous only what was done in order to obey moral commands, he had little difficulty in showing that we owed most benefits of society to what on such a rigoristic standard must be called vicious. This was no new discovery but as old almost as any reflection on these problems. Had not even Thomas Aquinas³² had to admit that *multae utilitates impedirentur si omnia peccata districte prohiberentur* – that much that is useful would be prevented if all sins were strictly prohibited?³³ The whole idea was so familiar to the literature of the preceding century, particularly through the work of La Rochefoucauld³⁴ and Bayle,³⁵ that it was not difficult for a witty and somewhat cynical mind, steeped from early youth in the ideas of Erasmus³⁶ and Montaigne,³⁷ to develop it into a grotesque of society. Yet by making his starting-point the particular moral contrast between the selfishness of the motives and the benefits which the resulting actions conferred on others, Mandeville saddled himself with an incubus of which neither he nor his successors to the present day could ever quite free themselves.

But as in his successive prose works Mandeville defends and develops the initial paradox, it becomes increasingly evident that it was but a special case of a much more general principle for which the particular contrast which had provoked all the moral indignation was almost irrelevant. His main contention became simply that in the complex order of society the results of men's actions were very different from what they had intended, and that the individuals, in pursuing their own ends, whether selfish or altruistic, produced useful results for

others which they did not anticipate or perhaps even know; and, finally, that the whole order of society, and even all that we call culture, was the result of individual strivings which had no such end in view, but which were channelled to serve such ends by institutions, practices, and rules which also had never been deliberately invented but had grown up by the survival of what proved successful.

It was in the elaboration of this wider thesis that Mandeville for the first time developed all the classical paradigmata of the spontaneous growth of orderly social structures: of law and morals, of language, the market, and of money, and also of the growth of technological knowledge. To understand the significance of this it is necessary to be aware of the conceptual scheme into which these phenomena had somewhat uneasily been fitted during the preceding 2,000 years.

4.

The ancient Greeks, of course, had not been unaware of the problem which the existence of such phenomena raised; but they had tried to cope with it with a dichotomy which by its ambiguity produced endless confusion, yet became so firm a tradition that it acted like a prison from which Mandeville at last showed the way of escape.

The Greek dichotomy³⁸ which had governed thinking so long, and which still has not lost all its power, is that between what is natural (*physei*) and that which is artificial or conventional (*thesei* or *nomos*).³⁹ It was obvious that the order of nature, the *kosmos*, was given independently of the will and actions of men, but that there existed also other kinds of order (for which they had a distinct word, *taxis*, for which we may envy them) which were the result of the deliberate arrangements of men.⁴⁰ But if everything that was clearly independent of men's will and their actions was in this sense obviously "natural", and everything that was the intended result of men's action "artificial", this left no distinct place for any order which was the result of human actions but not of human design. That there existed among the phenomena of society such spontaneous orders was often perceived. But as men were not aware of the ambiguity of the established

natural/artificial terminology, they endeavoured to express what they perceived in terms of it, and inevitably produced confusion: one would describe a social institution as “natural” because it had never been deliberately designed, while another would describe the same institution as “artificial” because it resulted from human actions.

It is remarkable how close, nevertheless, some of the ancient thinkers came to an understanding of the evolutionary processes that produced social institutions. There appears to have existed in all free countries a belief that a special providence watched over their affairs which turned their unsystematic efforts to their benefit. Aristophanes⁴¹ refers to this when he mentions that

There is a legend of the olden times
That all our foolish plans and vain conceits
Are overruled to work the public good.⁴²

– a sentiment not wholly unfamiliar in this country.⁴³ And at least the Roman lawyers of classical times were very much aware that the Roman legal order was superior to others because, as Cato is reported to have said, it

was based upon the genius, not of one man, but of many: it was founded, not in one generation, but in a long period of several centuries and many ages of men. For, said he, there never has lived a man possessed of so great a genius that nothing could escape him, nor could the combined powers of all men living at one time possibly make all the provisions for the future without the aid of actual experience and the test of time.⁴⁴

This tradition was handed on, chiefly through the theories of the law of nature; and it is startling how far the older theorists of the law of nature, before they were displaced by the altogether different rationalist natural law school of the seventeenth century, penetrated into the secrets of the spontaneous development of social orders in spite of the handicap of the term “natural”. Gradually even this unfortunate word became almost a technical term for referring to human

institutions which had never been invented or designed by men, but had been shaped by the force of circumstances. Especially in the works of the last of the Schoolmen, the Spanish Jesuits of the sixteenth century, it led to a systematic questioning of how things would have ordered themselves if they had not otherwise been arranged by the deliberate efforts of government; they thus produced what I should call the first modern theories of society if their teaching had not been submerged by the rationalist tide of the following century.⁴⁵

5.

Because, however great an advance the work of a Descartes,⁴⁶ a Hobbes,⁴⁷ and a Leibniz⁴⁸ may have meant in other fields, for the understanding of social growth processes it was simply disastrous. That to Descartes Sparta seemed eminent among Greek nations because its laws were the produce of design and, “originated by a single individual, they all tended to a single end”,⁴⁹ is characteristic of that constructivist rationalism which came to rule. It came to be thought that not only all cultural institutions were the product of deliberate construction, but that all that was so designed was necessarily superior to all mere growth. Under this influence the traditional conception of the law of nature was transformed from the idea of something which had formed itself by gradual adaptation to the “nature of things” into the idea of something which a natural reason with which man had been originally endowed would enable him to design.

I do not know how much of the older tradition was preserved through this intellectual turmoil, and particularly how much of it may still have reached Mandeville. This would require an intimate knowledge of the seventeenth-century Dutch discussion of legal and social problems which is still largely inaccessible to one who does not read Dutch.⁵⁰ There are many other reasons why a thorough study of this period of Dutch thought, which probably had a great influence on English intellectual development at the end of that and the beginning of the next century, has long seemed to me one of the great desiderata of intellectual history. But until that gap is filled I can, so far as my particular

problem is concerned, only surmise that a closer study would probably show that there are some threads connecting Mandeville with that group of late Schoolmen and particularly its Flemish member, Leonard Lessius of Louvain.⁵¹

Apart from this likely connexion with the older continental theorists of the law of nature, another probable source of inspiration for Mandeville was the English theorists of the common law,⁵² particularly Sir Mathew Hale.⁵³ Their work had in some respects preserved, and in other respects made unnecessary in England, a conception of what the natural law theorists had been aiming at; and in the work of Hale Mandeville could have found much that would have helped him in the speculations about the growth of cultural institutions which increasingly became his central problem.⁵⁴

Yet all these were merely survivals of an older tradition which had been swamped by the constructivist rationalism of the time, the most powerful expositor of which in the social field was the chief target of Hale's argument, Thomas Hobbes. How ready men still were, under the influence of a powerful philosophy flattering to the human mind, to return to the naïve design theories of human institutions, much more in accord with the ingrained propensity of our thinking to interpret everything anthropomorphically, we will understand better when we remember that distinguished renaissance scholars could still as a matter of course search for personal inventors of all the institutions of culture.⁵⁵ The renewed efforts to trace the political order to some deliberate act, an original agreement or contract, was much more congenial to this view than the more sophisticated accounts of their evolution which had been attempted earlier.

6.

To his contemporaries, "Mandeville's reduction of all action to open or disguised selfishness"⁵⁶ may indeed have seemed little more than another version of Hobbes, and to have disguised the fact that it led to wholly different conclusions. His initial stress on selfishness still carried a suggestion that man's actions were guided by wholly rational considerations, while the tenor of his argument

becomes increasingly that it is not insight but restraints imposed upon men by the institutions and traditions of society which make their actions appear rational. While he still seems most concerned to show that it is merely pride (or “self-liking”⁵⁷) which determines men’s actions, he becomes in fact much more interested in the origin of the rules of conduct which pride makes men obey but whose origin and rationale they do not understand. After he has convinced himself that the reasons for which men observe rules are very different from the reasons which made these rules prevail, he gets increasingly intrigued about the origin of these rules whose significance for the orderly process of society is quite unconnected with the motives which make individual men obey them.

This begins to show itself already in the prose commentary on the poem and the other pieces which make up Part I of the *Fable*, but blossoms forth in full only in Part II. In Part I Mandeville draws his illustrations largely from economic affairs because, as he thinks, “the sociableness of man arises from those two things, *viz.*, the multiplicity of his desires, and the continuous opposition he meets with in his endeavours to satisfy them.”⁵⁸ But this leads him merely to those mercantilist considerations about the beneficial effects of luxury which caused the enthusiasm of Lord Keynes.⁵⁹ We find here also that magnificent description of all the activities spread over the whole earth that go to the making of a piece of crimson cloth⁶⁰ which so clearly inspired Adam Smith and provided the basis for the explicit introduction of the division of labour in Part II.⁶¹ Already underlying this discussion there is clearly an awareness of the spontaneous order which the market produces.

7.

I would not wish to dwell on this at any length, however, if it were not for the fact that Mandeville’s long recognized position as an anticipator of Adam Smith’s argument for economic liberty has recently been challenged by Professor Jacob Viner,⁶² than whom there is no greater authority on such matters. With all due respect, however, it seems to me that Professor Viner has been misled by a phrase

which Mandeville repeatedly uses, namely his allusions to the “dextrous management by which the skilful politician might turn private vices into public benefits”.⁶³ Professor Viner interprets this to mean that Mandeville favours what we now call government interference or intervention, that is, a specific direction of men’s economic activities by government.

This, however, is certainly not what Mandeville meant. His aim comes out fairly unmistakably already in the little noticed subtitle to the second 1714 printing of the *Fable*, which describes it as containing “Several discourses, to demonstrate, that human frailties, [...] may be turned to the advantage of the civil society, and made to supply the place of *moral virtues*”.⁶⁴ What I believe he wants to say by this is precisely what Josiah Tucker expressed more clearly forty years later when he wrote that “the *universal* mover in human nature, self love, may receive such a direction in this case (as in all others) as to promote the public interest by those efforts it shall make towards pursuing its own”.⁶⁵ The means through which in the opinion of Mandeville and Tucker individual efforts are given such a direction, however, are by no means any particular commands of government but institutions and particularly general rules of just conduct. It seems to me that Mr. Nathan Rosenberg is wholly right when, in his reply to Professor Viner, he argues that in Mandeville’s view, just as in Adam Smith’s, the proper function of government is “to establish the rules of the game by the creation of a framework of wise laws”, and that Mandeville is searching for a system where “arbitrary exertions of government power would be minimized”.⁶⁶ Clearly an author who could argue, as Mandeville had already in Part I of the *Fable*, that “this proportion as to numbers in every trade finds itself, and is never better kept than when nobody meddles or interferes with it”,⁶⁷ and who in conclusion of Part II speaks about “how the short-sighted wisdom, of perhaps well-meaning people, may rob us of a felicity, that would flow spontaneously from the nature of every large society, if none were to divert or interrupt this stream”,⁶⁸ was quite as much (or as little)⁶⁹ an advocate of *laissez-faire* as Adam Smith.

I do not attach much importance to this question and would have relegated it to a footnote if in connexion with it the baneful effect of the old dichotomy of the “natural” and the “artificial” had not once again made an appearance. It was Élie Halévy who had first suggested that Mandeville and Adam Smith had based their argument on a “natural identity⁷⁰ of interests”,⁷¹ while Helvetius (who undoubtedly was greatly indebted to Mandeville and Hume), and, following Helvetius, Jeremy Bentham, were thinking of an “artificial identification of interests”;⁷² and Professor Viner suggests that Helvetius had derived this conception of an artificial identification of interests from Mandeville.⁷³ I am afraid this seems to me the kind of muddle to which the natural/artificial dichotomy inevitably leads. What Mandeville was concerned with was that institutions which man had not deliberately made – though it is the task of the legislator to improve them – bring it about that the divergent interests of the individuals are reconciled. The identity of interests was thus neither “natural” in the sense that it was independent of institutions which had been formed by men’s actions, nor “artificial” in the sense that it was brought about by deliberate arrangement, but the result of spontaneously grown institutions which had developed because they made those societies prosper which tumbled upon them.

8.

It is not surprising that from this angle Mandeville’s interest became increasingly directed to the question of how these institutions grew up which bring it about that men’s divergent interests are reconciled. Indeed his theory of the growth of law, not through the design of some wise legislator but through a long process of trial and error,⁷⁴ is probably the most remarkable of those sketches of the evolution of institutions which make his investigation into the origin of society which constitutes Part II of the *Fable* so remarkable a work. His central thesis becomes “that we often ascribe to the excellency of man’s genius, and the depth of his penetration, what is in reality owing to the length of time, and the experience of many generations, all of them very little differing from one another

in natural parts and sagacity”.⁷⁵ He develops it with reference to laws by saying that “there are very few, that are the work of one man, or of one generation; the greatest part of them are the product, the joint labour of several ages [...] The wisdom I speak of, is not the offspring of a fine understanding, or intense thinking, but of sound and deliberate judgment, acquired from a long experience in business and a multiplicity of observations. By this sort of wisdom, and length of time, it may be brought about, that there may be no greater difficulty in governing a large city, than (pardon the lowness of the simile) there is in weaving of stockings.”⁷⁶ When by this process the laws “are brought to as much perfection, as art and human wisdom can carry them, the whole machinery can be made to play of itself, with as little skill, as is required to wind up a clock”.⁷⁷

Of course Mandeville is not fully aware of how long would be the time required for the development of the various institutions – or of the length of time actually at his disposal for accounting for it. He is often tempted to telescope this process of adaptation to circumstance,⁷⁸ and does not pull himself up to say explicitly, as Hume later did in a similar context, that “I here only suppose those reflections to be formed at once, which in fact arise insensibly and by degrees”.⁷⁹ He still vacillates between the then predominant pragmatic-rationalist and his new genetic or evolutionary view.⁸⁰ But what makes the latter so much more significant in his work than it was in the application to particular topics by Mathew Hale or John Law,⁸¹ who probably did it better in their particular fields, is that he applies it to society at large and extends it to new topics. He still struggles to free himself from the constructivist preconceptions. The burden of his argument is throughout that most of the institutions of society are not the result of design, but how “a most beautiful superstructure may be raised upon a rotten and despicable foundation”,⁸² namely men’s pursuit of their selfish interests, and how, as “the order, economy, and the very existence of civil society [...] is entirely built upon the variety of our wants [...] so the whole superstructure is made up of the reciprocal services which men do to each other”.⁸³

9.

It is never wise to overload a lecture with quotations which, taken out of their context, rarely convey to the listener what they suggest to the reader of the consecutive exposition. So I will merely briefly mention the further chief applications to which Mandeville puts these ideas. Starting from the observation of how the skills of sport involve movements the purpose of which the acting person does not know,⁸⁴ and how similarly the skills of the arts and trades have been raised to “prodigious height [...] by the uninterrupted labour and joint experience of many generations, though none but men of ordinary capacity should ever be employed in them”,⁸⁵ he maintains that manners in speaking, writing, and ordering actions are generally followed by what we regard as “rational creatures [...] without thinking and knowing what they are about”.⁸⁶ The most remarkable application of this, in which Mandeville appears to have been wholly a pioneer, is to the evolution of language which, he maintains, has also come into the world “by slow degrees, as all other arts and sciences”.⁸⁷ When we remember that not long before even John Locke had regarded words as arbitrarily “invented”,⁸⁸ it would seem that Mandeville is the chief source of that rich speculation on the growth of language which we find in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁸⁹

All this is part of an increasing preoccupation with the process which we would now call cultural transmission, especially through education.⁹⁰ He explicitly distinguishes what is “adventitious and acquired by culture”⁹¹ from what is innate, and makes his spokesman in the dialogue of part II stress that “what you call natural is evidently artificial and acquired by education”.⁹² All this leads him in the end to argue that “it was with our thought as it is with speech”⁹³ and that “human wisdom is the child of time. It was not the contrivance of one man, nor could it have been the business of a few years, to establish a notion, by which a rational creature is kept in awe for fear of itself, and an idol is set up, that shall be its own worshipper.”⁹⁴

Here the anti-rationalism, to use for once the misleading term which has been widely used for Mandeville and Hume and which we had now better drop in favour of Sir Karl Popper's⁹⁵ "critical rationalism", comes out most clearly. With it Mandeville seems to me to have provided the foundations on which David Hume was able to build. Already in Part II of the Fable we meet more and more frequently terms which are familiar to us through Hume, as when Mandeville speaks of "the narrow bounds of human knowledge"⁹⁶ and says that "we are convinced, that human understanding is limited; and by the help of very little reflection, we may be as certain, that the narrowness of its bounds, its being so limited, is the very thing, the sole cause, which palpably hinders us from diving into our origins by dint of penetration".⁹⁷ And in *The Origin of Honour*,⁹⁸ which came out when Hume was twenty-one and according to his own testimony was "planning" the *Treatise on Human Nature*, but had not yet started "composing" it,⁹⁹ we find the wholly Humean passage that "all human creatures are swayed and wholly governed by their passions, whatever fine notions we may flatter ourselves with; even those who act suitably to their knowledge, and strictly follow the dictates of their reason, are not less compelled to do so by some passion or other, that sets them to work, than others, who bid defiance and act contrary to both, and whom we call slaves to their passions".¹⁰⁰

10.

I do not intend to pitch my claim on behalf of Mandeville higher than to say that he made Hume possible.¹⁰¹ It is indeed my estimate of Hume as perhaps the greatest of all modern students of mind and society which makes Mandeville appear to me so important. It is only in Hume's work that the significance of Mandeville's efforts becomes wholly clear, and it was through Hume that he exercised his most lasting influence. Yet to have given Hume some of his leading conceptions¹⁰² seems to me sufficient title for Mandeville to qualify as a master mind.

How much Mandeville's contribution meant we recognize when we look at the further development of those conceptions which Hume was the first and greatest to take up and elaborate. This development includes, of course, the great Scottish moral philosophers of the second half of the century, above all Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, the latter of whom, with his phrase about the "results of human action but not of human design",¹⁰³ has provided not only the best brief statement of Mandeville's central problem but also the best definition of the task of all social theory. I will not claim in favour of Mandeville that his work also led via Helvetius¹⁰⁴ to Bentham's¹⁰⁵ particularistic utilitarianism which, though the claim is true enough, meant a relapse into that constructivist rationalism which it was Mandeville's main achievement to have overcome. But the tradition which Mandeville started includes also Edmund Burke,¹⁰⁶ and, largely through Burke, all those "historical schools" which, chiefly on the continent, and through men like Herder¹⁰⁷ and Savigny,¹⁰⁸ made the idea of evolution a commonplace in the social sciences of the nineteenth century long before Darwin. And it was in this atmosphere of evolutionary thought in the study of society, where "Darwinians before Darwin" had long thought in terms of the prevailing of more effective habits and practices, that Charles Darwin at last applied the idea systematically to biological organisms.¹⁰⁹ I do not, of course, mean to suggest that Mandeville had any direct influence on Darwin (though David Hume probably had). But it seems to me that in many respects Darwin is the culmination of a development which Mandeville more than any other single man had started.

Yet Mandeville and Darwin still have one thing in common: the scandal they caused had ultimately the same source, and Darwin in this respect finished what Mandeville had begun. It is difficult to remember now, perhaps most difficult for those who hold religious views in their now prevailing form, how closely religion was not long ago still associated with the "argument from design".¹¹⁰ The discovery of an astounding order which no man had designed was for most men the chief evidence for the existence of a personal creator. In the moral and political sphere Mandeville and Hume did show that the sense of justice and

probity on which the order in this sphere rested, was not originally implanted in man's mind but had, like that mind itself, grown in a process of gradual evolution which at least in principle we might learn to understand. The revulsion against this suggestion was quite as great as that caused more than a century later when it was shown that the marvels of the organism could no longer be adduced as proof of special design. Perhaps I should have said that the process began with Kepler¹¹¹ and Newton.¹¹² But if it began and ended with a growing insight into what determined the kosmos of nature, it seems that the shock caused by the discovery that the moral and political kosmos was also the result of a process of evolution and not of design, contributed no less to produce what we call the modern mind.¹¹³

¹ The *Remarks* in part I of *The Fable of the Bees* (1714/1723), which deal with the poem *The Grumbling Hive* (*Collected Works* volume I, p. 27ff), will be published in Dutch translation in a later volume of the *Collected Works*.

² Along with his father, Mandeville was expelled from Rotterdam in 1693 by the Reformed Church minister Pierre Jurieu; see “The Life of Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733)” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 235ff. In England Mandeville was furiously attacked by the clergy and other church figures. His name was on the *Index* for 235 years. The Roman Catholic Church placed the French edition of *Free Thoughts* (1720) on its *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* in 1732, followed in 1745 by the 1740 French translation of *The Fable of the Bees, Parts I & II*. In 1948 these titles could still be found on the *Index*, which was not formally abolished until 1967.

³ Mandeville mistakenly named *Gassendus* as the example he had followed. See note ... below.

⁴ *People do not Speak to be Understood* consists mainly of the complete Dutch translation of *The Fable of the Bees, Part II* by Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), which first appeared in 1729. This is the fourth translated version. Previous translations have appeared in French, parts 3 and 4 of *La fable des abeilles ou les fripons devenus honnêtes gens* (1740); German, *Anti-Shaftsbury oder die entlarvte Eitelkeit der Selbstliebe und Ruhmsuch* (1761); and Italian, *Dialoghi tra Cleomene e Orazio* (1978). The title chosen for the Dutch translation, *People do not Speak to be Understood*, is taken from a passage in the book about the function of speech (see pages...).

⁵ The five centuries during which people were gradually forced to acknowledge that happiness is a human creation fall into two distinct phases. The first lasted until 1789, the start of the French Revolution, and was exploratory, philosophical, elitist and regional. The subsequent phase was operational, ideological, non-elitist and global.

⁶ See Mandeville’s essay entitled “Search into the Nature of Society” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue*, p. 117ff.

⁷ *Philosophia naturalis* (1685) by Wolfert Senguerdus, also known as Senguerdius or Senguerd (1646-1724).

⁸ It is unclear why the proto-feminist Mandeville did not seize the opportunity to give Fulvia a greater role in the dialogues. See also *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 304, n. 286.

⁹ The revised and expanded edition of 1714 can be downloaded at www.oll.libertyfund.org

¹⁰ Shaftesbury’s work was enormously influential in the eighteenth century. Stanley Grean writes: “As the founder of the ‘moral sense’ school in ethics, his ideas were extensively used and developed by Francis Hutcheson, Bishop Butler, Adam Smith, and Hume. He played an important role in the Deistic movement, particularly influencing John Toland and Anthony Collins. In the sphere of literature, his effect can be traced in the writings of Addison, James Thomson, Mark Akenside, and Henry Fielding. On the continent, his thought had an impact on Jean Le Clerc, Voltaire, and Diderot. [...] Shaftesbury’s effect may have been even greater on German thought, especially on Lessing, Mendelssohn, Wieland, Herder, Kant, Goethe, and Schiller. Whereas in Britain his philosophy was swamped by the high tide of empiricism, in Germany it contributed to the rise of romanticism, particularly in aesthetic theory. [...] He had little sympathy for or understanding of the scientific research being done by members of the Royal Society.” Introduction, p. xiv and xxii-xxiii in *Characteristics*, ed. J.M. Robertson (1964). See also the Introduction and the essay “Search into the Nature of Society” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue*, 2006, p. 117ff.

¹¹ In this regard it is fortunate that most of his work was written in English and that *The*

Fable of the Bees, Private Vices, Public Benefits has been translated into all the major European languages. See *The World is Being Ruined By Virtue*, p. 277, n. 1.

¹² The value we place on this essay should not be taken to imply any particular stance with regard to Hayek's political beliefs.

¹³ Does "healthily" constitute a new ideal or a new ideology? It seems so to us now, with fitness and wellness becoming part of the self-made cult of modern man, but not from Mandeville's perspective, since in his day you were healthy as long as you did not need a doctor.

¹⁴ F.A. Hayek, "Dr. Bernard Mandeville: Lecture on a Master Mind" *Proceedings of the British Academy* 52 (23 March 1966) p. 125-141. Friedrich August Hayek (1899-1992), Austrian economist. Also deeply interested in philosophy, psychology and epistemology. Awarded the Nobel Prize in 1974.

¹⁵ British Academy.

¹⁶ John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), English economist.

¹⁷ The correct date is 1693. Mandeville was born in 1670.

¹⁸ This is a reference to *The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turned Honest* (1705)

¹⁹ Game of wit.

²⁰ See Leslie Stephen's *History of English Thought in the 18th Century* (1881) II, p. 40: "Mandeville anticipates, in many respects, the views of modern philosophers. He gives a kind of conjectural history describing the struggle for existence by which man gradually elevated himself above the wild beasts, and formed societies for mutual protection."

²¹ Bernard Mandeville, *The Grumbling Hive*, published in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue*, Rotterdam (2006), p. 32.

²² The correct date is 1729

²³ *The Fable of the Bees, Part II*. Published in the *Collected Works as People do not Speak to be Understood*.

²⁴ There is perhaps no comparable work of which one can be certain that all contemporary writers in the same field were familiar with it, whether or not they refer to it explicitly. Alfred Espinas ("La troisieme phase de la dissolution du mercantilisme" *Revue Internationale de Sociologie*, 1902, p. 162) calls it "un livre dont nous nous sommes assurés que la plupart des hommes du XVIIIe siècle ont pris connaissance".

²⁵ Frederick Benjamin Kaye (1892-1930). See www.bernard-mandeville.nl

²⁶ From the 1923 edition of Mandeville's *The Fable of the Bees. Part I*, ed. F.B. Kaye, Introduction, p. xxxix.

²⁷ Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746), Irish philosopher, one of the founding fathers of the Scottish Enlightenment.

²⁸ Adam Smith (1723-90), Scottish moral philosopher and economist.

²⁹ Samuel Johnson (1709-84), one of the greatest of English literary figures.

³⁰ Joan Robinson, *Economic Philosophy* (1962), p. 15.

³¹ David Hume (1711-76), Scottish philosopher and economist.

³² Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-74), Italian philosopher and theologian.

³³ *Summa Theologia*, II, ii, q. 78 i.

³⁴ François de La Rochefoucauld (1613-80), French author.

³⁵ Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), French Huguenot and writer, professor at the Illustrious School in Rotterdam.

³⁶ Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536).

³⁷ Michel de Montaigne (1533-92), French author.

³⁸ [Division into two. This explanation of the term "dichotomy" is not relevant to an English language edition.]

³⁹ See for example F. Heinemann, *Nomos und Physis* (1945) and Hayek's essay "The Result of Human Action but not of Human Design" in *Le fondement philosophique des*

systèmes économiques. Réflexions de M. Jacques Rueff et essais en honneur de M. Jacques Rueff (1966).

⁴⁰ *Taxis*, or the movement of independent organisms as a response to an external stimulus.

⁴¹ Aristophanes (c. 448-385 BC).

⁴² *Ecclesiazusiae*, 473. Trans. B. B. Rogers, Loeb ed., iii, p. 289.

⁴³ The United Kingdom.

⁴⁴ M. Tullius Cicero, *De re publica* ii, 1,2, Loeb ed. trans. C.W. Keyes, p. 113. See also the Attic orator Antiphon, *On the Choreutes*, para. 2 in *Minor Attic Orators*, Loeb ed. by K.J. Maidment, p. 247, where he talks about laws that have “the distinction of being the oldest in this country [...] and that is the surest token of good laws, as time and experience show mankind what is imperfect”.

⁴⁵ For more on Luis Molina, in this context the most important of the sixteenth-century Spanish Jesuits, and some of his predecessors, see the quotation from an essay by Hayek in note ??? (397)

⁴⁶ René Descartes (1596-1650).

⁴⁷ Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679).

⁴⁸ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716).

⁴⁹ R. Descartes, *A Discourse on Method, Part II*, Everyman ed. p. 11.

⁵⁰ For the Dutch context, compare Arne C. Jansen, “The Life of Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733)” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006). Hayek does not seem to have looked at developments in seventeenth-century medical studies.

⁵¹ Leonard Lessius, *De justitia et jure* (1606).

⁵² English common law is based on precedent and custom.

⁵³ On Hale (1609-76) see especially J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (1957), p. 171ff.

⁵⁴ A biography of Hale was written by Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715). For a reference to Burnet, see *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue*, Rotterdam (2006), p. 295, n. 153.

⁵⁵ See J.G.A. Pocock. *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* (1957), p. 19: “This was the period in which Polydore Vergil (c. 1470-1555) wrote his *De inventoribus rerum* on the assumption that every invention could be traced back to an individual discoverer; and in the field of legal history Macchiavelli could write with what seems singular naïveté of the man ‘chi ordinó’ so complex a creation of history as the monarchy of France”. This passage includes references in footnotes to Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil* (1952), chapter III; Macchiavelli, *Discorsi* I, xvi; and Pierre Mesnard, *L’essor de la philosophie politique au XVI^e siècle* (1951), p. 83.

⁵⁶ From the 1923 edition of Mandeville’s *The Fable of the Bees, Part I*, ed. F.B. Kaye, Introduction, p. lxiii.

⁵⁷ See Chiaki Nishiyama, “The Theory of Self-Love: an essay in the methodology of social sciences, and especially economics, with special reference to Bernard Mandeville” (1960). This reference by Hayek has not been verified. But in Mandeville ‘pride’ is not the same as ‘self-love’ and because self-love does not adequately express what he means, he developed the concept of ‘self-liking’. (See *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. ???)

⁵⁸ Bernard Mandeville, “Search into the Nature of Society” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 134.

⁵⁹ See previous note, number ???

⁶⁰ Bernard Mandeville, “Search into the Nature of Society” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 146. Dugald Stewart (1753-1823) pointed out long ago in his *Lectures on Political Economy* (*Collected Works*, vii, p. 323) that this passage in

Mandeville “certainly formed the basis for one of the most appealing passages in *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith”.

⁶¹ In *The Fable of the Bees*. See *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. ??? [284]

⁶² Jacob Viner (1892-1970), Introduction to Bernard Mandeville’s *A Letter to Dion* (1732), (1953), reprinted in J. Viner, *The Long View and the Short* (1958), p. 332-42. For the prevailing and in Hayek’s view more correct interpretation see Albert Schatz, *L’Individualisme économique et social* (1907), p. 62, where he describes *The Fable of the Bees* as “l’ouvrage capital où se trouvent tous les germes essentiels de la philosophie économique de l’individualisme”.

⁶³ *An Inquiry into the Origin of Honour in The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 48; “Search into the Nature of Society” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 158; *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. ?319?; also in *A Letter to Dion*, p. 36.

⁶⁴ See the title page, printed in *The Fable of the Bees*, ed. F.B. Kaye, ii, p. 393. This is not the second edition of the *Fable* (1723) but the second printing of the first edition of 1714. The text is as follows: “containing several discourses to demonstrate that human frailties, during the *degeneracy* of mankind, may be turned to the advantage of the CIVIL SOCIETY and made to supply the place of *moral virtues*”. The motto of this second printing was *Lux e tenebris*, or light from the darkness. Hayek has omitted the words “during the degeneracy of mankind”, the state referred to in Genesis 3: 23-24.

⁶⁵ Josiah Tucker (1713-99), “The Elements of Commerce and Theory of Taxes” (1755), in R. L. Schuyler, *Josiah Tucker, a Selection from his Economic and Political Writings*, (1931) p. 92.

⁶⁶ Nathan Rosenberg, “Mandeville and Laissez Faire” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, xxxiv (1963), p. 190, 193. See also *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. ?335?, where Mandeville argues that although it would be preferable to have all power in the hands of the good, “let us, as the best of all worlds is not achievable, look to the next best and we will notice that of all possible means to secure and perpetuate the economies of nation states and whatever else they value, there is no better method than to protect and fix their constitutions with wise laws and to think up forms of government such that the general welfare cannot be greatly damaged by the lack of knowledge or righteousness of ministers, should one of them prove less competent or honest than they would wish”.

⁶⁷ “An Essay on Charity and Charity-Schools” in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 96.

⁶⁸ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. ?353?

⁶⁹ See J. Viner, “Adam Smith and Laissez Faire” *Journal of Political Economy*, xxxv (1927), reprinted in *The Long View and the Short*.

⁷⁰ Here “identity” is intended to mean equality.

⁷¹ Elie Halévy (1870-1937), *The Growth of Philosophical Radicalism*, (1928), p. 15-17.

⁷² Equality.

⁷³ J. Viner, *The Long View and the Short*, p. 342.

⁷⁴ [This note explaining the English expression ‘trial and error’ is not relevant to an English language edition.]

⁷⁵ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 142.

⁷⁶ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 322.

⁷⁷ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 323.

⁷⁸ N. Rosenberg, “Mandeville and Laissez Faire” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, xxxiv (1963), p. 194.

⁷⁹ David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, ed. Green and Grose, ii. p. 274.

⁸⁰ See Paul Sakmann, *Bernard de Mandeville und die Bienenfabel-Controverse* (1897),

p. 141.

⁸¹ John Law, *Money and Trade Considered with a Proposal for Supplying the Nation with Money* (1705).

⁸² *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 64.

⁸³ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 349.

⁸⁴ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 140-1.

⁸⁵ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 141.

⁸⁶ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 141.

⁸⁷ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 287.

⁸⁸ John Locke (1632-1704), *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, III, ii. I.

⁸⁹ See note ?259?

⁹⁰ [This note explaining that the specific English word used here is 'education' is not relevant to an English language edition.]

⁹¹ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 89.

⁹² *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 270.

⁹³ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 269.

⁹⁴ Bernard Mandeville, *The Origin of Honour*, p. 41. See also Bernard Mandeville, *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 284, n. 54.

⁹⁵ Karl R. Popper (1902-94), British-Austrian sociologist and philosopher of science.

⁹⁶ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 104. Compare David Hume, "Enquiry" *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*, ed. Green and Grose, ii, p. 6: "Man is a reasonable being; and as such, receives from science his proper food and nourishment: but so narrow are the bounds of human understanding, that little satisfaction can be hoped for in this particular, either from the extent of security or his acquisitions".

⁹⁷ *People do not Speak to be Understood*, p. 315.

⁹⁸ The full title is *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour, and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732).

⁹⁹ See Ernest C. Mossner (1907-87), *The Life of David Hume* (1954), p. 74.

¹⁰⁰ Bernard Mandeville, *The Origin of Honour*, p. 31.

¹⁰¹ See Simon N. Patten, *The Development of English Thought* (1910), p. 144: "Mandeville's immediate successor was Hume..." If Hayek's interpretation is correct, then Hume took Mandeville's essays as his starting point. See also O. Bobertag's observation in the German translation of Mandeville's *Bienenfabel* (1914), p. xxv: "In the eighteenth century there was only one man who achieved anything as great, and greater, and that was David Hume."

¹⁰² The same may also be true of Montesquieu. See Joseph Dedieu, *Montesquieu et la tradition politique anglaise en France: les sources anglaises de "L'esprit des lois"* (1909), p. 260-1 and 307 n. Montesquieu was familiar with *The Fable of the Bees* and *Free Thoughts*: "J'entrerais volontiers dans les idées de celui qui a fait la fable des Abeilles..." *Pensées et fragments inédits* (1899-1901), ii. p. 405-6.

¹⁰³ Adam Ferguson (1723-1816), Scottish philosopher, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), p. 187.

¹⁰⁴ Claude Adrien Helvétius (1715-71), French philosopher and writer.

¹⁰⁵ Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), English philosopher and writer.

¹⁰⁶ Edmund Burke (1729-97), Irish philosopher and politician.

¹⁰⁷ It is worth noting that in the work of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) the influence of Mandeville seems to have been brought together for the first time with the rather similar ideas of Giambattista Vico (1668-1744).

¹⁰⁸ It appears that the ideas of Mandeville and Hume reached Carl Menger (1840-1921) mainly through Friedrich Carl von Savigny (1779-1861) and thereby found their way back

into economic theory. See *Untersuchungen über die Methode* (1883), translated as *Problems of Economics and Sociology*, ed. Louis Schneider (1963), p. 94. Through Menger's pupil Richard Thurnwald (1869-1954) they influenced cultural anthropology. See also J. Slotkin (ed.) *Readings in Early Anthropology* (1965).

¹⁰⁹ For more on the influence of the ideas that Charles Darwin (1809-82) borrowed from social theory, see Emanuel Rádl, *Geschichte der biologischen Theorie in der Neuzeit*, ii, (1909), especially p. 121.

¹¹⁰ See also the current debate on "intelligent design".

¹¹¹ Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), German astronomer.

¹¹² Isaac Newton (1643-1727), English physicist, philosopher and mathematician. See Arne C. Jansen, "The Life of Bernard Mandeville" in *The World is Being Ruined by Virtue* (2006), p. 241, 302.

¹¹³ "Modern mind" is a problematic term. Walter Pater (1839-94) observes in *Coleridge's Writings* (1899) that "Modern thought is distinguished from ancient by its cultivation of the 'relative' spirit in place of the 'absolute' [...] To the modern spirit nothing is, or can be rightly known, except relatively and under certain conditions". In other words the modern mind is limited. Mandeville emphasised the importance of 'abstract thinking', meaning scientific thinking that takes account of the limits to human knowledge and competence. In this connection it is useful to look at the speech Hayek gave when he was presented with his Nobel Prize, "The Pretence of Knowledge" (1974): "The recognition of the insuperable limits to his knowledge ought indeed to teach the student of society a lesson of humility which should guard him against becoming an accomplice in men's fatal striving to control society – a striving which makes him not only a tyrant over his fellows, but which may well make him the destroyer of a civilization which no brain has designed but which has grown from the free efforts of millions of individuals."