
Self-Love in Early 18th-Century
British Moral Philosophy:
*Shaftesbury, Mandeville, Hutcheson,
Butler and Campbell*

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Enlightenment / Lumières britanniques; Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury;
Bernard Mandeville; Francis Hutcheson; Joseph Butler; Archibald Campbell

Abstract

This doctoral thesis focuses on the debates on self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy, examining and comparing in particular the positions of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, Bernard Mandeville, Francis Hutcheson, Joseph Butler and Archibald Campbell. The study distinguishes five different concepts of self-love, and analyses their role in the mentioned authors' theories of human nature and morality, examining the relations between the concepts of self-love and other essential concepts of moral philosophy such as benevolence, pity and virtue. It investigates aspects of the evaluation of self-love and provides an account of how the debates on the questions of self-love relate to more general discussions on human motivation and on the morality of human nature.

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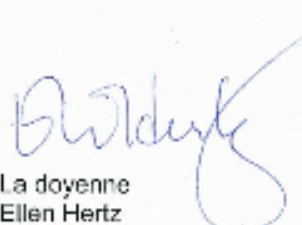
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Abstract / résumé

This doctoral thesis focuses on the debates on self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy. It examines the intricate relations of these debates with questions concerning human nature and morality in five central authors: Anthony Ashley Cooper the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, Bernard Mandeville, Francis Hutcheson, Joseph Butler and Archibald Campbell. One of the central claims of this study is that a distinction between five different concepts of self-love is necessary to achieve a clear understanding of the debates on self-love. Thus, egoistic self-love, self-love as love of praise, self-love as self-esteem, self-love as excessive pride and self-love as self-respect are distinguished. The role of these different concepts is analysed in the mentioned authors' theories of human nature and morality, and the relations between the concepts of self-love and other essential concepts of moral philosophy such as benevolence, pity and virtue are examined. This study highlights the importance of the widely discussed claim that self-love is the only motive for human agents and shows that the moral rehabilitation of self-love becomes an important issue for the period. Commentators generally agree on the importance of the notion of self-love for the period's moral philosophy, yet little attention has been paid to the different concepts of self-love. Present-day philosophy's tendency to equate self-love with egoism is too simplistic, and the insufficient recognition of the vagueness of the notion of self-love is shown to be an impediment to an appropriate reconstruction of important arguments in the debates on self-love. The framework suggested in this study thus enables a better comprehension of the different accounts of self-love in the selected authors' moral psychologies, and of their views of the moral value of self-love. This facilitates the shedding of light on central aspects of moral philosophy at the beginning of the 18th century.

For three very different generations

Trudi
my parents
Julia & Johanna

all of whom have never stopped encouraging and inspiring me

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Chapter I - Introduction

1. Self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy

This study analyses the debates on self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy. It examines the intricate relations of these debates with questions concerning human nature and morality. The investigation highlights the importance of the widely discussed claim that self-love is the only motive for human agents and shows that the moral rehabilitation of self-love becomes an important issue for the period. One of the central claims of this study is that a distinction between five different concepts of self-love is necessary to achieve a clear understanding of the debates on self-love. Commentators generally agree on the importance of the notion of self-love for the period's moral philosophy, yet little attention has been paid to the different concepts of self-love. Present-day philosophy's tendency to equate self-love with egoism is too simplistic, and the insufficient recognition of the vagueness of the notion of self-love is shown to be an impediment to an appropriate reconstruction of important arguments in the debates on self-love. The framework suggested in this study thus enables a better comprehension of the different accounts of self-love in the selected authors' moral psychologies, and of their views of the moral value of self-love. This

facilitates the shedding of light on central aspects of moral philosophy at the beginning of the 18th century.

1.1. The questions of self-love in view of the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question

What is self-love? Does the expression refer to some kind of love for some kind of self, or does it designate self-interested desires, i.e. desires for some kind of advantage for the agent? - What is the relation between self-love and the promotion of the good of others? Is it a relation of conflict, of compatibility, or does the former even necessarily bring about the latter? Is promoting the good of others a way of promoting one's own good? - What is the role of self-love in human psychology? Is self-love the only motive for human action, even in the case of apparently benevolent, unselfish actions? If this is not the case, then what are the other motives or principles of actions? - How ought human agents to love themselves? What is the moral value of self-love? Are there different forms of self-love, some morally better than others? Is it a morally neutral fact that we sometimes (or always) act out of self-love? Must we disapprove of self-love as a source of vices, or is it, on the contrary, the foundation of moral virtue? If self-love is vicious or sinful, how does it relate to self-preservation, which is often assumed to be a duty? Does self-love influence our moral judgements, maybe even corrupt them? - The present study investigates the treatment of these questions in early 18th-century British moral philosophy, with a special focus on discussions of motivation and moral motivation. Throughout this study, we shall refer to the aforementioned questions as "the questions of self-love".

In early 18th-century British moral philosophy, the questions of self-love attract an enormous deal of attention. This increased interest arises in the context of two interrelated domains of investigation. On the one hand, a lot of attention is paid to questions of moral psychology: What motivates human agents? Let us call this the Motivation Question, which aims at determining the dominant emotions and motives in human nature. In this study, several egoistic and non-egoistic answers will be discussed. Egoistic answers claim that human beings act only on egoistic desires, whereas non-egoistic answers allow for other motives. On the other hand, there is an interest in the relation between human nature and morality: Is human nature good or evil? Following Michael Gill, let us call this the Human Nature Question.¹ We will analyse several positive answers, which assert that virtue is in some sense natural to human agents, as well as negative answers, which claim that virtue is in some sense against human nature. The Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question are interrelated: Insofar as moral virtue is conceived of as somehow bound to human nature and the emotions, the answer to the Human Nature Question depends on the answer to the Motivation Question. If virtue is conceived of as grounded on benevolence, for example, then the answer to the Motivation Question determines the answer to the Human Nature Question.

Both the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question constitute the framework for an analysis of the debates on self-love at the beginning of the 18th century. Let us highlight two important factors that cause an increased interest in the questions of self-love during the period investigated. Firstly, as to the point of view of moral psychology, where the Motivation Question is discussed, there is one particular thesis that is at the centre of attention. It is the claim that self-love is the

¹ Michael B. Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 1.

dominant passion in human nature and the only motive for human actions. Historians of ideas have discussed this claim as the “interest paradigm”, or, in Hume’s terms, as the “selfish hypothesis”.² In present-day philosophy, the expression “psychological egoism” is commonly used to refer to the related claim that all actions are motivated by self-interested desires, i.e. by desires that ultimately aim at some kind of advantage for the agent.³

During the course of the present study, it will become clear that the claim “self-love is the only motive for human actions” is unclear. Does it mean, for example, a) that all actions ultimately aim at pleasure, b) that we are only motivated by pride or c) by a desire for esteem from others? These are three different interpretations of the same phrase. Obviously, its precise meaning depends on the concept of self-love, which leads to different strategies for defending or rejecting the claim. In order to give an appropriate reconstruction of these arguments, one of the main goals of the present study is to investigate the characteristic features of the different concepts of self-love used by the authors examined. In section 3.2. of this chapter, we will thus distinguish five different concepts of self-love that are relevant for our period.

A second factor that causes an increased interest in the questions of self-love lies in the importance of the Human Nature Question in early 18th-century British moral philosophy and moral theology. The thinking of the period about morality is deeply marked by the questioning of the dominant theological and philosophical view that human nature is morally

² For the expression cf. David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996 [1751]), p. 296. For commentators, cf. most prominently Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 42; and, more recently, Pierre Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith. A Genealogy of Economic Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 5 and 7ff.

³ Cf. our remarks in section 4.2. One of the most thorough discussions of psychological egoism in Hobbes is provided in Gregory S. Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 35 – 44. Furthermore, psychological egoism is often discussed in the context of Butler’s arguments.

corrupt and sinful, and thus contrary to virtue.⁴ In the context of such a negative view of human nature, the dominance of (some kind of) self-love is generally seen as a sign of the corruption of human nature, or as its cause. The *Westminster Confession of Faith*, which Hutcheson had to sign in order to be appointed professor at Glasgow University, states that “we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all Good, and wholly inclined to all Evil”⁵. Self-love is listed as one of the signs of this state of moral corruption.

More positive views of human nature were already put forward in the 17th century. Cambridge Platonists, such as Ralph Cudworth, emphasised the rational powers of the human mind and its abilities to discover eternal and immutable moral truths.⁶ Natural law theorists, such as Richard Cumberland, emphasised the naturalness of benevolent inclinations in human nature.⁷ Furthermore, several commentators have highlighted the late 17th- and early 18th-century tendency to argue that virtue has some kind of natural foundation in human nature.⁸ The majority of the early 18th-century authors who are in the focus of this study take an active part in the endeavours to morally rehabilitate human nature, which partly extends to a rehabilitation of self-love, and not only to a restriction of its motivational power, as will be shown. Self-love is not necessarily seen as a

⁴ E.g. Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 7 – 11 on the English Calvinist negative answer to the Human Nature Question. Lovejoy similarly discusses aspects of the negative answer. In Arthur O. Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 7f., he dates the climax of the opposite, positive view, or “the Age of Man’s Good Conceit of Himself” with “faith in the ‘perfectibility’ of man” very roughly in the second half of the 18th century and in the 19th century. We shall see, however, that many of our early 18th-century authors argue emphatically for a positive answer.

⁵ Church of Scotland, *The Confession of Faith, The Larger and Shorter Catechisms, with the Scripture-Proofs at large* (Edinburgh: 1728), p. 52: Chapter VI, IV.

⁶ Cf. the discussion e.g. in Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 43.

⁷ Richard Cumberland, *A Treatise of the Laws of Nature. Edited and with a Foreword by Jon Parkin* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2005 [1672]), e.g. p. 357, *marginalia*, argues against Hobbes that “universal Experience confirms Men’s general Tendency, rather to Acts of Benevolence, than Malevolence.”

⁸ E.g. Stephen Darwall, *The British Moralists and the Internal 'Ought': 1640 - 1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 178f. on Shaftesbury; Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 79f.

vicious principle or as a sign of the corruption of the human soul, and some of the authors even attribute a positive moral value to it.

1.2. Authors, theses and questions

1.2.1. Objectives of the present study

Given the intimate relation between the Human Nature Question and the Motivation Question with the questions of self-love at the beginning of the 18th century, it is not surprising that self-love figures as a key concept in many of the period's writings on human nature and morality, on political and theological issues. Accordingly, a close examination of self-love is required to shed light on essential characteristics of these debates. The present study concentrates on the treatment of self-love in the moral philosophy of Shaftesbury, Mandeville, Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell. All these authors deal extensively with the questions of self-love, as we shall see.

Other commentators have already highlighted that there is a diversity of concepts of self-love and self-interest in these authors.⁹ Yet, a systematic comparative analysis is still lacking, and the present study attempts to fill this gap. The examination and comparison of the different concepts of self-love, which is one of the main goals of the present study, requires an analysis of the role of self-love in the respective theories of human nature, especially in the author's accounts of moral psychology. Furthermore, it involves establishing the relations with other essential concepts of moral philosophy, such as the related concepts of self-

⁹ Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature* ; Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* ; Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith* ; David Phillips, "Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 60, no. 2 (2000).

preservation, selfishness, self-esteem and pride, as well as with frequently contrasted concepts, such as benevolence, public affections and pity.¹⁰

With appropriately precise accounts of the different concepts of self-love, a series of much debated questions and claims concerning self-love will be investigated. They concern the Human Nature Question, the Motivation Question, as well as the relation between self-love and morality, and they can only be appropriately understood on the basis of a thorough analysis of the concept of self-love.

Firstly, there is the aforementioned question of whether self-love is the only motive for human actions. This fundamental point concerns first of all the Motivation Question, yet it is in general seen as having implications for the Human Nature Question. The claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions cannot simply be analysed in terms of psychological egoism (i.e. in terms of the claim that all actions are ultimately self-interested or aim at some advantage for the agent)¹¹, for we must take into account essential differences between several concepts of self-love. Throughout this study, several interpretations of the claim will be discussed.

Next, many authors discuss extensively in what sense and to what extent self-love and other-directed motives, desires, and emotions are in some kind of conflict. This point is frequently connected to a related point that arises insofar as virtue and other-directed emotions are conceived to have an intrinsic relation, namely the question of whether self-love is in conflict with virtue. During the period investigated, two fundamentally opposed positions are dominant, which are linked with the Human Nature Question. On the one hand, there is Mandeville's claim that moral virtue requires self-denial in the sense of the hardly (if ever) possible frustration

¹⁰ For more remarks on pity, cf. section 4.4.

¹¹ Cf. section 4.3.

of one's selfish passions, which is constitutive of his negative answer to the Human Nature Question. In opposition to Mandeville, and linked with a positive answer to the Human Nature Question, other authors hold that virtue is in the agent's interest, and that (some kind of) self-love favours virtue. In the following study, we shall call this the "Interest Claim".¹²

Lastly, the question of the moral value of self-love calls for a great deal of attention. We will discuss very different views, ranging from self-love as a source of vice, over self-love as a neutral source of motives, to the view that some particular kind of self-love is the foundation of moral virtue. The majority of our authors argue against the claim that self-love is necessarily a source of morally corrupt motives, which is part of their asserting a positive answer to the Human Nature Question.¹³

In spite of their importance for early 18th-century moral philosophy, the concepts of self-love and the questions of self-love have not been very frequent subjects of broader comparative studies in history of philosophy. In addition, more historically interested historians of philosophy with a focus on the contextualisation of ideas frequently treat rather different authors and questions than more analytically interested historians of philosophy with a focus on the reconstruction and assessment of arguments.¹⁴ Given the questions of the present study and the selection of authors, which is based on the importance of the debates on self-love in their moral philosophy, this project must integrate sometimes rather different traditions of investigating the history of philosophy. In order to understand the role of the questions of self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy, our focus is on reconstructing the authors' arguments concerning the points mentioned above in an

¹² Cf. especially chapter II, section 2.4.

¹³ Cf. section 4.3.

¹⁴ Mandeville, for example, is an author who is treated more often by rather historically interested historians of philosophy, whereas Butler is mainly treated by rather analytically interested historians of philosophy. Hutcheson attracts the interest of historians of philosophy of both stripes.

appropriately precise conceptual framework, and on comparing the authors' claims and positions. Less importance is attributed to assessing the coherence or validity of these arguments, however.

It is appropriate to mention some important studies that are related to the present project. In the early 1960s, Arthur Lovejoy published a series of lectures on theories of human nature and their implications for political and economic theory.¹⁵ Lovejoy explores the debates on human nature in French and British moral philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries with a special focus on the desires of the “self-conscious animal”, especially on different forms of pride. He distinguishes three different kinds of desires of the self-conscious animal: Firstly, “approbativeness”, or the “*susceptibility to pleasure in, or a desire for, the thought of oneself as an object of thoughts or feelings, of certain kinds, on the part of other persons*”¹⁶, which is better known as “love of praise” or “love of esteem” in the terminology of the investigated period; secondly, “self-approbativeness” or self-esteem, which is “both the capacity for pleasure in, and the desire for, a pleasing idea of oneself”¹⁷, which Lovejoy associates with the French “*amour-propre*”¹⁸ and with the rarely used term “*philaute*”; and thirdly, “emulativeness” or comparative self-esteem, which is “the desire for superiority, or [...] the feeling of superiority”¹⁹. His classification is partly in the background of our own distinction between five different concepts of self-love, as suggested in section 3.2. of the present chapter. In comparison, our study concentrates on the debates in moral philosophy, and on a much shorter period.

Next, Albert Hirschman in the late seventies and more recently Pierre Force published comparative studies on the concept of self-interest and

¹⁵ Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹⁸ We will question this point in our own typology of different concepts of self-love, since the concept of *amour-propre* is often tied to competitive features that are not essential to self-esteem.

¹⁹ Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, pp. 112 and 117.

its relation to the passions.²⁰ Both studies are ultimately motivated by an interest in the history of economic ideas, and thus in the social dimensions of the human passions, yet they provide a valuable insight into theories of human nature and other domains of (mainly) French and British moral philosophy during the 17th and 18th centuries. Force, in particular focussing on Smith, Rousseau and Mandeville, highlights the differences in the debates on self-interest in the context of the dichotomy between Stoic lines of thought on the one hand, and Epicurean and Augustinian lines of thought on the other hand.²¹ For the focus of this study, Force's book is particularly valuable in virtue of his analysis of the different answers to the Motivation Question, and in virtue of his discussion of Mandeville. Again, Hirschman's and Force's studies both focus upon a rather long period. The present study, given its concentration on a shorter, yet especially rich period of the debates on self-love, attempts to contribute a more detailed analysis of the different concepts of self-love and their role in important questions of the period, thus reconsidering some of Force's and Hirschman's results.

In an important recent study that focuses on the Human Nature Question in British moral philosophy from Cudworth to Hume, Michael Gill treats some of the questions of self-love.²² In the context of his discussion of the emergence of positive answers to the Human Nature Question, he regularly emphasises the importance of the Motivation Question and of the debates on egoism. We will regularly draw attention to Gill's study and refine some of his results. Furthermore, the debates on self-love have been approached via the analysis of other subjects, such as the concept of benevolence, the moral sense, moral obligation, or

²⁰ Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* ; Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith* .

²¹ Cf. section 2 of the present chapter.

²² Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* .

egoism,²³ and there are a considerable number of articles treating facets of our problems in certain authors. Butler's treatment of egoism, for example, has attracted a great deal of attention, particularly from historians of philosophy of the analytic stripe.²⁴ Finally, Stephen Darwall's study on the development of the concept of obligation from Hobbes to Hume is an extremely valuable source for many aspects of this study.²⁵

1.2.2. Shaftesbury, Mandeville, Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell

During the early 18th century, especially during the 1720's and early 1730's, the debates on the questions of self-love profoundly influence the moral philosophy of a series of authors. Our analysis will concentrate on five moral philosophers for whom the questions of self-love occupy a central role. They develop a broad spectrum of positions and arguments, are part of an extremely dense network of references and publish - with the exception of Shaftesbury - most of their important contributions to the debates on self-love within the short period between 1723 and 1733: Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746), Joseph Butler (1692-1752) and Archibald Campbell (1692-1756).

Unavoidably the concentration on such a short period engenders omissions with respect to the larger story of self-love in 17th and 18th-century moral philosophy. Only little attention will be paid to the contributions of the French moralists of the 17th century, which are very

²³ Cf. studies such as T. A. Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence. Aspects of Eighteenth-Century Moral Philosophy* (London, Basingstoke: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1973); Darwall, *British Moralists*; Robert Shaver, *Rational Egoism. A Selective and Critical History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Wolfgang H. Schrader, *Ethik und Anthropologie in der englischen Aufklärung. Der Wandel der moral-sense-theorie von Shaftesbury bis Hume* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1984).

²⁴ Cf. studies such as Terence Penelhum, *Butler* (London, Boston, Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985); Austin Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1952); Richard G. Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 49, no. 1 (1988); Phillips, "Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest"; and on other authors Stanley Grean, "Self-Interest and Public Interest in Shaftesbury's Philosophy" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 11, no. 1 (1964); Robert M. Stewart, "John Clarke and Francis Hutcheson on Self-Love and Moral Motivation" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 20, no. 2 (1982).

²⁵ Darwall, *British Moralists*.

influential for the investigated debates. Similarly, later British and French philosophers such as Hume, Smith and Rousseau, who touch on similar questions, will only be treated occasionally. In Scotland, Hume and Smith already seem to consider the interest paradigm, as put forward by Epicureans and Augustinians, as less threatening than Mandeville's contemporaries Hutcheson and Butler. In their moral philosophy, Hume and Smith focus on the concept of sympathy rather than on the questions of self-love. Furthermore, the continuing shift of power towards the Moderate party in the Church of Scotland in the middle of the 18th century, and thus the institutional undermining of the Scottish Augustinians' power, provides a historical explanation for the fact that the debates on self-love shift in the background after Mandeville's and Hutcheson's time.²⁶ In England, some of the questions of self-love attract attention in the context of David Hartley's theory of association in his *Observations on Man, his Frame, his Duty, and his Expectations* from 1749, which is influenced by John Gay's short *Preliminary Dissertation Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Virtue and Morality*.²⁷ Yet, the particular intensity of the debates on self-love in the investigated period, the very dense network of mutual references between the selected authors and the broad range of positions concerning the questions of self-love justify our concentration on the beginning of the 18th century.

The beginning of the period investigated is roughly marked by the publication of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury's *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* in 1711.²⁸ Shaftesbury,

²⁶ This process is analysed in great detail in Richard B. Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment. The Moderate Literati of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985).

²⁷ The *Preliminary Dissertation* appears anonymously in Edmund Law's English translation of William King's *Essay on the Origin of Evil* from 1731. Gay defends an egoistic answer to the Human Nature Question against Hutcheson, which already incorporates elements of a theory of association. Cf. William Robert Scott, *Francis Hutcheson. His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), pp. 108f.

²⁸ It must be noted, however, that the *Inquiry* was already published in 1699, and other texts contained in the *Characteristics* in the years before 1711. Cf. chapter II, section 1.

who will be in the focus of Chapter II, gives a distinctively positive answer to the Human Nature Question by asserting that virtue has a basis in human nature, more precisely in the affections of a rational being and in the reflected moral sense. As to the Motivation Question, Shaftesbury rejects the claim that self-love is the only source of motives. Rather, he argues in a Stoic vein that human beings have natural affections, which aim at the good of other creatures of their species. By following their natural affections, human beings naturally promote the well-being of others and group together in societies. The moral value of the self-affections, which tend to the private good of the agent, depends on their degree. Having a natural degree of self-affections is not only morally unproblematic, but a necessary condition for virtue.

Chapter III focuses on Bernard Mandeville. His *Fable of the Bees* was first published in 1714, and then in 1723 in an enlarged edition that provoked a series of harsh reactions. The *Fable* is inspired by a series of themes of 17th-century French Augustinian moralists. Mandeville attacks Shaftesbury and claims that human beings only search for pleasure and for the gratification of their self-love as excessive pride. Moral virtue, however, requires the denial of one's passions and is thus against the agent's selfish interests. In this paradigm, human nature is selfish to a degree that being truly virtuous is almost impossible. Thus, Mandeville combines an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question with a negative answer to the Human Nature Question and provides a complex account of human psychology based on several concepts of self-love. The social virtues are ultimately rooted in the creatures' excessive pride, which is manipulated by politicians in order to create a stable society. These claims are elaborated in later publications, such as the second volume of the *Fable of the Bees* (1729), and in the *Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732).

Chapter IV concentrates on Francis Hutcheson. In a series of publications, the most important being the *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725), the *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions* and the *Illustrations upon the Moral Sense* (1728), Hutcheson opposes Mandeville and claims to defend Shaftesbury's principles. He argues that human beings are not only motivated by self-love in the sense of a self-directed desire for pleasure, as claimed by Mandeville, but also by benevolence, which is an equally natural desire to promote the happiness of others. Furthermore, moral judgments are shown to be independent of self-love and to have their origin in a moral sense. Hutcheson rejects with powerful effectiveness the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and asserts a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. Human beings are capable of genuine virtue. Self-love, even if it is frequently contrasted with benevolence, is not per se morally corrupt.

In Chapter V, we will focus on how Joseph Butler, mainly in his *Fifteen Sermons* (1726), joins Hutcheson in his opposition to Mandeville and argues that human beings are also motivated by other principles than selfish desires. With Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, Butler argues for a positive answer to the Human Nature Question and rejects the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. However, Butler relies on a fundamentally different concept of self-love. For him, self-love is not a desire for pleasure, but a principle that aims at realising the agent's true nature in view of her happiness. Thus, Butler's arguments concerning self-love depend on a moral psychology that differs greatly from Hutcheson's. This influences his discussion of the relation between self-love and benevolence as well as his discussion of Hutcheson's claim that virtue is disinterested.

Chapter VI deals with Archibald Campbell. In his *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* (1733), which has very rarely been the object of investigation by philosophers, Campbell attacks not only Hobbes and Mandeville, but also Hutcheson. He emphasises that self-love in the sense of a self-directed desire for pleasure is the ultimate motive for all human actions. Yet, Campbell combines an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question with a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. He argues that true self-love in the sense of a desire for esteem from other agents is the motive and standard for virtue and moral goodness. Campbell distinguishes self-love as the desire for esteem from Mandeville's self-love as excessive pride and concludes that genuine virtue is within the reach of human beings, even if they always act for ultimately selfish reasons. Campbell's objections to other authors illuminate important aspects of the debates on self-love.

2. Important cornerstones for early 18th-century debates on self-love in British moral philosophy

At the beginning of the *Illustrations Upon the Moral Sense*, Hutcheson opposes the egoistic and the non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and distinguishes two main sources of the egoistic answer. There is the theory of

[...] the old *Epicureans*, as it is beautifully explained in the first Book of *Cicero, De finibus*; which is revived by Mr. *Hobbes*, and followed by many better Writers: 'That all the Desires of the *human Mind*, nay of all *thinking Natures*, are reducible to *Self-Love*, or *Desire of private Happiness*: That from this Desire all Actions of any Agent do flow.' Our *Christian Moralists* introduce other sorts of Happiness to be desired, but still 'tis the *Prospect*

*of private Happiness, which, with some of them, is the sole Motive of Election.*²⁹

Hutcheson mentions two important traditions that both assert an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, but that differ greatly in their background. On the one hand, there are thinkers such as Hobbes, who are frequently accused of atheism and classified as “Epicureans” in view of both their hedonistic moral psychology and their theological points of view. On the other hand, there are the “*Christian Moralists*” who constitute what is nowadays frequently called the “Augustinian” tradition.³⁰ These authors affirm the doctrine of the original sin and give an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question in the context of their negative answer to the Human Nature Question. We shall begin by taking a look at these two traditions and their views of self-love, and then examine other important cornerstones for the treatment of self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy.

2.1. Hobbes’ egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, and his negative answer to the Human Nature Question

One of the cornerstones of the debates on self-love is Thomas Hobbes. This holds for both the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question. The answer Hobbes gave to the Motivation Question quickly turned into a paradigm for an egoistic view of human nature.³¹ His

²⁹ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*. Edited by Aaron Garrett (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001 [1728]), p. 134.

³⁰ Knud Haakonssen, “Natural Law and Moral Realism: The Scottish Synthesis” in *Studies in the Philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 64; James Moore, “The two Systems of Francis Hutcheson: On the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment” in *Studies in the Philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 39 – 41 and 44; Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, e.g. pp. 51ff. E. G. Hundert, *The Enlightenment’s Fable. Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), e.g. p. 37.

³¹ Yet, the question whether Hobbes puts forward a genuinely egoistic theory of human nature, or merely a non-egoistic tautological version, has been subject to controversial discussions: Bernard Gert, “Hobbes, Mechanism, and Egoism” *The Philosophical Quarterly* 15, no. 61 (1965), Bernard Gert,

negative answer to the Human Nature Question in *De Cive*, “*homo homini lupus*” or “*man to man is an arrant wolf*”³², is equally notorious. Unlike the Augustinian negative answer, which will be presented in the next subsection, Hobbes’ analysis of human nature in the state of nature seems to encourage a secular interpretation.³³ Many of Hobbes’ contemporaries would thus classify him as an atheist and, furthermore, as an Epicurean. It is interesting to note that Hobbes, as one of the most important philosophers for the debates on self-love, is so in a negative way: Almost all philosophers and theologians who discuss his theses are explicitly hostile to Hobbes.³⁴ This concerns his theory of human nature as well as his moral and political theory. Many aspects of Hobbes’ philosophy “shocked”³⁵ his generation, and to a considerable extent influenced developments in moral and political philosophy for the following generations.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the egoistic characteristics of Hobbes’ moral psychology are often summarised and attacked as the claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions – the passage quoted from Hutcheson’s *Illustrations* is just one example among many.³⁶ The predominant interpretation of Hobbes’ theory of human nature is that

"Hobbes and Psychological Egoism" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28, no. 4 (1967), Bernard Gert, "Introduction" in *Man and Citizen (De Homine and De Cive)* (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1993), F. S. McNeilly, "Egoism in Hobbes" *The Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (1966), Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*. For the distinction between egoistic and non-egoistic theories of human nature, cf. section 4.2. of this chapter.

³² Thomas Hobbes, *Man and Citizen (De Homine and De Cive)* (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1993), p. 89.

³³ That the secular interpretation of Hobbes is correct is questioned in A. P. Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan. Thomas Hobbes on Religion and Politics* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 43ff. According to Martinich, theological concepts are essential not only to the third and the fourth, but also to the first and second books of the *Leviathan*. He claims that “[...] Hobbes was a sincere, and relatively orthodox, Christian.” Ibid., p. 1.

³⁴ Samuel I. Mintz, *The Hunting of the Leviathan* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1996) provides an impressive list of critics of Hobbes.

³⁵ A term used in Haakonssen, "Natural Law and Moral Realism: The Scottish Synthesis", p. 70.

³⁶ We have to note, however, that Hobbes himself almost never used terms such as “self-love” or “amor sui”. – Similarly, Locke’s account of desire as uneasiness is often treated as the claim that all desires are selfish or that self-love is the only motive for human actions. Cf. Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, in Two Treatises. Edited by Wolfgang Leidhold* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004 [1726]), pp. 22ff., Henning Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in Francis Hutcheson’s Ethical Theory* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), pp. 15f. Locke, however, was less frequently as overtly attacked as Hobbes.

human beings always act to satisfy some kind of self-interested desires, an interpretation which is encouraged by notorious passages such as the following: “Of the voluntary acts of every man, the object is some *good to himself*.”³⁷ There are no genuinely benevolent actions that ultimately aim at promoting the good of others, and Hobbes goes as far as to claim that even a passion such as pity is ultimately self-interested since essentially concerned with the avoidance of future calamities to oneself.³⁸

Given these characteristics of human nature, the best way of assuring self-preservation in a state of nature is to achieve dominion over others.³⁹ Human nature bears “three principal causes of quarrel: first, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory.”⁴⁰ In the state of nature, the result is a war of all against all, which is characterised by “continual fear and danger of violent death, and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”⁴¹ Such a state is best avoided by the institution of a powerful sovereign and thus by leaving the state of nature. The reasons why human beings consent to leave the state of nature are, however, purely self-interested and not based on natural inclinations to society. Rather, human beings are afraid of a violent death. These and other Hobbesian views of human nature, society, and morality provoked harsh reactions from philosophers as well as theologians.

The numerous classifications of Hobbes as an Epicurean certainly have a strong polemic dimension, but are also very informative. The debates on Epicureanism in early modern philosophy concern very different features, such as atomism, atheism and hedonism. When it comes to moral psychology and moral philosophy, the core reason for classifying Hobbes as an Epicurean is to mark him as a defender of the

³⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan. With selected variants from the Latin edition of 1668* (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1994) (I, xiv), p. 82.

³⁸ Cf. our discussion in section 4.4., furthermore the discussion in Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp.41-43.

³⁹ Hobbes, *Leviathan* (I, xiii), p. 75.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

doctrine that self-love is the only motive for human actions, i.e. to flag his egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. Furthermore, the classification of Hobbes as an Epicurean is very interesting because many authors who attacked him relied on elements from Stoic moral psychology and philosophy. Thus, many debates on the role of self-love focusing on Hobbes are in line with the contrast between what Force calls “Epicurean” and “Stoic Schemes”.⁴² Very roughly, and as far as the Motivation Question is concerned, Force distinguishes between (Neo-) Epicureans and (Neo-) Stoics. The former assert the truth of the *interest paradigm* and claim that self-love in the sense of an ultimate desire for pleasure is the only motive for actions in human nature. The latter assert the reality of other-directed principles, such as Shaftesbury’s natural affections, or Hutcheson’s benevolence.

2.2. *The Augustinian negative answer to the Human Nature Question and the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question*

Another influential cornerstone of early 18th-century debates on self-love consists in a heterogeneous group of philosophers and theologians, who are often referred to as “Augustinians”.⁴³ They include authors from a rather broad range of currents of the 17th and 18th centuries, such as French Jansenists and Calvinists, English Calvinists and Scottish Presbyterians in both philosophy and theology. The use of the term “Augustinians” may be questionable due to the heterogeneity of the different currents, yet they share a series of essential features. They disagree with Hobbes on theological grounds, and accuse him of atheism. Yet, they agree with him in giving a distinctively negative answer to the

⁴² Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, in particular pp. 48 – 90.

⁴³ Haakonssen, "Natural Law and Moral Realism: The Scottish Synthesis", pp. 64; Moore, "The two Systems of Francis Hutcheson: On the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment", pp. 39 – 41 and 44; Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, e.g. pp. 51ff. Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable. Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society*, e.g. p. 37.

Human Nature Question. On theological grounds, and in the tradition of St. Augustine's doctrine of the original sin, the Augustinians of the 17th and 18th centuries emphasise the corruption and sinfulness of postlapsarian man.⁴⁴ As in Hobbes, their answer to the Motivation Question is egoistic. Self-love is the cause of the Fall of the human race, and it is the dominant passion in corrupted human nature. Due to the substantial similarities when it comes to the Motivation Question, Force regularly speaks of a convergence between Epicureans and Augustinians.⁴⁵

Augustine himself puts forward a negative view of postlapsarian human nature as well as a predominantly negative view of self-love. His treatment of self-love or *amor sui* is marked by the conception of self-love as something morally corrupt, since it is the source of man's rebellion against God. He writes of self-love as the first reason for man's Fall: "*Prima hominis perditio, fuit amor sui.*"⁴⁶ Self-love creates an insurmountable gap between heaven and earth: "*Fecerunt itaque ciuitates duas amores duo, terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum dei, caelestem uero amor dei usque ad contemptum sui.*"⁴⁷ Self-love is the source of all vices and the root of mankind's sins. *Amor sui* is closely associated with sins such as *avaritia* (avarice), *superbia* (pride), and the inappropriately strong love of one's own body and life.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Moore, "The two Systems of Francis Hutcheson: On the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment" , p. 39 on the Augustinian mentality of Reformed Scholasticism; Alexander Broadie, *The Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited, 2001), p. 116 on the emphasis on the sinfulness of human nature by the Scottish Church; Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* , pp. 7ff. on the negative answer to the Human Nature Question in English Calvinism; Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith* , pp. 51ff.

⁴⁵ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith* , p. 51.

⁴⁶ Augustinus, Sermo XCVI. – "The primal destruction of man was self-love.", cf. Oliver O'Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in St. Augustine* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1980), p. 96.

⁴⁷ Augustinus, De Civitate Dei, Lib. XIV, Cap. XXVIII. – "Two loves made two cities. Self-love to despite of God made the earthly city, love of God to despite of self the heavenly.", cf. Ibid., p. 93.

⁴⁸ It must be noted, however, that Augustine has not only a negative but also a positive view on self-love, which is rooted in his theological framework. When discussing the command that "you shall love your neighbour as yourself", Augustine invokes a concept of self-love as the recognition of one's true nature and dignity, which relates to the love of oneself in God, or to the seeking of one's true welfare in the love of God. If the self is improperly understood, then loving oneself is evil, but if the creature sees herself in her relation to God as her creator, her love of self will coincide with love of God. Cf.

The emphasis on the negative view of self-love as the primary source of vice, the claim that human beings are unavoidably subjected to its power, and the claim that human nature is therefore corrupt are typical of Augustinian moral philosophers and theologians of the 17th century. Augustinian views are particularly dominant in reformed moral theology all over Europe, exerting a strong influence on moral philosophy.⁴⁹ Augustinians in 17th-century France, whether of catholic Jansenist stripe, such as François de La Rochefoucauld, Jacques Esprit and Pierre Nicole, or of protestant Calvinist stripe, such as Jacques Abbadie, emphasise man's self-love or *amour-propre* as the fundamental motivational power in human nature. Abbadie writes for example: "Le coeur [...] pese l'utilité et non pas la lumière, et ce n'est pas la raison, mais l'amour de nous-mêmes qui nous détermine dans nos affections."⁵⁰ Self-love is conceived as a great vice, frequently associated with pride and vanity rather than with the mere search for pleasure, and its dominance is related to the corruption and sinfulness of human nature after the Fall. To use Abbadie's words again:

En un mot considérez bien tous les vices et toutes les passions de l'homme, vous trouverez au bout l'amour propre. C'est lui qui leur donne la naissance, puisque tous les motifs du vice sont pris de ce que nous recherchons ce qui nous flâte, et se rapporte à *ce moy*, qui tient le premier rang entre les objets de nos connoissances et de nos affections.⁵¹

Stressing the negative understanding of self-love, one of the important themes of the French moralists is the analysis of social virtues in terms of *amour-propre*.⁵² What is commonly held to be virtuous

Ibid., pp. 112, 147. Early modern Augustinian moralists have a strong tendency to emphasise exclusively the corrupt form of *amor sui*.

⁴⁹ Moore, "The two Systems of Francis Hutcheson: On the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment", p. 39 speaks of a "Reformed scholasticism" that goes back to an Augustinian scholasticism and relies heavily on the claim that the "natural state or condition of human affairs [is] a condition of sinfulness."

⁵⁰ Jacques Abbadie, *L'art de se connaître soi-même* (Paris: Fayard, 2003 [1692]), p. 171.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 149.

⁵² Jacques Esprit wrote an entire treatise with the title "La fausseté des vertus humaines", which was first published in 1678. Jacques Esprit, *La fausseté des vertus humaines*. (Paris: Aubier, 1996 [1679]). On the Augustinian critique of the virtues, cf. also Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 57 – 63.

behaviour is in fact ultimately motivated by self-love, and thus by a principle of action that is far from being virtuous. The social rules called “virtues” are based on self-love and thus merely reflect the corruption of human nature.⁵³ Other important themes that are linked with an egoistic analysis of apparently other-directed motives include the revelation of strategies of self-deception about one’s real motives, and of strategies of concealment of one’s selfish motives from others. La Rochefoucauld writes in one of his *Maximes morales*: “Ce que les hommes ont nommé amitié n’est qu’une société, qu’un ménagement réciproque d’intérêts, et qu’un échange de bons offices; ce n’est enfin qu’un commerce où l’amour-propre se propose toujours quelque chose à gagner.”⁵⁴ However, another important theme of Augustinian thinkers is that in spite of its potential for conflict, self-love is the basis for a stable society of corrupt human beings, since the individuals’ selfish interests mutually check each other.⁵⁵

On the basis of his egoistic account of human nature, his naturalistic approach to the civilising process and his suspected atheism, Mandeville has often been classified as an Epicurean. However, as we shall discuss in chapter III, many of the mentioned Augustinian elements are present in Mandeville’s moral philosophy. Augustinian ideas are also prominent in the institutionalised religious context, for example in the *Church of Scotland*. The views of human nature and morality of authors such as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler, are in clear opposition to Augustinianism. Partly directed against the Augustinian tradition, which is still dominant at the beginning of the 18th century, they argue for positive answers to the Human Nature Question and for non-egoistic answers to the Motivation Question, thereby relying on Stoic elements in their moral philosophy.

⁵³ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 57f.

⁵⁴ François de La Rochefoucauld, *Réflexions ou Sentences et Maximes morales. Suivi de Réflexions diverses et des Maximes de Madame de Sablé*. Édition présentée, établie et annotée par Jean Lafond (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1976), p. 57, Maxime No. 83.

⁵⁵ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 76 – 79.

2.3. Aristotle's double view of self-love

The questions of self-love have a long tradition in Western philosophy, and there have been other than just negative views of self-love. The first substantial treatment of self-love, or of the agent's love to herself, can be found in Aristotle. He discusses both negative and positive aspects of self-love. In his analysis of friendship in the ninth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle treats in 1168a-1169b the question of whether a man should love himself most, or someone else. He distinguishes between two forms of *philautía*, a term which is generally translated by "self-love".⁵⁶ The picture he draws of *philautía* is ambiguous, and this ambiguity reappears during the debates that are at the centre of the present study. From the moral point of view, loving oneself can be either vicious or virtuous, depending on the part of the self that is the object of the agent's love.

In Aristotle's view, one form of *philautía* is associated with "those who assign themselves the larger share where money, or honours, or bodily pleasures are concerned".⁵⁷ This way of loving oneself focuses on the wrong part of the self and has the consequence that one performs actions that harm others and ultimately oneself.⁵⁸ It leads to a selfish focus on one's own interests, conceived in terms of pleasure, money, etc., which makes it a morally reproachable way of loving oneself. The second form of *philautía*, more legitimately so called according to

⁵⁶ It is most interesting to note, however, that Archibald Campbell, when translating Aristotle, associates two different English terms with the one Greek term *philautía*: "self-love" with the recommendable, and "selfishness" with the blameworthy form of *philautía*. Archibald Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue* (London, Tokyo: Routledge / Thoemmes Press, 1994 [1733]), pp. 5 – 12. Campbell's treatment of self-love will be discussed in greater detail in chapter VI of this study.

⁵⁷ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics. Translation, Introduction, and Commentary by Sarah Broadie and Christopher Rowe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 235 [1168b15-1168b15].

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 235 [1169a10].

Aristotle,⁵⁹ consists in a person's indulging "the most authoritative element of himself, obeying it in everything"⁶⁰. This way of loving oneself is compatible with being virtuous, for it is tied to the rational part of the self, which has the moral authority over the other parts. Thus, to love oneself in the sense of *philautía* can be virtuous when it leads to following the dictates of the rational part of the soul, which does not exclude promoting the interests of others. Aristotle concludes: "Thus the good person should be a self-lover, since by doing what is fine he will both be better off himself and benefit others, but the bad one should not, for he will harm both himself and those round him through following worthless attractions."⁶¹

Aristotle's discussion of *philautía* is based on the assumption that there are recommendable and blameworthy ways of loving oneself. Some parts of the self are worthy of being loved, others are unworthy, and the moral value of loving oneself is at least partly a function of the value of the part one loves. During the period investigated, a positive view of self-love is most emphatically put forward by Butler, who relies on the Aristotelian idea of a hierarchy in authority between different parts of the agent's self, yet relies on a theistic teleological framework.⁶² He conceives of self-love as an affection that aims at realising the agent's true self. Others, such as Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, are not as positive about self-love as Butler. Still, they deny that self-love, as they conceive it, is *per se* corrupt, and emphasise the importance of considering its degree of strength within human psychology. Campbell even recommends self-love in the sense of a desire for esteem as the motive for virtuous actions.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 235 [1168b25]. Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 257, suggests that recommendable self-love is not distinguished from reproachable self-love in that the latter is competitive and the former is not. Rather, Annas distinguishes two different objects of competition: For many, self-love consists in competing for bodily and external goods, which are limited and thus involve competition at others' expense. The "real" self-lover, however, competes with others to be virtuous, which is not competition for a limited good.

⁶⁰ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 235 [1168b30].

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 235 [1169a10].

⁶² Cf. chapter V, sections 1.1.3. and 2.

Thus, the widespread Augustinian negative view of self-love is opposed by more positive views at the beginning of the 18th century. Many authors put forward the idea of self-love as something not necessarily problematic, and some even tend to morally rehabilitate self-love.⁶³

2.4. Self-love and Stoicism

Another fundamental source of inspiration for the early 18th-century treatment of self-love is Stoicism. Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler rely on several elements of Stoic moral philosophy, which influences their answers to both the Human Nature Question and the Motivation Question, as well as their evaluation of self-love. One important Stoic element that concerns moral psychology is the traditional Stoic typology of the emotions, which we will regularly encounter in the subsequent chapters.⁶⁴ A second point that will attract attention concerns the conception of virtue as a “private sublimely selfish Discipline”⁶⁵, or as the seeking of apathy, held by some of the Stoics.⁶⁶ Thirdly, to understand the Stoic treatment of self-love as it influences early 18th-century debates on the Motivation Question, we must take a look at one of the central concepts of Stoic moral philosophy, the concept of *oikeiôsis*.⁶⁷ The translation of this term has been a matter of debate; “familiarisation”, “appropriation” and “affinity” have been suggested.⁶⁸ We will simply use the term “*oikeiôsis*”.

⁶³ Cf. U. Dierse and S. Knoche, “Selbstliebe” in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (Basel: Schwabe & Co. AG, 1995), Vol. 9, pp. 465 – 487.

⁶⁴ Cf. especially chapter II, section 3.3. and chapter IV, section 2.2.

⁶⁵ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 83.

⁶⁶ Cf. the discussions in Shaftesbury, chapter II, sections 3.2., 3.3. and conclusions; Hutcheson, chapter IV, section 3.2.5.

⁶⁷ The most important classical sources for the Stoic concept of *oikeiôsis* are Chrysippus, as summarised in the 7th book of Diogenes Laertius’ “Lives of the Philosophers”, as well as Cicero’s analysis in the 3rd book of “De finibus”.

⁶⁸ Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, p. 262; John Sellars, *Stoicism* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), p. 107; Malcolm Schofield, “Stoic Ethics” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 243. The present section is much indebted to Annas’ discussion of *oikeiôsis*.

The Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis* describes the natural development of human beings. According to the Stoics, they are endowed not only with primitive natural instincts for self-concern, but also with primitive natural instincts for other-concern.⁶⁹ This rough dichotomy will reappear in Shaftesbury's distinction between self-affections and natural affections, in Hutcheson's distinction between self-love and benevolence, and in Butler's distinction between private and public principles. The Stoic *oikeiôsis* is the developmental process during which nature "familiarises" the human agent a) with herself and b) with others.⁷⁰ It thus involves the development of both natural self-directed and natural other-directed tendencies.⁷¹ Julia Annas gives the following comprehensive account of the Stoic theory of *oikeiôsis*:

As babies we start out concerned for ourselves in a primitive way, guided by instinct to the basic things that our nature needs – food, warmth, security. We learn the kinds of things to do to get what is natural for us – health, activity, engagement in finding out about the world. From there we move to the ability that rational beings have to follow rules and to perform 'due actions', and thence to the build-up of a virtuous disposition to do these firmly and reliably. Finally, when we come to a point when, if our reason develops properly, we appreciate that the value of our getting things rationally is crucially different from the value of our rational activity itself; it is the reasons we act on that matter, not the consequences of acting on those reasons. To realize this is to realize the distinct value of virtue, and its difference from other kinds of value expressed in the thesis that only virtue is good.⁷²

It is important to insist that the Stoic conception of *oikeiôsis* has two dimensions. The first is a private dimension, in which the human being develops the appropriate form of rationality and the right form of self-concern. The second is a social dimension, in which the human being develops the right form of other-concern and expands her psychologically primary attachment and concern for her offspring towards an impartial

⁶⁹ Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, pp. 265, 276; Schofield, "Stoic Ethics", p. 243.

⁷⁰ Annas, *The Morality of Happiness*, pp. 262f.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 265. Some commentators therefore tend to distinguish a personal *oikeiôsis* from a social *oikeiôsis*, the former being the process of familiarisation with oneself, the latter being the process of familiarisation with others. This view is debated, however.

⁷² Ibid., p. 263.

concern for humanity (rather than keeping it on the level of a concern for particular persons).⁷³ The Stoic Sage has completed the developmental process of the *oikeiôsis* in both dimensions.

Several points are relevant for our investigation. Firstly, the Stoics assert a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. Even if the Stoic developmental account may allow for the interpretation that self-love in the sense of an affection to the self and its preservation is psychologically primary, the concern for others is also a natural instinct, which develops naturally and can be cultivated. This point is of importance for our authors. Unlike the Augustinian and the Epicurean tradition, the Stoic tradition insists that self-love is not the only principle of actions.⁷⁴ Next, the Stoics provide the basis for a positive answer to the Human Nature Question and thus for opposing the Augustinian doctrine of the total depravity of postlapsarian man. Independent of the question whether human beings can actually become Stoic Sages, virtue is in their reach at least in that they can cultivate virtuous dispositions and become more virtuous. Another important point is that self-love, in contrast to the Augustinian view, is not considered morally problematic if it is in its natural degree. Self-love in the sense of a concern for one's own well-being and self-preservation is a natural instinct, not a source of moral corruption. In the course of this study, we shall see how these ideas are integrated by our authors.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 265. The idea of expanding one's other-concern is especially present in Hutcheson, as we shall see in chapter IV, sections 2.2.3.c) and 3.1.1.a).

⁷⁴ Furthermore, self-love is not conceived as a mere search for pleasures (which is the Epicurean point of view), but as an affection to the self and its preservation. Smith describes the Stoic concept of self-love as follows: "The self-love of man embraced, if I may say so, his body and all its different members, his mind and all its different faculties and powers, and desired the preservation and maintenance of them all in their best and most perfect condition." Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Edited by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 322: VII, II, I, 16.

2.5. Some remarks on terminological aspects

The French term “amour-propre” is essential to the works of the Augustinians of the 17th century, and English terms such as “self-love” and “interest” are recurrent in early 18th-century British moral philosophy. Yet they hardly ever occur in Hobbes, whose theses are ultimately about self-preservation. At the beginning of the 18th century, however, partly under the influence of the French debates on *amour-propre*, and still in the context of the overwhelming wave of attacks against Hobbes, his critics begin to reformulate his claims in the terminology of self-love. Hobbes would have claimed that all human actions are motivated by self-love or self-interest, and that morality could be analysed in terms of self-love and self-interest. The debates that centre on these claims intensify significantly after the publication of Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees* in 1714, and especially after the publication of the enlarged edition in 1723. Again, numerous authors, including Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell, overtly declare their intention to defend morality and rehabilitate human nature against Hobbes and Mandeville. At the same time, but less overtly, they attack Augustinian philosophers and theologians, who have been shown to be in line with the “Epicurean” Hobbes concerning the Motivation Question. In the context of the debates on self-love, Hobbes and Mandeville are frequently criticised by means of limiting the importance apparently attributed to self-love in human nature and morality by them, or by putting forward different concepts of self-love in order to show that there is no conflict between virtue and a human being’s interest. Thus, self-love becomes one of the key issues in moral and political philosophy.

3. Preliminary reflections on the concepts of self-love

3.1. The ambiguity of the term “self-love”

To speak of “self-love” in a broad and unspecified sense seems to invoke at least some kind of special relation of a person with herself. Yet, how precisely do we have to understand this? Is it really appropriate to speak of a kind of love for oneself, or is self-love something less complex than love, for example a mere desire for some kind of advantage for oneself? As with many other important terms in the history of thought, the term “self-love” is highly ambiguous. This fact has received rather little attention by commentators,⁷⁵ but it is extremely important for an analysis of the debated claims mentioned in sections 1.2.1. and 4 of this chapter. The present section discusses some fundamental features of the different conceptions of this close relation the agent has with herself. Below, we are going to stipulate five different concepts of self-love that are at the core of the debates during the investigated period.

In British moral philosophy and moral theology of the early 18th century, the term “self-love” begins to appear with remarkably high frequency especially during the 1720’s. However, very different concepts of self-love can be found in the context of our authors’ thinking about human nature and morality. The present study analyses the far-reaching differences, for example, between Hutcheson’s and Butler’s concepts of

⁷⁵ Most recently in Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, p. 1f. on the notions of self-love and self-interest. Furthermore in Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, and in more focused studies such as Phillips, “Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest”. See also my remarks in Christian Maurer, “Two Approaches to Self-Love: Hutcheson and Butler” *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy* 2, no. 2 (2006).

Force rightly criticises the tendency of some commentators to argue that *self-love* and *self-interest* are synonymous. Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, p. 1f. Yet, he has a problematic tendency to associate the term self-love to the French term *amour-propre* and to oppose self-love and *amour-propre* as passions to the concept of self-interest. This does not hold for all concepts of self-love, as we shall see.

self-love, and shows the impact on their argumentative strategies against Hobbes and Mandeville. Yet, there are not only differences between the terminologies of the authors investigated. Frequently, the meaning of the term changes within the development of a single author's writings. This is the case in Mandeville, who speaks only of "self-love" in the first volume of his *Fable of the Bees*, yet in his later treatises introduces a distinction between "self-love" and "self-liking" in order to elaborate his theory of human nature.

Given the range of concepts of self-love at the beginning of the 18th century, there are rather few debates on what self-love really is. Many authors do not attempt to clearly distinguish their view of self-love from others' when discussing the questions of self-love. This fact makes an analysis of the debates on self-love in the early 18th century a complex enterprise. In order to facilitate the reconstruction of their arguments, it is apposite to draw some preliminary distinctions and to highlight in advance some fundamental features of the different concepts the term "self-love" designates in the period.

Two points must be noted with respect to the following stipulation of the different concepts of self-love. Firstly, the suggested list is not exhaustive. Any account of what it is for an agent to love herself depends to a large extent on the author's moral psychology. When the latter changes, the concept of self-love should itself be expected to change.⁷⁶ Yet, in view of the texts that will be analysed, the five concepts of self-love presented below stipulate the five most important ways to conceive of the special relation the agent has with herself. Secondly, all that can be provided before a close reading of the primary sources is a rough

⁷⁶ For a contemporary concept of self-love, cf. Harry Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 71 – 100 and other writings. Frankfurt develops a view of self-love as a desire for volitional unity, which resembles Butler's concept of self-love in that it rests on a hierarchical conception of human nature. Furthermore, cf. the discussion in Oswald Hanfling, "Loving my Neighbour, Loving Myself" *Philosophy* 68, no. 264 (1993).

conceptual framework, which must be elaborated in the analyses of each author's moral psychology.⁷⁷

3.2. Five concepts of self-love

3.2.1. The egoistic and the hedonistic concept of self-love

One of the most widespread approaches to self-love in the early 18th century is to conceive it in terms of egoistic desires.⁷⁸ Hutcheson, for example, speaks of self-love in terms of selfish desires, which “pursue ultimately only the private Good of the Agent.”⁷⁹ Egoistic desires are desires that ultimately aim at the agent's personal benefit in a broad sense (including pleasure, power, wealth, security, self-preservation etc.). Hedonistic desires, which are commonly treated as a subclass of egoistic desires, are desires that ultimately aim at pleasure for the agent.⁸⁰ Hereafter, this will be referred to as the “egoistic” or “hedonistic concept of self-love” (conceiving hedonistic self-love as a form of egoistic self-love). Both expressions will be used in a technical sense without moral connotations.

A note on the present-day treatment of hedonistic desires as a subclass of egoistic desires, and our respective treatment of hedonistic self-love as a kind of egoistic self-love is required. In the 18th century, the

⁷⁷ The following analysis benefits from Lovejoy's study of the desires of the self-conscious animal, Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature* ; and Solomon's close study of the emotions, Robert C. Solomon, *The Passions. Emotions and the Meaning of Life* (Indianapolis, Cambridge: Hackett, 1993).

⁷⁸ Self-love has also been characterised as a *source* of egoistic or hedonistic desires. This source needs further characterisation, for example in terms of one of the concepts below. Self-love as excessive pride, for example, can be the source of an egoistic desire to get confirmation of one's superiority over others.

⁷⁹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 37.

⁸⁰ These preliminary definitions of “egoistic” and “hedonistic” are sufficient for the present purposes. In section 4.2. of this chapter, we will discuss these notions in greater detail in the context of egoistic theories of human nature. We should also note that the term “egoistic” in the ethical sense of “self-interested” or “selfish” is not found in the 18th century. The Oxford English Dictionary locates its first appearance in the first half of the 19th century. The term “egoistic” in a metaphysical sense that is associated with Berkeley's idealism appears already in the 18th century, however. W.A. Craigie and C.T. Onions, eds., *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), vol. 3, p. 59f.

distinction between egoistic desires for self-preservation and hedonistic desires for pleasure is rather important in view of the opposition between Stoic and Epicurean backgrounds. In the cradle-argument, which is mainly known from Cicero's *De finibus*, the Stoics argue against the Epicureans that in the process of the *oikeiôsis*, self-preservation - but not pleasure - is to be counted among the primary objects of an infant's natural impulses.⁸¹ In other words, egoistic impulses to self-preservation are psychologically primary to self-directed hedonistic desires. Thus, the first step in the Stoic rejection of the Epicurean hedonistic account of the interest paradigm consists in an argument that relies on the Stoic theory of the psychological development of a human agent. As we have seen in section 2.4., the next step consists in asserting the reality of other-directed affections, i.e. in a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

Another important aspect that needs to be highlighted is that the conceptual separation between egoistic and altruistic desires does not imply an actual conflict or opposition between them. This point is frequently stressed by the investigated authors. Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler rely on a distinction between egoistic and altruistic desires and strongly emphasise that the promotion of the private good and the promotion of the public good are not mutually exclusive – rather, they coincide. We shall take a closer look at these arguments in the respective chapters.

In case of the egoistic and hedonistic concepts of self-love, the term “self-love” refers to mental states that are primarily concerned with the desired outcome of the agent's actions, but not with an idea of her self.⁸² Egoistic self-love is not some kind of love in the sense of an emotion the object of which is the agent herself, or in the sense of some caring about

⁸¹ Cicero, *De finibus bonorum et malorum* (Cambridge Mass., London: Harvard University Press, William Heinemann Ltd, 1971), p. 232ff.

⁸² Cf. also Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, pp. 79 – 81.

oneself. Rather, egoistic self-love consists in desires that aim at some kind of advantage for the agent. The fact that an agent desires some advantage for herself does not entail any positive evaluation of the agent by herself. Even an agent who hates herself can be motivated by egoistic desires.⁸³ That its object is somehow positively evaluated seems to be a generally accepted feature of love, however.⁸⁴ We must note, however, that in many 17th and 18th-century theories of the emotions, the term “love” is used as an equivalent for “desire”.⁸⁵ This explains why speaking of “love” in this context is not as problematic for 18th-century writers as it may be for present-day readers, especially since during the period investigated it was perfectly common to say that an agent acted from self-love if she acted on egoistic desires.

It is helpful to take a brief look at the meaning of some frequent expressions involving references to self-love. From the point of view of the egoistic concept of self-love, an action is in conflict with self-love in two typical cases. Firstly, if an egoistic desire is not satisfied because of a non-egoistic motive, such as an altruistic motive or a motive of duty.⁸⁶ Secondly, if the agent is motivated by an egoistic desire that, in the long run, has consequences that make the satisfaction of other, more important egoistic desires impossible. This point depends on a distinction between short-term and long-term interests, or on an account of the importance or value of different egoistic desires, and it provides a basis for the distinction between both the right and the wrong ways of loving oneself in terms of egoistic self-love.⁸⁷ Next, to claim that an action is apparently motivated by a non-egoistic principle, but in fact by self-love,

⁸³ Furthermore, we will discuss several analyses of suicide as an act performed out of self-love in the sense of mere pain-avoidance. Cf. chapter III, section 2.1.3. and chapter VI, section 2.1.

⁸⁴ Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 278; Bennet Helm, *Love*. In: The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2005), edited by Edward N. Zalta.

URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2002/entries/love/>.

⁸⁵ Cf., however, Hutcheson's criticism of the broad use of the term “love” by his contemporaries in chapter IV, section 2.2.2. of the present study.

⁸⁶ This point is important for Hutcheson's discussion of the relation between self-love and benevolence. Cf. e.g. chapter IV, section 2.2.3.d)

⁸⁷ This point is especially important in Campbell. Cf. chapter VI, section 2.3.

requires us to show that the apparently non-egoistic motive can be analysed in terms of underlying egoistic desires. The same holds for the claim that all actions are motivated by egoistic self-love. Campbell especially makes frequent use of such analyses. Mandeville suggests an egoistic analysis of pity, yet relies more frequently on the concept of self-love as excessive pride when suggesting analyses of apparently non-egoistic actions. It should also be emphasised that the adoption of an egoistic concept of self-love does not entail that one is a psychological egoist. Both Hutcheson and Mandeville adopt a hedonistic concept of self-love. Yet whereas Mandeville has a tendency towards psychological hedonism, Hutcheson's declared aim is to show that human beings are not only motivated by hedonistic self-love, but also by benevolent desires that ultimately aim at promoting the good of other agents.

3.2.2. Self-love as love of praise

During the investigated period, the term "self-love" is regularly used in the sense of a person's desire for some form of approbation from other agents. Other common expressions for "love of praise" are desire for and love of esteem, honour or approbation.⁸⁸ The desired approbative reaction is generally a favourable judgment or opinion, as found in honour, or some kind of positive affective attitude, as found in love and esteem.⁸⁹

Does the satisfaction of love of praise depend on the agent's belief that the praise is justified or appropriate? Mandeville denies this, and claims that humans derive satisfaction from being praised even if they are convinced that it is misplaced, for example if they are praised for an action that they did not perform. This is because it confirms them in their sense of superiority over others. Other authors, such as Hutcheson or

⁸⁸ Instead of "love of praise", Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 129 suggests "approbateness". In the present study, we will use the expression "love of praise" since it is more in accordance with the period's use.

⁸⁹ Lovejoy furthermore mentions the simple wish to be an object of attention on the part of others. This is, however, of minor importance in the investigated discussions.

Campbell, and later Adam Smith, attack Mandeville on this point and distinguish a desire for appropriate praise from vanity.⁹⁰ In the *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith criticises Mandeville for not having distinguished between *love of true glory* and *love of vanity*. “He is guilty of vanity who desires praise for qualities which are either not praise-worthy in any degree, or not in that degree in which he expects to be praised for them.”⁹¹

Self-love as love of praise has often been treated as a basic passion in self-conscious human agents, who are concerned about the opinions of others.⁹² Different aspects of self-love as love of praise may be distinguished according to the agent’s features that are counted as relevant to merit praise. The approbative reaction desired can concern essential or contingent features of the agent’s self, such as her moral qualities as opposed to the beauty of her nose. Furthermore, it can concern meritorious features as well as features the agent has no merit for possessing, such as those moral qualities that she acquired through self-cultivation, as opposed to the unmerited moral qualities she has *qua* moral agent. We may also distinguish different criteria of evaluation. An agent’s desire for praise may aim at approbation that is grounded on moral criteria, on personal criteria that concern personal, non-moral achievements, or on interpersonal but non-moral criteria such as social values.⁹³

Self-love as love of praise can be treated as a special kind of egoistic self-love. What the agent desires is a specific kind of benefit for herself. Yet, it must be emphasised that self-love as love of praise presupposes the agent’s awareness of being an agent among others, and of being a possible object of praise. In other words, ascribing self-love as love of

⁹⁰ Cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.4.a), and chapter VI, section 2.2.1.

⁹¹ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, pp. 365: VII, II, IV, 8.

⁹² Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 129. Campbell, for example, attributes self-love as love of praise the central role in his moral philosophy.

⁹³ On this point, cf. Solomon, *The Passions. Emotions and the Meaning of Life*, pp. 204 – 206.

praise involves presupposing rather complex cognitive structures and a social context. Other instances of egoistic self-love may not presuppose this. For this reason, many authors attribute self-love as love of praise only to human beings.

As in egoistic self-love, it may seem problematic to claim that an agent loves herself if she has self-love as love of praise. What is desired, loved, or positively evaluated in love of praise is not the self, but primarily the praise from others. If the agent has some kind of positive self-evaluation, this is better conceived as a possible effect of the praise the agent gets from other agents than as a feature of self-love as love of praise. Self-love as love of praise does not imply that the agent approves of herself in the sense of self-esteem. An agent suffering from low self-esteem, who thus cannot be said to love herself, may have a greater desire for praise than an agent with high self-esteem, who can be said to love herself. However, due to the close links between self-love as love of praise, self-love as self-esteem (cf. 3.2.3.) and self-love as excessive pride (cf. 3.2.4.), our authors sometimes slip from discussing love of praise to discussing other concepts of self-love without noticing.

It is unproblematic to claim that an agent acted out of self-love in the sense that her action was motivated by love of praise. During the period investigated, there is an important discussion about the uncovering of the real motives of apparently virtuous actions. An important claim put forward by Augustinian and Epicurean thinkers is that apparently benevolent actions are, as a matter of fact, motivated by love of praise and thus by a kind of self-love.

3.2.3. Self-love as self-esteem⁹⁴

Another relevant but less frequently discussed concept is self-love in the sense of self-esteem, self-approration, or pride (as far as it is appropriate, moderate and morally unproblematic, and thus distinguished from vanity). Self-love as self-esteem essentially involves some kind of self-approration, which is based on features of the agent's self. It thus involves a positive self-evaluation in view of some personal, non-moral or moral characteristics.⁹⁵ In contrast with self-love as excessive pride (3.2.4.), self-love as self-esteem does not imply that the agent thinks of herself as being better than other agents, nor does it involve tendencies to compare herself with others. However, self-love as self-esteem presupposes that the agent has the belief that she is worthy of approbation, and this may bring about self-love as love of praise, i.e. a desire for the confirmation of that fact by other agents.

Self-love as self-esteem is not an egoistic desire, even if it may bring about egoistic desires to preserve one's self-approration, or if one might desire to have self-esteem for egoistic reasons. It involves the agent's awareness of being an agent who is the subject of evaluative criteria, moral or other. The agent's self-love in the sense of self-esteem or self-approration can be supported by praise, and it can influence self-love as love of praise. Self-love as self-esteem, if it becomes excessive, can lead to indifference with respect to the opinions of others about oneself,⁹⁶ or it can be based on the wrong features. In this case, self-esteem turns out to be morally problematic. On the other hand, since self-love as self-

⁹⁴ "Self-esteem" is also Lovejoy's term in Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, pp. 99f. Some authors distinguish between "pride" (as morally unproblematic, appropriate pride) and "vanity" (as morally problematic, excessive pride) and tend to associate the former with the concept of self-love as self-esteem, and the latter with the concept of self-love as excessive pride as discussed in 3.2.4. (Cf. the discussion in Solomon, *The Passions. Emotions and the Meaning of Life*, pp. 284 – 287 and pp. 303 – 305). The term "pride", however, is used more frequently to refer to self-love as excessive pride, and it will be reserved for this context.

⁹⁵ Hutcheson's self-approration by the moral sense is a form of self-esteem based on one's own moral accomplishments or merits. He does not term it self-love, however, and opposes it to pride. Cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.4.b).

⁹⁶ Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 100.

esteem may also make the agent care more about herself as a moral agent, it is often seen not only as morally unproblematic, but even as praiseworthy.

An agent can be said to love herself in the sense of self-love as self-esteem if she has an appropriate degree of self-esteem. In the case of self-love as self-esteem, it seems more apposite to speak of an agent's love for herself, since self-esteem has the self as its object, and since there is a positive attitude involved. The agent can have a mistaken or inappropriate self-esteem if her positive self-evaluation is based on features that do not justify it. If an agent's self-esteem is entirely based on the shape of her nose, this may be inappropriate. In this case, many authors would claim that the agent does not love herself in the appropriate way. An action is motivated by self-love as self-esteem if it is based on the good opinion the agent has of herself (for example in the case of actions that an agent only performs if she has a high self-esteem), or by a desire to increase her self-esteem. An action can be in conflict with self-love as self-esteem in case it puts the agent's self-approbation in danger.

3.2.4. Self-love as excessive pride

Another essential concept of self-love at the beginning of the 18th century, especially in Mandeville's writings, is self-love as excessive pride.⁹⁷ This could be construed as an excessive form of self-love as self-esteem, which essentially involves competitive behavioural tendencies⁹⁸ and the agent's belief or feeling that she is superior to others. Since the term "pride", on its own, is sometimes used to refer to self-love as self-esteem (in the sense of appropriate and morally innocent pride), we will

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 112 suggests the technical term "emulativeness". To remain closer to the authors we are going to discuss, we will use the expression "excessive pride". Pride is qualified as excessive in order to clearly distinguish it from appropriate or justified pride (in the sense of self-esteem).

⁹⁸ This aspect has been highlighted by both Hobbes and the French Augustinian moralists and is especially emphasised by Mandeville.

use the expression “excessive pride” to mark the distinction. Other common expressions are “vanity”, “arrogance” and, in allusion to the French Augustinian moralists, “*amour-propre*”.⁹⁹ Mandeville, in the second volume of the *Fable of the Bees*, uses the term “self-liking” to contrast self-love as excessive pride with hedonistic self-love, which he calls “self-love”.¹⁰⁰

Self-love as excessive pride differs from self-love as self-esteem in that the former not only involves an inappropriately positive self-evaluation, but also a tendency to compare oneself with other agents, and the feeling or belief in one’s superiority.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, it engenders the aforementioned behavioural tendency to compete with others in order to preserve the feeling of superiority, and a tendency to display or express the belief in one’s superiority, and to seek confirmation from others.¹⁰² On this basis, self-love as excessive pride is frequently seen as a cause of self-love as love of praise.¹⁰³ An agent is said to love herself in the sense of self-love as excessive pride if she has the feeling or belief that she is superior to other agents, a desire to express this belief and a desire to make others express their confirmation to her. Mandeville, for example, draws attention to this last point when discussing the origins of politeness:

He would be highly delighted with, and love every body, whom he thought to have a good Opinion of him, especially those, that by Words or Gestures should own it to his Face [...]¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ This is also the term used later in the 18th century by Rousseau in his treatment of the present concept. In difference to the French Augustinian moralists of the 17th century, *amour-propre* for Rousseau is not tied to the corruption of postlapsarian man, but considered an effect of the civilising process.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. chapter III, section 2.1.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Solomon, *The Passions. Emotions and the Meaning of Life*, pp. 206 – 209 on the subject of personal status and the emotions.

¹⁰² Cf. Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 129.

¹⁰³ Cf. Mandeville on this point, chapter III, section 2.1.2.

¹⁰⁴ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The Second Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1729]), p. 133f.

An action is said to be motivated by self-love as excessive pride if it ultimately aims at supporting the agent's view of herself as superior to other agents, at displaying the agent's superiority, or at making others acknowledge her superiority. Self-love as excessive pride is, in general, not only seen as being inappropriate since based on a false belief in one's superiority over others, but also as morally problematic. On the one hand, this concerns the difficulty of justifying excessive pride – especially from the Augustinian point of view, which emphasises the corruption of all human beings. On the other hand, it concerns the consequences of self-love as excessive pride. Especially the expressive and competitive behavioural tendencies risk to cause conflicts with other agent's self-love as excessive pride.

For Mandeville, in accordance with the French Augustinian moralists' views of *amour-propre*, self-love as excessive pride is the most powerful passion in human nature. Mandeville distinguishes between a) *excessive* self-liking, which is self-love as excessive pride that is in conflict with other agents' self-liking due to its expressive tendencies, and b) *moderate* self-liking, which is self-love as excessive pride that does not offend the self-liking of others, since it is concealed and expressed only within socially permitted bounds. The former, according to Mandeville, is called "pride", and the latter has no name.¹⁰⁵

3.2.5. Self-love as self-respect

The fifth relevant concept of self-love will be termed self-love as self-respect in allusion to Butler's somewhat vague expression of the principle in human nature that "respects self".¹⁰⁶ Butler's concept of self-love is

¹⁰⁵ Cf. chapter III, section 2.1.2. as well as Bernard Mandeville, *An Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War. With a new Introduction by M. M. Goldsmith* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1971 [1732]), pp. 3 and 6.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. especially chapter V, section 2.3.1.a).

quite unique among the authors investigated¹⁰⁷ and rests upon his theistic teleological conception of human nature. The self that is the object of Butlerian self-love as self-respect is the true nature of the agent, which has been designed by God, and which involves a hierarchy between different principles, conscience being the most authoritative.¹⁰⁸ The self in question is not the agent's actual or empirical self, as in self-love as self-esteem, but a teleological notion of a true self the agent has to realise. Butlerian self-love involves a normative conception of the agent's self.

An agent can be said to love herself in the sense of self-love as self-respect if she is disposed to act in order to realise her true self, which she recognises as the proper goal of self-cultivation. In other words, the agent's love of herself in the sense of self-respect is characterised by a concern to form her own identity in view of what she recognises as her true self. In Butler, this forming of her identity is described as a process that involves the supporting, restricting and frustrating of various dispositions and desires in view of the true self. An agent performs an action that is in conflict with her self-love as self-respect if the action prevents her from realising her true self. Thus, an agent who performs an action that is vicious acts against her self-love as self-respect. If the agent is said to really love herself, this conflict with what she considers to be her true self needs to be reflected in a changing attitude towards her actual self, for example in terms of a decrease of her self-love as self-esteem.

¹⁰⁷ We have to note, however, that there seem to be traces of a similar notion of self-love in Shaftesbury. Cf. chapter II, section 2.5.2.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. chapter V, section 2, especially 2.2. and 2.3.

4. Further central aspects for the analysis of the debates on self-love

Besides the analysis of the chosen moral philosophers' concepts of self-love, this study attempts to reconstruct and compare their arguments concerning self-love. As highlighted above, the focus is on questions of human nature and morality, especially on motivation and moral motivation. Questions of political philosophy and moral theology are not part of our main concern, but will be touched on occasionally. The following subsections highlight some aspects that will be particularly important during the subsequent investigations: the emotions, egoism, morality, and the relation between self-love and pity.

4.1. Self-love and the emotions

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the emotions attract an enormous deal of interest. Emotions are not only discussed from a psychological point of view, but also from an interest in subjects such as morality, politics, and epistemology. Authors such as Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza and Malebranche in the 17th century, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Hume and many others in the 18th century write extensively on the emotions. We will use the term "emotion", which is rarely used by our authors, in a generic sense to refer to those modifications¹⁰⁹ of the mind or *motus animi*, which during the investigated period are referred to as "passions", "affections", "appetites", "desires" etc.¹¹⁰ They are generally

¹⁰⁹ James Fieser, "Hume's Classification of the Passions and its Precursors" *Hume Studies* 18 (1992), p. 2 uses the term "disturbances".

¹¹⁰ The suggested broad use of the term "emotion" includes states of different degrees of complexity. It can be contrasted with a more specific use, common in contemporary research on the

thought of as passive states or “dispositions to be affected”¹¹¹, which are not in the agent’s immediate voluntary control. Emotions are sometimes conceived as perceptions of pleasure or pain.¹¹² Unlike sensations, which are immediate sensual perceptions, emotions are thought to involve reflection. During the period investigated, it was quite common to use the terms “passions” and “affections” in a generic sense. Yet, there is frequently a distinction between “affections” in the sense of calm emotions, and “passions” in the sense of violent emotions. Since each of our authors uses terms such as “affections”, “appetites”, “passions” etc. in a slightly different way, there is no sense in giving a precise meaning to these terms in this section. However, it is appropriate to introduce some fundamental distinctions in order to draw attention to important aspects of our authors’ treatment of the different kinds of self-love, which are conceived as emotions in the broad sense specified above.

An initial clarification is needed to specify two different approaches to the emotions, both being of great importance during the period investigated.¹¹³ Typological approaches on the one hand tackle the task of providing a systematic overview of the different emotions. Thus, they aim at giving a complete account of the emotional life of human agents. As we will see in Shaftesbury’s *Pathologia* and in Hutcheson’s *Essay*, their typological accounts rely heavily on the Stoic typology of the emotions. On the other hand, there are more specific approaches that are concerned with analysing a particular kind of emotion in terms of its phenomenology, its relation to other kinds of emotions, its function in processes of the human mind, and its teleology. Often, these approaches are combined in order to offer a complete picture of the emotional life of human agents.

emotions, which restricts it to complex states of mind that involve phenomenological, cognitive, evaluative and conative aspects.

¹¹¹ Susan James, “Explaining the passions: passions, desires, and the explanation of action” in *The Soft Underbelly of Reason. The Passions in the Seventeenth Century* (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 19.

¹¹² Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 30.

¹¹³ Laurent Jaffro, “Emotions et jugement moral chez Shaftesbury, Hutcheson et Hume” in *Les émotions* (Paris: Vrin, forthcoming).

Thus, the analysis of particular kinds of emotions is linked with a more general typology of the human emotions. Both approaches are relevant for understanding our authors' treatment of the different concepts of self-love.

Another very common distinction should be introduced. Especially in Stoic typologies of the emotions, it is common to draw a distinction in kind or in degree between calm and violent emotions. Emotions are generally thought to lie beyond the agent's immediate voluntary control, but it is assumed that calm emotions can be indirectly influenced by reason and reflection. Violent emotions, on the other hand, can only be opposed by stronger emotions. Often, the aforementioned tendency to call calm emotions "affections" and violent emotions "passions"¹¹⁴ is tied to a distinction between emotions arising from the soul and emotions arising from disturbances in material bodies.¹¹⁵

The distinction between calm and violent emotions is reflected in our authors' treatment of the different concepts of self-love. Many authors distinguish between self-love as a calm affection on the one hand, which can be influenced by reflection, and excessive or passionate self-love on the other hand, which is outside any voluntary and rational control. Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, for example, discuss egoistic and hedonistic self-love as a calm and as a violent emotion, and Butler suggests a peculiar understanding of passionate self-love as self-respect. The distinction between self-love as an affection and self-love as a passion again influences the moral evaluation of self-love. Most authors claim that self-love as a calm emotion has a different moral value than self-love as a violent emotion.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Hutcheson puts forward this distinction between passions and affections. Shaftesbury and Butler have a certain tendency to use the terms accordingly.

¹¹⁵ Fieser, "Hume's Classification of the Passions and its Precursors", p. 6.

¹¹⁶ On this point, Mandeville is an exception. His conception of morality suggests the view that all degrees of self-love as excessive pride are equally a sign for the moral corruption of mankind.

It has already been mentioned that many authors, in spite of conceiving emotions as passive states, do not think of them as totally out of the agent's control. In this context, the notion of self-cultivation is of great importance. The agent can cultivate her emotions and make the morally right ones stronger, the morally problematic ones less powerful. To a certain extent, this implies responsibility for one's character, or a duty to oneself. With respect to the different concepts of self-love and their emotional aspects, the following questions are frequently discussed: How and to what extent can and should the emotion of self-love (in a given understanding) be controlled, cultivated, redirected, or frustrated? If it is not the only source of motives for human actions, to what extent ought it be allowed to influence actions and to shape the agent's character? We will discuss a series of different answers.

4. 2. Self-love and egoistic theories of human nature

Another cluster of questions concerns the relation between 18th-century debates on self-love and present-day discussions on egoism. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Motivation Question. It has been suggested that in the 20th century, the term "self-love" has been replaced by the term "egoism".¹¹⁷ We will show that this view is simplistic, since many arguments concerning self-love in its different forms cannot be simply analysed as arguments concerning egoism, even if there is an intricate relationship between the concepts.

During the 20th century, Hobbes' theory of human nature has been extensively analysed from the perspective of egoism. Mostly, Hobbes has been labelled a psychological egoist who supports the claim that all actions are self-directed in that they ultimately aim at some advantage

¹¹⁷ Dierse and Knoche, "Selbstliebe", p. 484.

for the agent.¹¹⁸ All the early 18th-century philosophers under discussion debated Hobbes' theses, and their arguments have frequently been interpreted as arguments concerning psychological egoism. Following the classification of Hobbes as a psychological egoist, Mandeville has been interpreted the same way, and it has been claimed that Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler reject psychological egoism. This point, and especially the role of the different concepts of self-love in this context, will be examined in the chapters on these authors.

There are some basic concepts of egoism that we shall now introduce. *Psychological egoism* is an egoistic theory of human nature that claims that human beings are only motivated by self-interested desires, which ultimately aim at some kind of personal benefit for the agent (for example pleasure, power, wealth etc.).¹¹⁹ *Psychological hedonism*, which is a form of psychological egoism, claims that all human actions are motivated by a desire for pleasure for oneself. Egoistic theories of human nature do not exclude the conceptual possibility of non-egoistic motives, but only their actual occurrence. The occurrence of non-egoistically motivated actions, such as altruistically motivated actions (which aim at the promoting the well-being of other agents, or of humanity), or actions motivated by duty falsify the thesis of psychological egoism. For this reason, the psychological egoist has to prove that apparently non-egoistically motivated actions are ultimately motivated by self-interested desires. Secondly, psychological egoism is a claim about a

¹¹⁸ We have to note that this interpretation has been debated. Cf. Gert, "Hobbes and Psychological Egoism" ; Gert, "Introduction" ; McNeilly, "Egoism in Hobbes" ; Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* ; Edwin Curley, "Reflections on Hobbes: Recent Work on His Moral and Political Philosophy" *Journal of Philosophical Research* 15 (1990). Kavka has argued that Hobbes is best understood as predominant egoist, and not as a psychological egoist. (Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* , p. 64f.) Predominant egoism, which is an egoistic theory of human nature, is the claim that the vast majority of all actions are motivated by selfish desires, but that under very restricted conditions non-egoistic desires can motivate human agents. In difference to psychological egoism, predominant egoism is not as highly vulnerable to counterexamples and can allow for a few (very restricted) cases of actions that aim at promoting the well-being of other agents.

¹¹⁹ Another term frequently used for "self-interested" is "self-directed", as opposed to "other-directed", which is an equivalent for "altruistic". The term "selfish", in the 18th century, is often equivalent to "self-interested" (e.g. in Hutcheson), but sometimes negatively connoted (e.g. in Shaftesbury).

specific quality of motives or efficient desires, not of desires in general. It is weaker than the claim that human agents do not have other-directed states of mind, such as desires for the well-being of others, the emotion of pity, etc. Thus, it is compatible with the occurrence of states of mind that involve a genuine concern for the well-being of others. It asserts, however, that such other-directed states of mind do not provide desires that are strong enough to motivate a human agent, and that all actions are ultimately motivated by self-directed states of mind.¹²⁰ According to this theory, egoistic desires will always trump potentially occurring altruistic desires.¹²¹

Another theory shall be mentioned, since it plays a certain role in the subsequent analyses, and since it is often mistaken for an egoistic theory of human nature.¹²² *Tautological egoism* consists in the claim that every human action is motivated by the agent's own desires (and not by the desires of other agents). This claim, which is criticised by Shaftesbury and Butler as irrelevant, does not specify whether the agent's motives are self-interested. It is thus compatible with the occurrence of an unlimited number of altruistic or other-directed motives. If "self-interest" is defined in this way, the claim that every action is motivated by self-interested desires becomes a mere tautology. Thus, tautological egoism has to be distinguished from egoistic theories of human nature.

The 20th-century interpretation of Hobbes as a psychological egoist has influenced present-day debates on 18th-century authors who discussed Hobbes' theses. As a consequence of the focus on Hobbes, the 18th-century debates on the claim that human agents only act out of self-love have often been reconstructed as debates on psychological egoism.

¹²⁰ This point is especially relevant for the subsequent analyses of the passion of pity and its relation to self-love.

¹²¹ The problems of these universal empirical claims have been widely discussed. Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 35ff. and 51ff. provides a helpful analysis.

¹²² Ibid., p. 35f.

This is plausible as far as egoistic self-love is concerned, but the variety of concepts of self-love introduced above suggests that in many cases, it is inappropriate to concentrate on egoistic self-love. This will be discussed in greater detail on various occasions. In the case of Hutcheson, many arguments can indeed be interpreted as attacks on psychological egoism.¹²³ However, when Butler argues against the thesis that all human actions are motivated by self-love, he does not attack psychological egoism, as will be argued below.¹²⁴ Butler did indeed oppose psychological egoism and psychological hedonism, but not in his discussion of self-love.¹²⁵ Furthermore, when Mandeville asserts that self-liking or self-love as excessive pride is the ultimate motive for all (or most) motives, he does not simply put forward psychological egoism, but a more specific Augustinian thesis, as we shall see below.¹²⁶

These points clearly suggest that an analysis of the debates on self-love merely in terms of egoism is not appropriate. Furthermore, when taking a look at the egoistic answers to the Motivation Question, we have to distinguish different backgrounds, such as the Augustinian background, where psychological egoism and moral corruption are tied together by the doctrine of the original sin, and the Epicurean background, where this is not the case.

4.3. Self-love and morality

The debates on the different concepts of self-love have a great impact on questions that concern morality. First of all, we have already highlighted the link between the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question.

¹²³ Cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.3.

¹²⁴ Cf. chapter V, section 3.2.

¹²⁵ Cf. chapter V, section 2.1.4.

¹²⁶ Cf. chapter III, section 2.1.2.

If morality is conceived as grounded on other-directed affections, such as benevolence, and if the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is correct - because we are only motivated by egoistic self-love, for example - then we are forced to give a negative answer to the Human Nature Question. Furthermore, in that case all approvals of actions as virtuous are erroneous.¹²⁷ Thus, the Motivation Question, which deals with human psychology, has a huge impact on moral questions.

Next, the moral evaluation of the concepts of self-love will attract a great deal of attention. The Augustinian position put forward by Mandeville suggests that both egoistic self-love and self-love as excessive pride, which are seen as the basic passions in human nature, are in some sense vicious.¹²⁸ Shaftesbury and, less emphatically, Hutcheson argue for a more detailed view of the moral value of self-love. This is in accordance with their Stoic moral psychology, where self-love in its natural degree is seen as morally unproblematic, or even required for virtue.¹²⁹ Butler and Campbell then put forward very positive views of self-love – Butler in defending a concept of self-love as self-respect, and Campbell in asserting that self-love as love of praise is the motive for all virtuous actions and the standard for moral virtue.¹³⁰ In contrast to the Augustinian condemnation of self-love as morally corrupt, these views tend towards a moral rehabilitation of self-love. This provides support for the positive answer to the Human Nature Question, even in the case of Campbell, who argues for an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

Many authors assume that there are different forms or degrees of self-love with different moral value in human nature. We have mentioned above that the distinction in moral psychology between calm and violent

¹²⁷ Cf. Gill's discussion of Hutcheson on Mandeville in Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 142 and 296.

¹²⁸ This is a consequence of Mandeville's rigoristic conception of morality, which makes self-denial or the frustration of one's passions a condition for morality. Cf. our discussion especially in chapter III, section 4.1.

¹²⁹ Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.2.c) and chapter IV, section 3.1.2.

¹³⁰ Cf. chapter V, section 2.3. and chapter VI, section 3.

self-love is often very important for the moral evaluation of self-love. Self-love as a violent emotion is in general seen as morally problematic, whereas self-love as a calm emotion can have very positive aspects. This treatment indicates the importance of the connection between ethical questions and questions of moral psychology, a connection that is particularly close in the moral philosophy of the late 17th century and during the 18th century.¹³¹ The moral evaluation of self-love furthermore depends on self-love's relation to other emotions and their respective moral value. This point is especially important for Hutcheson's mathematical evaluation of hedonistic self-love in its relation to benevolence.¹³²

A related aspect concerns the cultivation of virtue in one's own character. If the agent is thought to be able to exert an indirect influence on herself by modifying, endorsing or opposing certain motives, dispositions, and character traits, then how should she treat self-love? In the context of self-cultivation, the assessment of the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, or of the doctrine that (some kind of) self-love is the only motive for human agents, becomes also morally relevant. Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, for example, argue that the doctrine itself is not only false but also harmful, since it prevents the agent from cultivating her benevolent, unselfish affections.

Let us now turn to the relation between the different concepts of self-love and moral motivation. Can self-love of a given kind motivate virtuous actions? Hutcheson, for example, frequently argues that only benevolence motivates morally virtuous actions. Hedonistic self-love, if it

¹³¹ M. A. Stewart, "The Scottish Enlightenment" in *British Philosophy and the Age of Enlightenment* (London, New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 275, says about the close relation between psychological and ethical questions in the moral philosophy of the Enlightenment: "Moral philosophy was not confined to ethics, for ethics had to be grounded in a thorough understanding of human nature. A century earlier, this had been the prerogative of the theologians, whose emphasis on humanity's fallen state had encouraged a strictly biblical view of moral teaching. The Enlightenment changed this ethos, but the aim of instruction remained one of instilling principles of virtue and good citizenship within a context of general piety."

¹³² Cf. chapter IV, section 3.1.1.c)

is a calm affection, can be an incentive to cultivate benevolence, however. Mandeville is frequently attacked for having claimed that all virtuous actions are motivated by self-love as excessive pride (which is an unjustified ascription, as we shall see).¹³³ Campbell, who attacks Mandeville on this point, asserts that self-love understood as love of praise is the motive for genuinely virtuous actions.¹³⁴

These points lead to the question of whether the concept of morality itself can be analysed in terms of self-love. This claim is frequently rejected as undermining the foundation for our moral distinctions. Mandeville has been (erroneously) charged with reducing morality to self-love, which is a possible interpretation of his provocative formula that “Moral Virtues are the Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride”¹³⁵. Against Hutcheson, Campbell suggests an analysis of an action’s moral value in terms of its accordance with the hedonistic self-love of others. At the same time he claims that observers morally approve of actions because they gratify their own hedonistic self-love.¹³⁶ Another important aspect of the relation between self-love and morality is captured in the Interest Claim, i.e. in the claim that virtue is (in some sense) in the interest of the agent. We will discuss different interpretations of the Interest Claim, which is on the one hand rejected by Mandeville with the claim that virtue requires self-denial in the sense of the frustration of one’s natural selfish passions, and on the other hand asserted by other authors in different interpretations.¹³⁷

¹³³ Cf. chapter III, section 4.2.3.

¹³⁴ Cf. chapter VI, section 3.4.

¹³⁵ Bernard Mandeville, "An Enquiry Into the Origin of Moral Virtue" in *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The First Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1714]), p. 51. Cf. chapter III, section 4.2.3.

¹³⁶ Cf. chapter VI, sections 3.1. and 3.3.

¹³⁷ Cf. especially chapter II, section 2.4.

4.4. *Self-love and pity*

During the course of this study, we will regularly focus on the relation between self-love and pity (or compassion¹³⁸), which attracts a considerable amount of attention during the investigated period. This is a consequence of the importance of the Motivation Question and pity's almost paradigmatic status as an other-directed emotion.¹³⁹

Pity is roughly understood as some kind of emotional reaction in view of another person's misery, and is normally thought to involve a tendency to relieve the misery of the sufferer. Several questions are in the focus of the debates in the investigated period. i) Is the emotion itself altruistic, i.e. ultimately concerned with the well-being of the person in misery, or egoistic, i.e. ultimately concerned with the observer's own well-being? ii) Are actions motivated by pity altruistic or egoistic? iii) What is the moral value of pity? Many attacks on the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question focus on pity as a paradigmatic candidate for an other-directed emotion because i) it is thought to involve a genuine concern for the well-being of the miserable person, and because ii) it is thought to motivate altruistic actions. If this analysis is correct, then the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is false.

In order to save his claim, the psychological egoist must either suggest an egoistic analysis of pity, or deny that pity, if it is a genuinely altruistic emotion, is ever strong enough to overcome other, egoistic desires, such as the desire for one's own security, the desire to get rid of the uneasiness upon seeing someone in distress, or the desire to gratify one's self-love in the sense of love of praise. Hobbes, one of the most debated proponents of the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question,

¹³⁸ Pity and compassion are not properly distinguished by the investigated authors, who generally use the terms interchangeably.

¹³⁹ Cf. chapter 1 in Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 14 – 34, on the importance attributed to the emotion of pity by a series of authors, especially Smith and Rousseau.

suggested an analysis of pity that became particularly notorious and was regularly the target of criticisms. In *Human Nature*, he writes:

*Pity is imagination or fiction of future calamity to ourselves, proceeding from the sense of another man's calamity. But when it lighteth on such as we think have not deserved the same, the compassion is greater, because then there appeareth more probability that the same may happen to us.*¹⁴⁰

Pity, according to this egoistic analysis, is essentially a concern about one's own well-being, not about the well-being of the person in misery. The perception (or imagination) of someone else's misery is merely part of the causal chain that leads to pity in this egoistic sense. Yet, the other's misery is not what the observer is concerned about. The intensity of pity is a function of the probability with which the observer thinks that the same misery may occur to herself. Butler's reply to this analysis is famous and will be discussed in chapter V, section 2.1.5.¹⁴¹

Hobbes is not the only philosopher to put forward an egoistic analysis of pity. Philosophers of the Augustinian stripe, who also assert an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, join Hobbes in treating pity as a "manifestation of self-interest".¹⁴² La Rochefoucauld, for example, writes:

La pitié est souvent un sentiment de nos propres maux dans les maux d'autrui. C'est une habile prévoyance des malheurs où nous pouvons tomber; nous donnons du secours aux autres pour les engager à nous en donner en de semblables occasions; et ces services que nous leur rendons

¹⁴⁰ Thomas Hobbes, "Human Nature or the Fundamental Elements of Policy" in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes* (London, Aalen: John Bohn, Scientia Verlag, 1966 [1650]), p. 44. This passage has been discussed in Gert, "Hobbes and Psychological Egoism", p. 509 and others.

¹⁴¹ It is noteworthy that Hobbes suggests a second, non-egoistic account of pity in the *Leviathan*: "Grief, for the calamity of another, is PITY; and ariseth from the imagination that the like calamity may befall himself; and therefore is called also COMPASSION, and in the phrase of this present time a FELLOW-FEELING: and therefore for calamity arriving from great wickedness, the best men have the least pity; and for the same calamity, those hate pity, that think themselves least obnoxious to the same." Hobbes, *Leviathan* (I, vi), p. 32. In this passage, Hobbes refrains from an egoistic analysis of pity and assumes that it involves a genuine concern or grief about the misery of another person. The cause of this other-directed emotion is the imagination that the same misery could befall oneself, and the intensity of the emotion is again explained as a function of the probability with which the observer thinks that the same misery could occur to herself. The emotion of pity itself, however, is analysed as other-directed. This is not necessarily in conflict with the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, since it is still possible to claim that pity is too weak to motivate actions.

¹⁴² Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 24f.

sont à proprement parler des biens que nous nous faisons à nous-mêmes par avance.¹⁴³

Here, the emotion of pity is again explained as concerned with one's own well-being. Actions motivated by this passion ultimately aim at the agent's own benefit and are just apparently performed for the other's sake. For the Augustinians, this analysis is a reinforcement of their negative answer to the Human Nature Question. Thus, Jacques Esprit writes in a section on pity: "Mais notre amour-propre qui corrompt tous les biens que nous faisons, ne nous fait sentir les maux de notre prochain, et ne nous inspire le désir de les soulager que pour l'amour de nous-mêmes [...]".¹⁴⁴

Egoistic analyses of pity are frequently discussed in our authors. On the one hand, Mandeville and Campbell both put forward an egoistic analysis of pity, however giving very different answers to the Human Nature Question. On the other hand, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler put forward non-egoistic analyses of pity and take it to be a proof of the reality of other-directed emotions. In particular, Butler's arguments in the *Sermons* became very famous, and Hutcheson's reply to Hobbes in the fourth edition of the *Inquiry* is extremely interesting since it is linked with a criticism of Campbell.

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 24f. La Rochefoucauld, *Réflexions ou Sentences et Maximes morales*, p. 88, Maxim 264.

¹⁴⁴ Esprit, *La fausseté des vertus humaines*, p. 224.

Chapter II: Shaftesbury – Self-Affections, Selfishness and Self-Admiration

1. Introduction

1.1. Shaftesbury and his writings

Many commentators have drawn attention to the great influence the writings of Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), exerted on the philosophy of the 18th century, particularly in the fields of moral philosophy and aesthetics.¹ The present chapter focuses on Shaftesbury's contribution to the debates on self-love, which strongly reflects his Stoic account of human nature. Shaftesbury gives a distinctively positive answer to the Human Nature Question. Furthermore, his rejection of the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question comes conjoined with a rather positive view of self-love, which is in sharp contrast with the Augustinian view of self-love as a vice. Shaftesbury's treatment of self-love deeply influences Hutcheson and Butler, as will be argued in the respective chapters.

¹ E.g. Darwall, *British Moralists* ; David McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price" in *British Philosophy and the Age of Enlightenment* (London, New York: Routledge, 1996); Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* .

As a grandson of the first Earl of Shaftesbury, the famous Whig politician, Shaftesbury's education was supervised by John Locke, who entertained a close relationship with the Coopers. At a later stage of his life, the third Earl of Shaftesbury distanced himself from his famous tutor, not least because of Locke's view of morality. Shaftesbury wrote in a letter to Michael Ainsworth:

It was Mr. Locke that struck the home blow: for Mr. Hobbes' character and base slavish principles in government took off the point of his philosophy. 'Twas Mr. Locke that struck at all fundamentals, threw all order and virtue out of the world, and made the very ideas of these (which are the same as those of God) *unnatural*, and without foundation in our minds.²

It was Shaftesbury's declared aim to show that virtue has an internal foundation in human nature both in natural virtuous motives and a moral sense.³ Virtue, he asserted furthermore, "is the good and vice the ill of everyone."⁴ He saw both Hobbes and Locke challenging these views in their theories of human nature and morality and argued against them. On these points, Shaftesbury is much closer to Ralph Cudworth, the Cambridge Platonist, than to Locke, his tutor.⁵

Shaftesbury's most important publication was certainly the *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, which appeared in 1711 and is a collection of several treatises, some of which were already published at previous occasions.⁶ The *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*⁷, Shaftesbury's nowadays most discussed philosophical text, and one of the most important sources for the present study, had first been published by Shaftesbury's *protégé* John Toland in 1699 – in an unauthorised version,

² Quoted in Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 177. Cf. also the discussion in Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 81.

³ Cf. also Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 178.

⁴ Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, "An Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit" in *Characteristics of Men Manners, Opinions, Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1711]), p. 230.

⁵ Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 78.

⁶ We will use the edition by Lawrence Klein for references: Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1711]), henceforth referred to as *Characteristics*.

⁷ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry".

according to the fourth earl of Shaftesbury.⁸ Other writings that make up the *Characteristics*, and that will be mentioned below include the *Sensus Communis, an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour in a Letter to a Friend*⁹ (1709) and *The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody, Being a Recital of Certain Conversations on Natural and Moral Subjects*¹⁰ (1709). The *Miscellaneous Reflections on the Preceding Treatises and Other Critical Subjects*¹¹ appeared for the first time in the *Characteristics*' edition of 1711 as a commentary of the other treatises. Shaftesbury also left a considerable body of manuscripts, such as the *Pathologia, sive Explicatio Affectuum humanorum*¹², which he wrote around 1706, and the *Askemata*¹³ (1689-1712). The *Pathologia* will be of particular interest for this study, since it contains a clear exposition of the Stoic theory of the emotions, which influenced Shaftesbury's own moral philosophy to a great extent. Besides the fact that he is generally considered the first moral sense theorist, the rationalist influence from the Cambridge Platonists, who had a deep impact on Shaftesbury, must be highlighted.¹⁴ In turn, our

⁸ Lawrence E. Klein, "Cooper, Anthony Ashley, third earl of Shaftesbury" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 218.

⁹ Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, "Sensus Communis, an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour in a Letter to a Friend" in *Characteristics of Men Manners, Opinions, Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1709]), henceforth referred to as *Sensus Communis*.

¹⁰ Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, "The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody, being a Recital of Certain Conversations on Natural and Moral Subjects" in *Characteristics of Men Manners, Opinions, Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1709]), henceforth referred to as *Moralists*.

¹¹ Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, "Miscellaneous Reflections on the Preceding Treatises and Other Critical Subjects" in *Characteristics of Men Manners, Opinions, Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1711]), henceforth referred to as *Miscellanies*.

¹² Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, "Pathologia, sive Explicatio Affectuum humanorum, secundum Doctrinam Socraticorum (i.e. Academicorum antiquorum, Cynicorum, et Stoicorum qui cum Socrate solum Bonum Virtutem, solum Malum Vitium dixerunt,) ad intellectionem Epistolarum & Sermonum aliquot Horatii, in quibus ille Philosophiam hanc severiorem sequitur" in *Shaftesbury Papers, PRO30/24/26/1* (1706), henceforth referred to as *Pathologia*.

¹³ There are two editions of the *Askemata*, one in Benjamin Rand, ed., *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1997 [1900]), the other by Laurent Jaffro: Anthony Ashley Cooper Shaftesbury, 3rd Earl of, *Exercices. Traduction de l'anglais et présentation par Laurent Jaffro* (Paris: Aubier, 1993).

¹⁴ Ralph Cudworth is discussed as one of the most important influence on Shaftesbury. Other Cambridge Platonists were also important for Shaftesbury. He edited, for example, the sermons of Benjamin Whichcote. Darwall highlights the connections between Shaftesbury and the Cambridge Platonists in order to distinguish Shaftesbury's rationalist moral sentimentalism from Hutcheson's, Hume's and Smith's empiricist moral sentimentalism: "Shaftesbury's notion of 'moral sense' is very different from Hutcheson's; it is no empiricist's faculty that passively receives ideas and feelings but involves creative and formative powers that Shaftesbury believes are intrinsic to active mind. Like

philosopher's writings not only influenced the British *Enlightenment*, but also many thinkers of the French *Lumières* and the German *Aufklärung*.¹⁵ During the 20th century, the rather moderate interest of moral philosophers in Shaftesbury focussed mainly on the *Inquiry*.¹⁶ Yet, in recent years, Shaftesbury's writings, and not only the *Inquiry*, have got more attention especially from Anglophone and Francophone philosophers.¹⁷

1.2. Shaftesbury's philosophy and the question of self-love

It is appropriate to focus on Shaftesbury as the first author in this study because of his great impact on the debates on self-love at the beginning of the 18th century. Both his theory of human nature and his moral theory constitute essential points of reference for the subsequent authors. Mandeville is the most notorious author to have attacked Shaftesbury. He criticises him for having conceived of human nature too optimistically and for the claim that being virtuous does not require self-denial. Hutcheson, against Mandeville, declares his intention to defend Shaftesbury, and develops his arguments from an empiricist point of view. On certain

Cudworth, Shaftesbury holds that the very possibility of ethics depends on mind's being inherently creative and practical." Darwall, *British Moralists*, pp. 180f. Cf. furthermore Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 77ff.

¹⁵ Diderot, for example, translated Shaftesbury's *Inquiry*, and Montesquieu expressed his high esteem for the author. Lessing's aesthetical discussion in the *Laokoon* contains a series of Shaftesburian elements, while Herder and Mendelssohn referred to him frequently.

¹⁶ For further historiographical aspects, cf. Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 176, p. 181 and Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 88. For an example cf. McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price", p. 203.

¹⁷ A series of contributions that deal with different aspects of Shaftesbury's philosophy have been published over the last years. To give just a few examples: Darwall, *British Moralists*; Laurent Jaffro, *Ethique de la communication et art d'écrire. Shaftesbury et les Lumières anglaises* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998); Angelica Baum, *Selbstgefühl und reflektierte Neigung. Ästhetik und Ethik bei Shaftesbury* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann-holzboog, 2001); Richard Glauser, "Aesthetic Experience in Shaftesbury" *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 76 (2002); Richard Glauser, "Shaftesbury: Enthousiasme et expérience religieuse" *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* 134 (2002); Daniel Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson. Contesting Diversity in the Enlightenment and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*; Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*.

points, Butler takes a similar position to Shaftesbury's,¹⁸ yet emphasises certain differences in their views.

The close relation between questions of moral psychology and ethical questions for the moral philosophy of the period has been highlighted above. In Shaftesbury, the connection between investigating human nature and morality is particularly important. Commentators have emphasised that in his moral philosophy, questions of morality are no longer treated within the framework of a theory of law and duties, as was the case in the tradition of natural law throughout the 17th century. Rather, they are looked at from the point of view of human nature, in particular in relation with the agent's affections – a point that is also relevant for the other investigated authors.¹⁹ In the *Inquiry*, for example, Shaftesbury argues that the nature of virtue consists “in a certain just disposition or proportional affection of a rational creature towards the moral objects of right and wrong”²⁰. His emphasis that virtuous affections and a “just sense of right and wrong”²¹ are natural to mankind underlines the importance of the link between human nature and morality and indicates his positive answer to the Human Nature Question.

¹⁸ Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 282 for example, draws attention to one of the fundamental similarities between Shaftesbury and Butler. Both defend a *normative theory of the will*. An autonomous agent, according to this theory, is an agent who is guided and self-regulated “by a normative conception [of the self] that the agent herself accepts”. This point will become particularly relevant in the case of Butler's conception of self-love, as I shall argue in chapter V.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 182. Darwall points out that Shaftesbury's account occupies a most important place in the process of detaching the idea of virtue from the idea of a law: “Shaftesbury's ethics clearly mark a radical departure from the seventeenth-century tradition of natural law. If the model of law is significantly revised in Cumberland and Cudworth, it is almost entirely absent from Shaftesbury. What makes conduct virtuous and virtue obligating appears to have nothing at all to do with even a reformed idea of law. Rather, morality primarily concerns what Shaftesbury calls the agent's *affections*.” Cf. Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 193, where he suggests that Shaftesbury “may be the first British moralist” to discuss “the question of whether there is an obligation to be virtuous without any reference to the idea of law or to related notions of accountability, punishment, or blame.”

²⁰ Shaftesbury, “*Inquiry*”, p. 177.

²¹ Ibid., p. 177. Cf. also Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 178 and 182; Schrader, *Ethik und Anthropologie in der englischen Aufklärung. Der Wandel der moral-sense-theorie von Shaftesbury bis Hume*, p. XVIII. Shaftesbury's teleological conception of human nature will be discussed below.

Shaftesbury's moral philosophy has most often been read through the lenses of the *Inquiry*, which is certainly his most systematic text.²² In the present chapter, we will first focus on his discussion of the self-affections in the *Inquiry* (Section 2). Some passages from the *Sensus Communis* will enrich the analysis of Shaftesbury's view of self-love and selfishness. Yet, the questions of self-love that are the main interest of the present study are also treated in the *Moralists*, the *Miscellanies* and in the *Pathologia*. In comparison with the *Inquiry*, these latter treatises provide sometimes very different views of a series of aspects of moral philosophy, which has also implications for Shaftesbury's treatment of self-love. Section 3 will thus focus on the *Miscellanies* and the *Pathologia*, and will terminate with a discussion of the question whether the two approaches can still be made compatible, especially given the different conceptions of virtue – a point that will be reflected again in Hutcheson.

2. Self-affections, self-love and selfishness in the moral philosophy of the Inquiry (1699/1711)

2.1. Preliminary remarks

For Shaftesbury, the term “self-love” is not as central as for the other authors discussed in this study; compared with the writings of Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell, it appears rarely. However, the claims Shaftesbury puts forward in the *Inquiry*'s terminology of “self-affections”, “private affections” and “selfishness” exert a vast influence on subsequent

²² Such is the view of McNaughton, “British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price” , p. 203. Cf. Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* , p. 88.

authors, who prefer the term “self-love”. This holds on the one hand for Hutcheson and partly for Butler, who argue in a similar vein to Shaftesbury when asserting their non-egoistic answers to the Motivation Question, and on the other hand for Mandeville and Campbell, who attack Shaftesbury on this point.

The present section concentrates on Shaftesbury’s discussion of the self-affections in the *Inquiry*. We will first give a sketch of Shaftesbury’s holistic view of the universe as a harmonious system. After a discussion of his distinction between natural goodness and moral virtue (section 2.2.), we will examine his account of the affections and their moral value (section 2.3.). Then, we will analyse Shaftesbury’s influential claim that virtue is in the agent’s interest (section 2.4.), and close the section with some remarks on Shaftesbury’s use of the term “self-love” (section 2.5.) before turning to his account of moral psychology in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* (section 3).

2.2. *The universe, human nature and goodness*

2.2.1. *Human nature and the universe*

One of Shaftesbury’s main goals in the *Inquiry* is to provide an answer to the question “what honesty or virtue is considered by itself”²³, and to investigate its relation with religion. Shaftesbury argues with Bayle that it is not impossible to be virtuous and to have a correct sense of right and wrong without religious beliefs, even if religion is useful to cultivate virtue.²⁴ As indicated above, Shaftesbury affirms a close link between

²³ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 163f.

²⁴ Cf. the discussion of this point in the context of the Scottish Enlightenment in James Harris, “Answering Bayle’s Question: Religious Belief in the Moral Philosophy of the Scottish Enlightenment” in *Oxford Studies in Early Modern Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003).

morality and human nature in asserting that the virtue of a human agent depends on her affections, and not directly on her religious ideas.

From a more general point of view, the study of human nature and morality in Shaftesbury has to be seen in relation to his Stoic conception of the universe as a harmoniously designed system, which deeply marks his philosophy throughout his writings.²⁵ At the beginning of the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury puts forward a picture of the universe as a system that is composed of smaller systems, which again are made up of smaller systems or individual creatures. Every individual creature is a member of a species, which is again part of other, bigger systems. Thus, a human being is part of the human species, which is again part of the system of animals, which is “together with that of vegetables and all other things in this inferior world [...] properly comprehended in one system of a globe or earth”²⁶. Ultimately, everything is part of “a system of all things and a universal nature”²⁷. In the system of the universe, every creature has its attributed role, and “a certain end to which everything in his constitution must naturally refer.”²⁸ This end, which the creatures seek by following their affections, is the promotion of the good of the species and ultimately, given the design of the universe, the promotion of the good of the whole. This optimism with respect to the universe is also reflected in his view of human nature.²⁹

²⁵ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, p. 83 draws attention to the fact that both the Augustinian and the Stoic tradition assume some kind of providential design of the universe. “More generally, the Stoic account of Providence [...] emphasizes the *harmony* of the universe [My emphasis]”. On the other hand, “[i]n the Augustinian scheme, the path to social order includes the notion that self-love makes us enemies of one another”. The Augustinian scheme is based on the notion of the original sin, which is absent in the Stoic account of providence. We will discuss the Augustinian account of providence in more detail in Mandeville’s reconstruction of the process of civilisation, chapter III, section 3.2.

²⁶ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 169.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 167. Cf. also McNaughton, “British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price”, p. 204; Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 89f.

²⁹ Gill is more sceptical in this point and claims that “[t]he Positive Answer of Shaftesbury’s *Inquiry* thus has a distinctively misanthropic flavor.” Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 88. Indeed, Shaftesbury seems more critical than Hutcheson in that he describes the unnatural passions and their pernicious effects in greater detail. Still, Shaftesbury is fundamentally

2.2.2. Natural goodness

Every sensible creature, whether non-rational or rational, has “a private good and interest of his own, which nature has compelled him to seek”³⁰. What is in the creature’s interest depends on its nature, and the affections have the teleological function of guiding the creature towards the promotion of its interest. According to Shaftesbury, the creature’s private good is by nature linked with the good of its species. If the creature follows its affections as designed by nature, it promotes its own good as well as that of its species.³¹ The creature thus contributes to the preservation of the species, and the species contributes to the creature’s good.³² The natural goodness of a creature ultimately depends on its contribution to the good of its system (which is also a contribution to the good of the universe). If the creature has an overall tendency to promote the good of its species, it is naturally good, if it impedes it, it is naturally ill or evil. Shaftesbury claims with respect to natural goodness of creatures:

Nothing therefore being properly either goodness or illness in a creature, except what is from natural temper, *a good creature is such a one as by the natural temper or bent of his affections is carried primarily and immediately, and not secondarily and accidentally, to good and against ill.* [...] When in general all the affections or passions are suited to the public good or good of the species, as above-mentioned, then is the natural temper entirely good. If, on the contrary, any requisite passion be wanting or if there be any one supernumerary or weak or anyway disserviceable or contrary to that main end, then is the natural temper, and consequently the creature himself, in some measure corrupt or ill.³³

The natural goodness or illness of an individual creature is determined by its affections and their effects for the species’ good. Shaftesbury claims

optimistic about human nature in that he depicts it as naturally virtuous. Cf. e.g. our remarks in section 2.3.2.c)

³⁰ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 167.

³¹ Ibid., p. 167.

³² Ibid., p. 167. Cf. also McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price", p. 204.

³³ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 171f.

that “that which is not done through any affection at all makes neither good nor ill in the nature of that creature”.³⁴ A creature’s affections are naturally good if they ultimately promote the well-being of the species, which means that they are “natural” in a teleological sense.³⁵ A creature has a naturally good character if its affections (and dispositions) in general tend to the good of the species. The core of natural goodness is obviously the promotion of the good of the species. In section 2.3., however, we will discuss Shaftesbury’s view that a creature is naturally good if it has both affections to its species’ good (“natural affections”) and affections to its private good (“self-affections”) in their natural, appropriate degree. Natural goodness is not simply a matter of natural affections, but requires also a natural degree of self-affections.

For the level of species, Shaftesbury claims that a species can affect the well-being of other species, and be naturally good or ill for them. A species of predators, for example, is ill for its victims. Yet, Shaftesbury holds also that “there is no such thing as real ill in the universe, nothing ill with respect to the whole”.³⁶ The existence of a real evil would imply that the designing principle, God, is “itself corrupt” or “cannot be the cause of all things”³⁷ – which is, for Shaftesbury, absurd. In our universe, the relations between different species are ultimately well ordered with the end of promoting the good of the universe. This is true even if a particular

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 169f.

³⁵ Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 183: “What makes an affection a good one? Shaftesbury’s answer depends on his theory of nature. A good affection is a *natural* one. Indeed, ‘natural’ frequently functions in Shaftesbury’s writings as a synonym for ‘good’. Standing behind this identification is a teleological picture of the natural order as an integrated system in which subsystems function together to realize a well-functioning whole.” Note that the expression “natural” in Darwall’s sentence “a good affection is a *natural* one” needs to be read as referring to the *natural degree* of self-affections and natural affections, not to *natural affections* as a kind of affections – cf. our discussion in section 2.3.2.c). Darwall points out that Shaftesbury’s teleology is ultimately universal, not speciesist. In other words, the different subsystems are ordered in a way that they ultimately promote the good of the universe. Schrader, *Ethik und Anthropologie in der englischen Aufklärung. Der Wandel der moral-sense-theorie von Shaftesbury bis Hume*, p. 9, seems to prefer the speciesist interpretation: “Die Natur des Individuums [hat] ihr Telos in der Erhaltung der Gattung.” Yet, since the different species are again part of a well-ordered system and of an ultimately well-ordered universe, the teleology is ultimately universal.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 165.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 165.

species is a natural evil for another. Ultimately, however, there is “an animal order or economy according to which the animal affairs are regulated and disposed.”³⁸

2.2.3. Moral goodness

Shaftesbury seems not always to coherently distinguish between natural goodness and moral goodness or virtue, since he sometimes refers to animals as “vicious” or “virtuous”. Yet, this is merely a terminological incoherence. On the systematic level, he neatly distinguishes between natural goodness on the one hand, which is a feature of both non-human and human creatures, and virtue or moral goodness on the other hand, which is a feature of rational creatures only: “And in this case alone it is we call any creature worthy or virtuous, when it can have the notion of a public interest and can attain the speculation or science of what is morally good or ill, admirable or blameable, right or wrong.”³⁹

The behaviour of non-rational creatures, “who are only capable of being moved by sensible objects”⁴⁰, is guided by “perceptions, sensations, and presensations”⁴¹, which are the basis for the animal’s affections. Non-rational creatures are moved by mere impulses or by affections that involve representations, which they are not able to critically evaluate or to rationally control. Rational creatures, which are “capable of framing rational objects of moral good”⁴², can use their representations in a reflected way. They have the liberty to assent to the impressions they get from their senses and that are the cognitive basis for their

³⁸ Ibid., p. 169.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 173.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 175.

⁴¹ Shaftesbury, “The Moralists” , p. 282. Cf. also Laurent Jaffro, “La question du sens moral et le lexique stoïcien. Sur la définition du ‘sense’ comme ‘affection’ dans l’*Enquête sur la vertu*” in *Shaftesbury. Philosophie et Politesse. Actes du Colloque (Université de Nantes, 1996)* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2000), pp. 63f.

⁴² Shaftesbury, “Inquiry” , p. 175. Mandeville ridicules the distinction between rational and non-rational creatures in the *Enquiry*. Mandeville, “Enquiry” , p. 43. Cf. chapter III, section 2.

affections.⁴³ Rational creatures are capable “of forming general notions of things”.⁴⁴ Thus, their first-order affections become the object of second-order affections:

In a creature capable of forming general notions of things, not only the outward beings which offer themselves to the sense are the objects of the affection, but the very actions themselves and the affections of pity, kindness, gratitude and their contraries, being brought into the mind by reflection, become objects. So that, by means of this reflected sense, there arises another kind of affection towards those very affections themselves, which have been already felt and have now become the subject of a new liking or dislike.⁴⁵

By means of these second-order affections, which are best understood as rational dispositions towards the first-order affections,⁴⁶ rational agents become conscious of their first-order affections and take an evaluative stance towards them. Second-order affections are generated naturally and necessarily: “the heart cannot possibly remain neutral [and] in all disinterested cases, must approve in some measure of what is natural and honest and disapprove of what is dishonest and corrupt.”⁴⁷ The origin of these second-order affections is “a sense of right or wrong, a sentiment or judgment of what is done through just, equal and good affection or the contrary.”⁴⁸ Human beings have a moral sense that approves or disapproves of their first-order affections, and in virtue of this they can be said to be morally good or evil, vicious or virtuous. Commentators have emphasised that Shaftesbury does not have a *sentimentalist* conception of the moral sense as a passive recipient of moral sentiments, but a *rationalist* conception that highlights the importance of active reflection on the notion of the public good.⁴⁹ To sum up, the conditions for a

⁴³ Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 192 speaks of the power of rational agents of “self-critically assessing their opinions and affections”.

⁴⁴ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 172.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁴⁶ Jaffro, “La question du sens moral et le lexique stoïcien”, p. 68.

⁴⁷ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 173.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁴⁹ Cf. e.g. Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 187; Jaffro, “La question du sens moral et le lexique stoïcien”, pp. 65f.; Jaffro, *Ethique de la communication et art d’écrire. Shaftesbury et les Lumières anglaises*, pp. 176f.

rational creature to be morally good or virtuous are that it is a) naturally good, i.e. that it has its first-order affections directed towards the promotion of the good of its species, and that it has b) the appropriate second-order affections, which stem from the moral sense. We will take another look at this point in section 2.3.2.c)⁵⁰

2.3. Shaftesbury's theory of the affections in the *Inquiry*

Shaftesbury's view of self-love and its moral value can only be understood from the point of view of his theory of the affections. In a Stoic vein, he suggests a typology distinguishing between three different kinds of affections, namely *natural affections*, *self-affections* and *unnatural affections*, which occur in different degrees of strength. The goodness or illness of natural affections and self-affections depends on their degree. Particularly interesting for the present investigation is the category of the *self-affections*. We will also suggest that there are traces of a concept of self-love that differs from the self-affections.

We must note that in the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury has a strong tendency to use the term "affections" (and sometimes the term "passions", too) in a generic sense to refer to all the emotions or *motus animi*⁵¹. He does not put forward a strict distinction between calm affections and violent passions, yet he sometimes uses the term "passions" in the more narrow sense of emotions that are too strong or violent, as opposed to "affections" in the more narrow sense of emotions that are in their natural

⁵⁰ In the *Moralists* much more than in the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury highlights that moral goodness is a form of beauty in that it expresses an internal harmony of the creature's affections and, ultimately, the harmony of design. Cf. also Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 179; Glauser, "Aesthetic Experience in Shaftesbury", p. 32; Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 103.

⁵¹ This is Shaftesbury's generic term for the emotions in the *Pathologia* (cf. section 3.3.), which covers both *perturbationes* (violent emotions or "passions" in the specific sense) and *constantiae* (calm emotions or "affections" in the specific sense). Sometimes, he even speaks of *affectus* in the generic sense.

degree.⁵² Other terms, such as “appetites” or “desires”, are often used indiscriminately. On this point, the *Inquiry* is very different from the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*, where Shaftesbury presents a systematic distinction between violent passions and calm affections on the basis of Stoic moral psychology, but pays little attention to the distinction between private and public emotions, which is essential in the *Inquiry*.

In the first book of the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury stresses the fundamental role of the affections for his concept of natural and moral goodness and outlines the programme for his investigation: “Since it is therefore by affection merely that a creature is esteemed good or ill, natural or unnatural, our business will be to examine which are the good and natural and which the ill and unnatural affections.”⁵³ The state of its affections (both in terms of the combination of kinds of affections and in terms of their respective degrees) determines the goodness of a creature. In the following, we will first examine the distinction in kind between natural affections, self-affections, and unnatural affections (2.3.1.). Then, we will investigate the question of the affection’s degree, which has implications for the evaluation of the affections in terms of natural and moral goodness (2.3.2.).

2.3.1. The distinction between natural affections, self-affections and unnatural affections

Shaftesbury distinguishes the various affections in the following way:

The affections or passions which must influence and govern the animal are either:

1. the *natural affections*, which lead to the good of the public; or
2. the *self affections*, which lead only to the good of the private; or

⁵² Jaffro, “La question du sens moral et le lexique stoïcien” provides a thorough analysis of the broad range of different meanings of the term “affections” in the *Inquiry*. It applies to calm affections and violent passions of both non-rational and rational creatures.

⁵³ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, pp. 169f.

3. such as are neither of these nor tending either to any good of the public or private, but contrariwise, and which may therefore be justly styled *unnatural affections*.⁵⁴

These three kinds of first-order affections influence the behaviour of both rational and non-rational creatures. Three points shall be noted here with respect to this distinction. Firstly, in the quoted passage, Shaftesbury suggests a distinction in terms of the normal causal tendency or fittedness of the affection.⁵⁵ Affections are said to “lead”, “tend”, or “conduce” to some kind of good.⁵⁶ This point will be discussed in greater detail in section 2.3.1.d). Secondly, let us clarify that what Shaftesbury terms *unnatural* affections are not self-affections or natural affections that have an *unnaturally* strong or weak *degree*. We will look at this point in section 2.3.1.c). Thirdly, the distinction between private and public applies to both non-rational instincts as well as to those affections that are guided by “general notions of things”⁵⁷. Thus, non-rational and rational creatures can be moved by non-rational instincts for self-preservation or for the preservation of their species. Rational creatures, however, also act on affections that depend on a general notion of private or public interest.

a) *Natural affections*

According to Shaftesbury, both rational and non-rational creatures have strong principles to associate with other members of their species and to promote their species’ good.⁵⁸ These are the *natural affections*, which are

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 196.

⁵⁵ Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 184.

⁵⁶ Commentators have noted that a distinction based on the normal causal tendencies of affections, rather than on their objects, may blur the distinction between natural affections and self-affections. Cf. McNaughton, “British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price”, pp. 206f. Note that there are other passages, in which Shaftesbury seems to conceive of the distinction in terms of the objects of the affections. C.f. e.g. Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 169, where he speaks of the “immediate object of some passion or affection”. Cf. our discussion of this point in section 2.3.1.d).

⁵⁷ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 172.

⁵⁸ Shaftesbury claims in the *Sensus Communis*: “For my own part, methinks, this herding principle and associating inclination is seen so natural and strong in most men, that one might readily affirm it was

also termed “social” or “public affections”. Both non-rational and rational creatures act instinctively for the sake of their species. In the *Miscellanies* IV, 2, Shaftesbury writes that “as the design or end of nature in each animal system is exhibited chiefly in the support and propagation of the particular species, it happens, of consequence, that those affections of earliest alliance and mutual kindness between the parent and the offspring are known more particularly by the name of *natural affection*”⁵⁹, which are the Stoic *storgê*. Rational creatures, however, do not only act instinctively or upon the apprehension of sensible objects, but they can also form a notion of the public interest or the public good and act with the intention of promoting the public good.⁶⁰ In this case, the natural affections are governed by reason.

The fact that Shaftesbury calls affections towards the public good “natural” highlights the great importance he attributes to them in opposition to authors, such as Hobbes, or moralists of the Augustinian stripe, who claim that there are no natural inclinations to associate or to promote the public good. Natural affections are “natural” in a negative sense in that they do not depend on education, habits, or punishments and rewards. They are “natural” in a positive sense in that they are said to exert their motivational power because they are part of the design or teleological constitution of every creature in the harmonious universe. Examples of natural affections are: “pity, kindness, gratitude”, “pity, love, kindness or social affection”, “gratitude, kindness, pity”, and “affection of love, gratitude, bounty, generosity, pity, succour or whatever else is of a social or friendly sort”.⁶¹

even from the violence of this passion that so much disorder arose in the general society of mankind.” Shaftesbury, “Sensus Communis” , p. 52. – This is in clear opposition to Hobbes, according to whom there is no natural principle to associate. Rather, “men have no pleasure, but on the contrary a great deal of grief, in keeping company where there is no power able to over-awe them all.” Hobbes, *Leviathan* (I, xiii), p. 75. Mandeville ridicules Shaftesbury on this point. Cf. chapter III, section 3.2.

⁵⁹ Shaftesbury, “Miscellaneous Reflections” , p. 432.

⁶⁰ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry” , p. 173.

⁶¹ For these passages, cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 178, 182, 201.

In asserting the reality of natural affections, Shaftesbury puts forward a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. He is not willing to analyse in Hobbes' manner the natural affections in terms of self-interest, or to "explain all the social passions and natural affections as to denominate them of the selfish kind."⁶² It is false to assume that "love of kindred, children and posterity is purely love of self and of one's own immediate blood", and to ultimately explain all natural affections in terms of "modifications of this universal self-love!"⁶³ This would mean to join those who "would new-frame the human heart and have a mighty fancy to reduce all its motions, balances and weights to that one principle and foundation of a cool and deliberate selfishness."⁶⁴ On the contrary, he insists that the natural affections are a powerful motivational force in human nature: "Thus it may appear how much natural affection is predominant, how it is inwardly joined to us and implanted in our natures, how interwoven with our other passions and how essential to that regular motion and course of our affections on which our happiness and self-enjoyment so immediately depend."⁶⁵ However, the fact that self-affections and natural affections are distinguished does not imply that they oppose each other. Rather, given the design of the universe, the promotion of the private and the public good coincide.

In the context of his assertion that society is not "a kind of invention and creature of art", but naturally based on a "herding principle and associating inclination"⁶⁶ in the *Sensus Communis*, he discusses the fact that natural affections can have different scopes. "Universal good, or the interest of the world in general, is a kind of remote philosophical object."⁶⁷ The natural affections to mankind are sometimes confined to smaller communities, where men "can better taste society and enjoy the

⁶² Shaftesbury, "Sensus Communis", p. 55.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 55.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 54.

⁶⁵ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 216.

⁶⁶ Shaftesbury, "Sensus Communis", p. 52.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 52.

common good and interest of a more contracted public.”⁶⁸ In vast societies, this “cantonizing” is natural, but it can lead to a narrow “spirit of faction, [which] seems to be no other than the abuse or irregularity of that social love and common affection which is natural to mankind.”⁶⁹ Thus, “one might readily affirm it was even from the violence of this passion that so much disorder arose in the general society of mankind.”⁷⁰ In section 2.3.2., we shall take a closer look at Shaftesbury’s view of the natural and moral goodness of affections.

b) Self-affections

The second kind of affections are what Shaftesbury terms “self-affections”, “private affections” or “affections towards private good”⁷¹. In the passage quoted above, self-affections are characterised as *leading* to the good of the agent, i.e. as having a causal tendency to promote the good of the agent. Again, both non-rational and rational creatures are instinctively moved by self-affections. However, rational creatures can form a notion of what is in their private interest and act in order to reflectively promote their own well-being. In this case, it makes sense to speak of the private good being the *object* of the affection. Examples of self-affections, or of

[...] those home-affections which relate to the private interest or separate economy of the creature [...are...] love of life, resentment of injury, pleasure or appetite towards nourishment and the means of generation, interest or desire of those conveniences by which we are well provided for and maintained, emulation or love of praise and honour, indolence or love of ease and rest.⁷²

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 52.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 53. Shaftesbury highlights that these “separate societies” can be “formed in opposition to the general one of mankind and to the real interest of the State.” Ibid., p. 53. Jaffro, *Ethique de la communication et art d'écrire. Shaftesbury et les Lumières anglaises*, p. 63 draws attention to the influence of James Harrington’s *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656) on these passages.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

⁷¹ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 197.

⁷² Ibid., p. 216; p. 185.

These various self-affections come in different degrees of strength. Self-affections in Shaftesbury include very different states of mind and dispositions that range from desires for self-preservation to love of praise. All aim at some kind of benefit for the agent. Thus, they are best understood in terms of egoistic self-love.

In claiming that there are not only self-affections, but also natural affections, which tend to the public good of the species and motivate actions, Shaftesbury is in plain opposition to Hobbes, who asserts in Chapter XIV of the *Leviathan* that “[...] of the voluntary acts of every man the object is some *good to himself*”⁷³. Shaftesbury’s non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is based on the Stoic idea that both self-concern and other-concern are part of the natural constitution of human beings.⁷⁴ In this context, Force emphasises that Shaftesbury takes part in what he calls a neo-Stoic refutation of the interest doctrine, i.e. of the claim that human agents only act on self-interest.⁷⁵

We ought to note, however, that in Shaftesbury’s Stoic approach, the self-affections are not necessarily negatively evaluated, which is a substantial difference to the Augustinian view of self-love. The value of the self-affections, as will be shown below, depends on their degree, and they are not a sign of depravity. Shaftesbury argues that the self-affections, if they are in their *natural* degree, have positive effects for the agent and the species – a feature Hutcheson also emphasises. Thus, the promotion of the private and the public good are not opposed. Rather, they are connected due to the harmonious design of the universe. Having self-affections in their natural degree is necessary for the goodness of a creature – not only in view of self-preservation. Yet, Shaftesbury also highlights that the self-affections, when they are too strong, become problematic from a moral and rational point of view: “Thus we have

⁷³ Hobbes, *Leviathan* (I, xiv), p. 82.

⁷⁴ Cf. our remarks in, chapter I, section 2.4.

⁷⁵ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 80f.

considered the self-passions and what the consequence is of their rising beyond a moderate degree. These affections, as self-interesting as they are, can often, we see, become contrary to our real interest.”⁷⁶ This point will be discussed in greater detail in section 2.3.2. (in view of the moral evaluation of self-affections) and section 2.4. (in view of the relation between virtue and interest).

c) Unnatural affections

The third kind of affections are what Shaftesbury calls “unnatural affections”. They lead neither to the private nor to the public good.

Examples of unnatural affections are

[...] unnatural and inhuman delight in beholding torments and in viewing distress, calamity, blood, massacre and destruction with a peculiar joy and pleasure.⁷⁷

He further names malice, malignity, ill will, envy, hatred of mankind and society, unnatural lusts in foreign kinds or species.⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that according to Shaftesbury these affections constitute a third kind of affections. They are not analysed as a subclass of self-affections or as self-affections in an excessive degree. Shaftesbury distinguishes excessive self-affections or “extended self-passions”⁷⁹, which presuppose some erroneous notion of private interest, from unnatural affections, which involve no notion of good at all.

To have unnatural affections is “wholly and absolutely unnatural as it is horrid and miserable.”⁸⁰ He argues that it is not possible to derive *real* pleasure or original joy from the gratification of unnatural affections, since they are, in reality, “original misery and torment, producing no other pleasure or satisfaction than as the unnatural desire is for the instant

⁷⁶ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 225.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 226f.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 226f.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 226.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 226.

satisfied by something which appeases it.”⁸¹ Shaftesbury is straightforward about the value of unnatural affections. They are always naturally ill (or morally vicious in the case of rational creatures), independently of their degree.⁸² He claims that the unnatural affection “has been the reigning passion of many tyrants and barbarous nations, and belongs in some degree to such tempers as have thrown off that courteousness of behaviour which retains in us a just reverence of mankind and prevents the growth of harshness and brutality.”⁸³

Shaftesbury’s unnatural affections are comparable to what Hutcheson discusses as *disinterested hatred* (i.e. hatred of displicence or contempt, and hatred of malice).⁸⁴ Hutcheson calls these emotions “disinterested” because they do not aim at any private advantage for the agent herself, but only at the misery of the other person. Thus, Hutcheson agrees with Shaftesbury that these cases are not occurrences of excessive self-affections (or: “passionate self-love” in Hutcheson’s terminology), nor are they caused by an erroneous representation of the private good.⁸⁵ It is important to highlight this point in view of the moral evaluation of the self-affections.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 227.

⁸² Ibid., p. 196.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 226. Baum, *Selbstgefühl und reflektierte Neigung. Ästhetik und Ethik bei Shaftesbury*, p. 247, highlights the political dimension of this claim. The unnatural affections are a product of a problematic political system, but not of the state of nature: “Wenn Shaftesbury dagegen die unnatürlichen Begierden als inhuman verurteilt, so verortet er sie nicht im Bereich der pervertierten Natur, sondern mitten in der Zivilisation und Kultur. Denn sie haben ihre Wurzeln nicht im Naturzustand, sondern sind Symptome einer ins Dämonische oder Viehische pervertierten Gemütsart, wie sie sich nur in der Tyrannei und in der Barbarei finden lassen. Diese Verortung der unnatürlichen Neigungen ist eminent politisch.”

⁸⁴ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 102ff.

⁸⁵ However, we have to note a difference. Whereas Hutcheson claims that such passions are extremely rare in human nature, Shaftesbury does not. In this point, Shaftesbury’s overall optimistic anthropology has indeed a “distinctively misanthropic flavor”, as claimed by Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 88. This aspect is absent in Hutcheson.

d) Some remarks on the distinction between natural affections and self-affections

We have pointed out above that there are expressions in Shaftesbury that encourage an understanding of the distinction between natural affections and self-affections in terms of their causal tendency – such as “leading to” or “tending to”⁸⁶. Yet, other expressions such as “affections *towards* any subject considered as private good [my emphasis]”⁸⁷ are open to an interpretation that distinguishes between different kinds of affections in terms of their objects. Other expressions even seem to require a distinction between affections in terms of their objects, and not in terms of their causal tendency:

So that, in a sensible creature, that which is not done through any affection at all makes neither good nor ill in the nature of that creature, who then only is supposed good when the good or ill of the system to which he has relation is the *immediate object of some passion or affection moving him*. [My emphasis.]⁸⁸

David McNaughton points out that a distinction that merely rests on the affections’ causal tendencies may be blurred:

The distinction between the first two kinds of affection [i.e. natural affections and self-affections] is unclear. His remarks seem most naturally to be taken as implying that a desire is a self-affection if, in the ordinary course of nature, indulging that affection tends to promote only the good of the agent and not the good of the species. But Shaftesbury includes among the self-affections self-preservation which, as we have seen, promotes the public good. Sometimes it seems that this distinction rests not on the causal tendency of the affection, but on whether the object of the affection is a good of the agent or of others.⁸⁹

The problem is the following: affections such as love of life or the desire for self-preservation have a causal tendency to promote the good of the individual. Yet, they furthermore have a causal tendency to promote the good of the species, which depends on the well-being of its members. Thus, if affections are to be distinguished according to their causal

⁸⁶ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry" , p. 196.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 170.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 169.

⁸⁹ McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price" , p. 206f.

tendencies, the desire for self-preservation should count as not only a self-affection but also a public affection. Next, the well-being of the individual depends also on the well-being of its species. Thus, affections that have a causal tendency to promote the well-being of the species, have also a tendency to promote the well-being of the individual. Therefore, a distinction that rests solely on the causal tendencies of affections would be blurred in that many affections, if not all, would count as private as well as public. Shaftesbury's distinction between self-affections and natural affections would collapse – not because self-affections and natural affections, as a matter of fact, tend to promote both the private and the public good, but because they could not be distinguished in the first place.

Given the importance of the distinction in view of the Motivation Question, we need to answer McNaughton's worry. It seems that the problem can be avoided with the introduction of a distinction between *direct* and *indirect* causal tendency. Self-affections, such as the desire for self-preservation, have a direct causal tendency to promote the well-being of the individual, and (in virtue of the well-ordered structure of the universe) an indirect causal tendency to promote the well-being of the species. On the other hand, public affections that have a direct causal tendency to promote the well-being of the species have (again in virtue of the well-ordered structure of the universe) an indirect tendency to promote the well-being of the individual creature. In those cases where Shaftesbury relies on a distinction in terms of causal tendencies, the distinction between self-affections and public affections thus depends on the distinction between the *direct* causal tendencies of affections. That affections with a direct causal tendency to promote the good of the individual creature have an indirect causal tendency to promote the good of the species and, ultimately, of the universe, is a fact that depends on the harmonious design of the universe. This interpretation agrees well

with what Shaftesbury says, even if he seems not to put it forward himself.

We have also mentioned above that some passages in the *Inquiry* suggest or even require a distinction in terms of the affection's object. In these cases, the problem at issue does not appear. However, it seems appropriate to reserve a distinction between self-affections and natural affections in terms of their specific objects of promoting the private or the public good for the case of rational creatures. Only rational creatures have the capacity of forming "general notions of things" and can act with the intention of promoting the private or the public good as opposed to promoting them instinctively. A rational agent, to be virtuous, must promote the good of its species in view of a general notion of the public interest.⁹⁰ Being virtuous – as contrasted with being naturally good – is not just a matter of the causal tendency of the affections of a rational agent. The virtuous agent wants to promote the good of her species. Non-rational creatures have non-reflective and ungoverned affections that simply *tend* towards the promotion of private or the public good, without this being the specific object. Rational creatures, however, sometimes act on affections that have the promotion of the private or the public good as their object.

2.3.2. *Natural and moral goodness and illness of affections*

Let us now turn to the *evaluation of the affections* in terms of natural goodness and virtue. It has been mentioned above that Shaftesbury is not always coherent on the terminological level – he sometimes refers to naturally good actions as "virtuous", and to naturally ill actions as "vicious". Still, we can point out a systematic basis for the distinction between mere *natural goodness* and *moral virtue*. For Shaftesbury, natural

⁹⁰ Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 92, speaks of a "conscious concern to benefit their species" in this context.

goodness is a condition for a creature to be virtuous, as has been highlighted in section 2.2.3. After having introduced the distinction between natural affections, self-affections and unnatural affections, Shaftesbury writes:

So that according as these affections stand, a creature must be virtuous or vicious, good or ill.

The latter of these affections [i.e. the unnatural affections], it is evident, are wholly vicious. The two former [i.e. the natural affections and the self-affections] may be vicious or virtuous according to their degree.⁹¹

We have already mentioned that in the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury claims that the *natural* goodness or illness of natural affections and self-affections depends on their respective degree of strength.⁹² Given that in the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury conceives of natural goodness as a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for *moral* goodness, the affections' degrees turn out to be relevant for moral virtue in rational creatures. Both natural affections and self-affections can be in their natural degree and are thus naturally good; or they can be too strong or too weak and are thus naturally ill.

a) The unusual part of illness and vice: Self-affections too weak, natural affections too strong

Immediately after the passage just quoted, Shaftesbury discusses what he thinks of as the rather uncommon part of his claim. This is the assertion that natural affections can be too strong and self-affections too weak:

It may seem strange, perhaps, to speak of natural affections as too strong or of self affections as too weak. But to clear this difficulty we must call to mind what has already been explained, that natural affection may, in particular cases, be excessive and in an unnatural degree, as when pity is so overcoming as to destroy its own end and prevent the succour and relief required or as when love to the offspring proves such a fondness as destroys the parent and consequently the offspring itself.

⁹¹ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 196.

⁹² It must be noted, however, that in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*, where Shaftesbury discusses only the *moral* goodness of emotions, their value is thought to be solely determined by their *object*, as we will show in Section 3.3.

[...] Now, as in particular cases, public affection, on the one hand, may be too high, so private affection may, on the other hand, be too weak. For if a creature be self-neglectful and insensible of danger or if he want such a degree of passion in any kind as is useful to preserve, sustain or defend himself, this must certainly be esteemed vicious in regard of the design and end of nature.⁹³

First of all, we ought to emphasise that the expression “unnatural degree” refers explicitly to the *degree* and not to the *kind* of the affection. In both cases, i.e. i) if natural affections are too strong and ii) if self-affections are too weak, Shaftesbury draws on the directly pernicious effects for the creature, and on the fact that this is indirectly pernicious for the species.

i) If natural affections are too strong, their excessive degree is not only likely to make the realisation of their end impossible (as in the case of excessive pity, which prevents by its violence the agent from relieving the sufferer from her distress), but also to lead to the destruction of the creature itself by pushing it into dangerous situations.⁹⁴ ii) If self-affections are too weak, then self-neglect is likely to engender self-destruction. Since the well-being of the species depends on the well-being of its creatures, what harms the creature also indirectly harms the species. And since for Shaftesbury the goodness or illness of an affection and of the creature’s temper ultimately depends on its overall tendency to promote the public good,⁹⁵ the affections are in the wrong degree in both cases.

Shaftesbury is aware that this claim is unusual. Yet, he insists on the fact that “to have any natural affection too high or any self-affection too low, though it be often approved as virtue, is yet, strictly speaking, a vice and imperfection”.⁹⁶ Note that this does not only hold for the moral goodness of rational creatures, as the language in the quoted passage seems to suggest, but also for the natural goodness of non-rational

⁹³ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", pp. 196f.

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 172, 196.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 172: “When in general all the affections or passions are suited to the public good or good of the species, as above-mentioned, then is the natural temper entirely good.”

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 200.

creatures. To have natural affections which are too strong is to be naturally ill.

Most important, Shaftesbury also maintains that “the affections towards private good become necessary and essential to goodness.”⁹⁷ When the self-affections are too low, the creature has a tendency to destroy itself and thus to harm the species, which is unnatural and, in the case of rational creatures, vicious. Compared to the Augustinian view of self-love as a sign of moral corruption, this Stoic perspective on self-love equals a moral rehabilitation of self-love. Hutcheson and Butler join Shaftesbury in that position. Campbell also argues for a positive view of self-love, however from a very different perspective. Smith is aware of Shaftesbury’s rather positive view of the self-affections and lists him in Part VII of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* among those who claim that “virtue consists in propriety; or in the suitableness of the affections from which we act”, specifying that Shaftesbury “places [virtue] in maintaining a proper balance of the affections, and in allowing no passion to go beyond its proper sphere”.⁹⁸ Below, we will discuss Smith’s suggested opposition of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, the latter of whom he reads as only emphasising the importance of benevolence.⁹⁹

b) The plainer part of illness and vice – natural affections too weak, self-affections too strong

The cases of i) natural affections that are too weak and of ii) self-affections that are too strong constitute “the plainer and more essential part of vice”.¹⁰⁰

i) According to the *Inquiry*, having natural affections in a suitable degree is a condition for natural goodness. If a creature has its natural

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 197 and 170.

⁹⁸ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 346: VII, II, I, 48.

⁹⁹ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.1.2.

¹⁰⁰ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 200.

affections in their appropriate or natural degree, it promotes the good of its species and thus “follows its nature”.¹⁰¹ Natural goodness in this sense is also a necessary condition for moral goodness in the case of rational creatures. If the natural affections are too weak, then the creature’s tendency to promote the good of its species is too weak, and the creature’s natural affections are likely to be overridden by self-affections. Thus the creature becomes ill or vicious. Natural affections that are too weak are more common than natural affections that are too strong, but this does not justify the erroneous conclusion that they *never* motivate actions. Shaftesbury, as we have mentioned above, asserts the reality of natural affections and thus gives a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

ii) The second case of the “plainer part” of natural illness and vice consists in the state in which the self-affections are too strong. To have them in their natural degree is a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for goodness and virtue.¹⁰² Shaftesbury writes that

[...] these affections, if they are moderate and within certain bounds, are neither injurious to social life nor a hindrance to virtue, but, being in an extreme degree, they become cowardice, revengefulness, luxury, avarice, vanity and ambition, sloth, and, as such, are owned vicious and ill with respect to human society.¹⁰³

If the self-affections become too strong and are in conflict with the natural affections, then they keep the creature from promoting the good of the species and become ill or vicious. However, Shaftesbury makes clear that there is no *necessary* opposition between self-affections and natural affections in the sense that they mutually exclude each others’ gratification. Rather, “to be well affected towards the public interest and

¹⁰¹ For this expression, cf. Shaftesbury, “Sensus Communis” , p. 56; Shaftesbury, “The Moralists” , p. 334. It will be discussed more extensively in the context of Butler’s writings. Cf. also Alan Millar, “Following Nature” *The Philosophical Quarterly* 38, no. 151 (1988)

¹⁰² Shaftesbury, “Inquiry” , p. 197: “And thus the affections towards private good become necessary and essential to goodness.”

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

one's own is not only consistent but inseparable".¹⁰⁴ If both natural affections and self-affections are in their natural degree, there is a harmony between public and private interest. Shaftesbury also claims that if the self-affections are in a reasonable degree, then "the public as well as the private system is advanced by the industry which this affection excites."¹⁰⁵ A natural degree of the self-affections are both in the agent's and the species' interest. Yet, if the self-affections become too strong or are passionate to a degree that cannot be rationally controlled, they turn into *selfishness*, which is vicious.¹⁰⁶

c) Summary and comparison

Let us resume the previous discussion of the affections. A non-rational creature is naturally good, a) if it is motivated by a combination of both natural affections and self-affections in their natural degree, and b) if it has no unnatural affections. This conjunction is also a necessary condition for a rational creature to be virtuous – which requires also the right second-order affections. A creature with a good character, "*is such a one as by the natural temper or bent of his affections is carried primarily and immediately, and not secondarily and accidentally, to good and against ill.*"¹⁰⁷ When the creature has its affections in their natural degree, it promotes the good of its species *and* its own good, which is again best for the species. Admittedly, Shaftesbury more frequently emphasises the requirement of having the natural affections in the right degree. Yet his claim that "the affections towards private good become necessary and

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 193.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 223. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, pp. 64f., highlights this point for what he calls the calm passion of money-making: "Obviously, then, money-making does not fit into the intermediate category of 'self-passion': when pursued in moderation, it is promoted all the way to a 'natural affection', which achieves both private and public good, while it is demoted to an 'unnatural affection', which achieves neither, when it is indulged to excess." There seems no evidence in Shaftesbury for Hirschman's claim that money-making could be counted among the natural affections, but the self-affections are certainly positively evaluated if they are in a natural degree.

¹⁰⁶ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", pp. 170, 196, 200, 217f., 222f., 225.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 171.

essential to goodness”¹⁰⁸ shows, as we have highlighted before, that he maintains that both self-affections and natural affections are required for goodness and moral virtue, since only their combination guarantees the well-being of the species.¹⁰⁹

Given the dependence of virtue on the degree and combination of affections, “vice and virtue are found variously mixed and alternately prevalent in the several characters of mankind.”¹¹⁰ According to Shaftesbury, there are no wholly vicious creatures: “Nothing is more just than a known saying that ‘it is as hard to find a man wholly ill as wholly good’ because, wherever there is any good affection left, there is certainly some goodness or virtue still in being.”¹¹¹ Since there are no morally insensible rational creatures that entirely lack any notion of a public interest¹¹², there are no rational creatures without any trace of virtue left that could be cultivated. Human nature, in spite of being capable of both “the highest improvements of temper” and the “greatest corruptions and degeneracies”¹¹³, is never *entirely* corrupt and deprived of goodness and virtue.

The following table sums up the foregoing explications:

<i>degree of the affection:</i>	<i>too weak</i>	<i>natural</i>	<i>too strong</i>
<i>kind of affection:</i>			
<i>natural affections</i>	naturally ill (in non-rational creatures) or vicious (in rational creatures), since leading to a neglect of the good of the public, thus damaging the public good (i.e. the	naturally or morally good, since promoting the good of the public	ill or vicious, since increasing the probability of self-destruction and leading to an incapacity of performing actions that promote the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 197.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. our remarks on Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 183 in section 2.2.2.

¹¹⁰ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 176.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 177. Note that this point limits Gill's view that Shaftesbury's theory of human nature has a "distinctively misanthropic flavor". Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 88. Even if there are many human beings with vicious character traits, none is entirely vicious.

¹¹² Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 177.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 199.

	good of the species) (plain part of vice)		public good (unusual part of vice)
<i>self-affections</i>	ill or vicious, since leading to a neglect of the private good, increasing the risk of self-destruction, and thus damaging the public good (unusual part of vice)	naturally or morally good, since preserving the individual and thus contributing to the good of the public	ill or vicious, since in conflict with the natural affections and thus tending to make the promotion of the good of the public impossible (plain part of vice)
<i>unnatural affections</i>	are always ill or vicious		

2.3.3. Pity as an example of a natural affection

Unlike our subsequent authors, Shaftesbury is not particularly interested in the emotion of pity. He rather concentrates on the generic class of the natural affections. The *Inquiry* contains, however, some interesting remarks on pity, which reflect the basic traits of Shaftesbury's moral philosophy. Without providing a precise analysis of pity as an emotion, he lists it with other particular emotions as a paradigmatic example of a natural affection.¹¹⁴ Pity ultimately aims at promoting the good of others and the species, and not at promoting the private good. Selfish analyses of pity and other natural affections are false, as he states in the *Sensus Communis* against those who "explain all the social passions and natural affections as to denominate them of the selfish kind."¹¹⁵ It is false to claim that "civility, hospitality, humanity towards strangers or people in distress [i.e. pity] is only a more deliberate selfishness."¹¹⁶ Thus, Shaftesbury treats pity as a passion the reality of which proves the truth of the non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

As an affection in its natural degree, pity is naturally good and – in rational creatures – morally virtuous.¹¹⁷ The lack of pity is vicious because

¹¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 172, 178, 182, 201.

¹¹⁵ Shaftesbury, "Sensus Communis", p. 55.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 55. This is a point directed against Augustinian moralists and Hobbes.

¹¹⁷ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 172.

it is a lack of natural affections. If pity becomes excessive, however, it becomes morally problematic and thus part of the “unusual” part of vice.¹¹⁸ Shaftesbury writes about the natural affections in general and about the emotion of pity in particular:

But it may be necessary perhaps to remark that, even as to kindness and love of the most natural sort, such as that of any creature for its offspring, if it be immoderate and beyond a certain degree, it is undoubtedly vicious. For thus over-great tenderness destroys the effect of love, and excessive pity renders us incapable of giving succour. Hence the excess of motherly love is owned to be a vicious fondness; over-great pity, effeminacy and weakness; over-great concern for self-preservation, meanness and cowardice; too little, rashness; and none at all or that which is contrary, namely, a passion leading to self-destruction, a mad and desperate depravity.¹¹⁹

If pity is in an excessive degree, it prevents the agent from relieving the person in distress, or leads to actions with negative consequences for one or both parties. This critical view reappears in both Hutcheson’s and Butler’s accounts of pity.

2.4. The Interest Claim: Virtue is in the agent’s interest

One of Shaftesbury’s substantial claims in the *Inquiry* is that it is in the interest of a rational agent to be virtuous. In the *Introduction* to this study, we have called this the Interest Claim.¹²⁰ After Shaftesbury, the Interest Claim is most prominently attacked by Mandeville, who asserts from his Augustinian perspective that virtue requires *self-denial*. The Interest Claim is then again defended by Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell. Shaftesbury’s *Inquiry* contains a series of different formulations of the Interest Claim. He maintains that “virtue and interest may be found at last

¹¹⁸ Cf. section 2.3.2.a)

¹¹⁹ Shaftesbury, “Inquiry”, p. 172.

¹²⁰ Chapter I, sections 1.2.1. and 4.3.

to agree”¹²¹ and that “it is in his [i.e. the rational creature’s] interest to be wholly good and virtuous”.¹²² In a slightly different vein, he claims that “to be well affected towards the public interest and one’s own is not only consistent but inseparable”, and that “moral rectitude or virtue must accordingly be the advantage and vice the injury and disadvantage of every creature”.¹²³ In a similar tone, he tries to prove that “to have the natural and good affections is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment”.¹²⁴

Shaftesbury gives two different arguments for the Interest Claim, an egoistic and a teleological one.¹²⁵ On the one hand, virtue is said to be in the agent’s interest because of its advantages in terms of happiness or pleasure. According to this egoistic argument, the Interest Claim is true because virtue is pleasurable for the agent. On the other hand, virtue is said to be in the agent’s interest because human nature is adapted to virtue. According to this teleological argument, the fact that virtue provides the agent pleasure is not the deciding factor for the truth of the Interest Claim. What makes the claim true is the agent’s nature.

2.4.1. *The egoistic argument for the Interest Claim*

It has been mentioned above that Shaftesbury makes having the right combination of first-order affections a necessary condition for virtue. This

¹²¹ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry" , p. 167.

¹²² Ibid., p. 200.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 193.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 216.

¹²⁵ The term “teleological” is also used in Gill’s discussion of Shaftesbury’s two reasons to be virtuous. Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* , pp. 118ff. Gill argues for a similar distinction with respect to the agent’s reasons to be virtuous. He distinguishes between a) a *teleological account*, according to which an agent has reasons to be virtuous because “it is the proper and natural end of each human to be benevolent”, and what he calls b) the *mental enjoyment account*, according to which an agent has reasons to be benevolent because she “will be happiest if he is benevolent”. The difference, according to Gill, is that “the mental enjoyment account is compatible with extreme skepticism [about our beliefs about the external world], the teleological account is not.” Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* , p. 125. Whatever the importance of scepticism about beliefs about the external world for Shaftesbury, a point Gill depicts as rather pressing for our author, the fundamental point for us is that the mental enjoyment account relies on egoistic reasons for being virtuous, whereas the teleological account does not.

is reflected in his arguments for the Interest Claim. Shaftesbury attempts to prove:

1. that *to have the natural, kindly or generous affections strong and powerful towards the good of the public is to have the chief means and power of self-enjoyment* and that *to want them is certain misery and ill*;
2. that *to have the private or self affections too strong or beyond their degree of subordinacy to the kindly and natural is also miserable*; and
3. that *to have the unnatural affections, namely, such as are neither founded on the interest of the kind or public nor of the private person or creature himself, is to be miserable in the highest degree.*¹²⁶

We have noted above that according to Shaftesbury, a rational creature is virtuous if it has its natural affections and its self-affections in their natural degree, if it has no unnatural affections and if it has the right second-order affections towards its first-order affections. In the sections following the quoted passage, Shaftesbury argues at length that virtue is in the agent's interest because it provides the agent happiness, and because vice makes the agent miserable. In other words, he invokes self-interested reasons to be virtuous and takes the point of view of the rational egoist who claims that, when it comes to ethical matters, being virtuous is better than being vicious because the former promotes the agent's happiness more than the latter.¹²⁷ Ultimately, being virtuous brings the agent advantages, and this is the reason why it is in the private interest of a rational creature to be morally virtuous:

Such are the advantages or disadvantages which accrue to virtue from reflection upon private good or interest. For though the habit of selfishness and the multiplicity of interested views are of little improvement to real merit or virtue, yet there is a necessity for the preservation of virtue, that it should be thought to have no quarrel with true interest and self-enjoyment.¹²⁸

According to Shaftesbury, the egoistic argument for the Interest Claim is especially interesting from the point of view of the promotion and preservation of virtue: For psychological reasons, virtuous dispositions are

¹²⁶ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 200.

¹²⁷ On this point, cf. also Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 194; McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price", p. 206.

¹²⁸ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 188.

more likely to be supported if the agent correctly believes that virtue provides her advantages than if she thinks that virtue involves disadvantages.¹²⁹ This point must neither be confused with psychological egoism, i.e. the descriptive claim that all human actions are motivated by self-directed desires, nor with ethical egoism, i.e. the moral claim that actions are morally good if and only if they promote the agent's interests. Against the former, Shaftesbury asserts the reality of the natural affections. Against the latter, Shaftesbury holds that an action is virtuous if it is motivated by affections in their natural degree that are guided by reflection on a notion of the public good. Virtue ultimately aims at the reflected promotion of the good of the species, and the promotion of the individual's good is merely one of its consequences.

Shaftesbury's egoistic argument for the Interest Claim draws heavily on a distinction between mental and bodily pleasures. He contrasts the bodily pleasures, which come from "outward enjoyment", or "pleasure of sense" with the pleasures of the mind.¹³⁰ Both promote the agent's happiness, yet the pleasures of the mind are superior to those of the body: The pleasures of the mind override bodily pains. Furthermore, the mental pains make the enjoyment of bodily pleasures impossible. The pleasures of the mind are a more certain and stable source of happiness:

The pleasures of the mind being allowed, therefore, superior to those of the body, it follows that *whatever can create in any intelligent being a constant flowing series or train of mental enjoyment or pleasures of the mind is more considerable to his happiness than that which can create to him a like constant course or train of sensual enjoyments or pleasures of the body.*¹³¹

Shaftesbury assumes that there is a hierarchy of different kinds of pleasures, as Hutcheson does in the *Essay*. The hierarchy is not justified

¹²⁹ Hutcheson will highlight that trying to be virtuous for such self-interested reasons does not improve the virtue of the agent, yet is an important support for the cultivation virtuous dispositions. Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.

¹³⁰ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 201.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 201.

by the *moral* value of the pleasures, but by the fact that they are more or less conducive to the happiness of the agent. Thus, Shaftesbury ties the mental pleasures to the natural affections by claiming that “the mental enjoyments are either actually the very natural affections themselves in their immediate operation, or they wholly in a manner proceed from them and are no other than their effects.”¹³²

This explains Shaftesbury’s arguments for the three points from the passage quoted at the beginning of this subsection. Given the focus of the present study, let us take a look at the reasons why having the self-affections too strong leads to the creature’s misery. Shaftesbury repeatedly insists on the necessity of a moderate degree of self-affections for self-preservation. He discusses a series of examples of self-affections that are useful and not in conflict with the social life when in a moderate degree (such as the affection of love of life, appetite towards nourishment, or anger). Yet, if they become too strong, they become ill or vicious and lead to the misery of the creature, either because they negatively affect the public good, or because they make the creature lose its public affections.¹³³ As a consequence, they affect the social life of the creature (and indirectly the public good), and thus deprive it of the mental pleasures. From this point of view, having the self-affections too strong, or being too self-interested, is against the agent’s private interest. Shaftesbury describes this miserable state in great detail:

Thus have we considered the self-passions and what the consequences is of their rising beyond a moderate degree. These affections, as self-interesting they are, can often, we see, become contrary to our real interest. They betray us into nasty misfortunes and into the greatest of unhappinesses, that of a profligate and abject character. As they grow imperious and high, they are the occasion that a creature in proportion becomes mean and low. They are original to that which we call selfishness and give rise to that sordid disposition of which we have already spoken. It appears there can be nothing so miserable in itself, or so wretched in its consequence, as to be

¹³² Ibid., p. 201; p. 204.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 225.

thus impotent in temper, thus mastered by passion and, by means of it, brought under the most servile subjection to the world.¹³⁴

The self-affections, when they are too strong, are in conflict with the natural affections, which are the most stable source of happiness. This causes the creature's misery and the loss of the mental enjoyments. Thus, having the self-affections too strong is not only unnatural and vicious, as discussed in section 2.3.2.b), but also conducive to the misery of the creature, and therefore against its interest.

2.4.2. *The teleological argument for the Interest Claim*

However, Shaftesbury does not only give the egoistic argument for the Interest Claim, which emphasises the advantages of virtue and the disadvantages of vice. He furthermore makes a claim about the agent's *nature*, which is designed for the virtuous life. This is a teleological argument for the Interest Claim that is different from the egoistic argument and relies on a normative conception of the agent's nature. According to the teleological argument, what is in the agent's interest depends on her nature and on the ends this nature is designed for. Shaftesbury writes:

We know that there is in reality a right and wrong state of every creature, and that this right one is by nature forwarded and by himself affectionately sought. There being therefore in every creature a certain interest or good, there must be also a certain end to which everything in his constitution must naturally refer. To this end, if anything either in his appetites, passions or affections, be not conducing but the contrary, we must of necessity own ill to him.¹³⁵

And in a passage from the *Miscellanies* that is intended to explain the purposes of the *Inquiry*, he claims:

This is the main problem which our author in more philosophical terms demonstrates in this treatise: that, for a creature whose natural end is society, to operate as is by nature appointed him towards the good of such his society or whole is in reality to pursue his own natural and proper good;

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 225.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 167.

and that to operate contrariwise, or by such affections as sever from that common good or public interest, is in reality to work towards his own natural and proper ill. Now, if man, as has been proved, be justly ranked in the number of those creatures whose economy is according to a joint stock and public weal, if it be understood, withal, that the only state of his affections which answers rightly to this public weal is the regular, orderly or virtuous state, it necessarily follows that *virtue is his natural good, and vice his misery and ill*.¹³⁶

What is in the interest of the creature is determined by its nature, and the natural end of human beings is society and virtue. In their natural and virtuous state, the affections guide human beings towards the realisation of their private interest or good, which is tied to the interest of the whole. If the affections are in an unnatural state, they “become contrary to our real interest.”¹³⁷ Being in an unnatural state has the psychological effects mentioned in the egoistic argument. Yet according to the teleological argument, the claim that being virtuous is in the agent’s interest is said to be true because of the design of her nature, and not because of the consequences in terms of the agent’s happiness and misery.¹³⁸

It is important to note already that Hutcheson and Campbell favour the egoistic argument for the Interest Claim, whereas Butler favours the teleological argument. This seems motivated by their respective concepts of self-love: Hutcheson relies on a hedonistic concept of self-love and asserts that virtue is in the interest of the agent because it provides the agent the pleasures of self-approbation. Butler, who relies on a concept of

¹³⁶ Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections", p. 432.

¹³⁷ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 225.

¹³⁸ Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 119 writes with respect to benevolence in Shaftesbury: “The claim that it is the proper and natural end of each human to be benevolent is not the same as the claim that each human will be happiest if he is benevolent. But according to Shaftesbury’s teleological account, the step between these two claims follows ineluctably from obvious facts. All our observations of other species show that a creature is happiest when it fulfills its proper and natural end. And so, since nature and happiness are connected in the life of every other creature, there is every reason to think that they are connected in the lives of humans as well.” – Gill concentrates on the natural affections only, which seems questionable in view of Shaftesbury’s emphasis on the necessity of the self-affections for virtue. However, Gill’s claim about the relation between living according to nature, virtue and happiness corroborate our own thesis.

self-love as self-respect, favours the teleological argument and asserts that given the design of human nature, self-love and conscience lead the agent the same way.

2.5. “Self-love” and “selfishness” in the *Inquiry* and the *Sensus Communis*

In the previous sections, we have focused on Shaftesbury’s concept of self-love as put forward in his discussion of the self-affections. These tend to promote the private good of the agent. If they are in their natural and moderate degree, they are not in conflict with the natural affections, which tend to promote the public good. The self-affections in their moderate degree are not only *not* in conflict with virtue, but even a necessary condition for virtue. Both a concern for the self and a concern for the species are part of the nature of human beings. To be virtuous is to follow one’s nature reflectively and involves having affections to both the self and the species in the appropriate degree. Self-love in terms of the self-affections is not a sign of the corruption of human nature. To complete the discussion of self-love in the *Inquiry*, it is appropriate to make some remarks on Shaftesbury’s use of the terms “selfishness” and “self-love” in the *Inquiry* and the *Sensus Communis*, and relate it to what has been said on the self-affections.

2.5.1. “Selfishness”

Let us begin with a discussion of Shaftesbury’s notion of selfishness, which occurs more frequently in the *Inquiry* than the notion of self-love. The following passage, which is part of a discussion of the self-affections, gives an impression of Shaftesbury’s view of selfishness:

But if the affection [towards self-good] be then only injurious to the society when it is immoderate and not so when it is moderate, duly tempered and allayed, then is the *immoderate degree* of the affection truly vicious, but not the moderate. And, thus, if there be found in any creature *a more than ordinary self-concernment or regard to private good, which is inconsistent with the interest of the species or public*, this must in every respect be esteemed an ill and vicious affection. And this is what we commonly call *selfishness* and disapprove so much in whatever creature we happen to discover it. [My emphases]¹³⁹

According to this passage, selfishness is a state in which the self-affections are in an *immoderate degree* and thus become unnatural. If an agent is in a state of selfishness, his self-affections are too strong and conflict with the natural affections and the good of the species. They may even cause the loss of the creature's natural affections.¹⁴⁰ The inconsistency of unnaturally strong self-affections with the good of the public makes them ill in non-rational creatures and vicious in rational creatures.

In another passage, part of which we have already quoted, Shaftesbury supports what has just been said and claims furthermore that selfishness in the sense of having a character that is dominated by self-affections in an excessive degree is in conflict with the agent's "real interest":

Thus have we considered the *self-passions* and what the consequence is of their rising beyond a moderate degree. These affections, as self-interesting as they are, can often, we see, become *contrary to our real interest*. [...] They are original to that which we call *selfishness* and give rise to that sordid disposition of which we have already spoken. [My emphases]¹⁴¹

Again, selfishness is associated with excessive self-affections. It is interesting to note that Shaftesbury uses the expression "self-passions" in this passage, and just below the term "passions", which supports the interpretation that passions are affections in an excessive degree. The

¹³⁹ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 170.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 224.

term “passions” will be of great importance in the moral psychology of the *Miscellanies* and the *Pathologia*.

Shaftesbury carefully distinguishes cases of selfishness from the case of parent animals that are inapt for resistance against enemies and flee for the sake of self-preservation while abandoning their offspring. If they stayed, both parents *and* offspring would be killed. Shaftesbury considers this fleeing behaviour “no way unnatural or vicious”¹⁴² and does not count it as a case of selfishness, in spite of the fact that there might be a conflict between self-affections and natural affections, more precisely parental affections.

2.5.2. “Self-love”

Whereas the term “selfishness” is consistently used to refer to self-affections in an excessive degree, Shaftesbury is more ambiguous in his use of the term “self-love”. On the one hand, he uses it in a generic sense to refer to self-affections in general:

We are now to prove that, *by having the self-passions too intense or strong, a creature becomes miserable.*

In order to this, we must, according to method, enumerate those home-affections which relate to the private interest or separate economy of the creature, such as love of life, resentment of injury, pleasure or appetite towards nourishment and the means of generation, interest or desire of those conveniences by which we are well provided for and maintained, emulation or love of praise and honour, indolence or love of ease and rest. These are the affections which relate to the private system and constitute whatever we call interestedness or self-love.

Now these affections, if they are moderate and within certain bounds, are neither injurious to social life nor a hindrance to virtue, but, being in an extreme degree, they become cowardice, revengefulness, luxury, avarice, vanity and ambition, sloth, and, as such, are owned vicious and ill with respect to the private person and are to his own disadvantage as well as that of the public, we may consider as we severally examine them.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 216f. The quoted passage will be discussed in the context of a comparison between the account of self-love in the *Inquiry* and the account of self-love and *amour sui* in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*.

The term “self-love”, in this passage, refers to the self-affections in general, without consideration of their degree. Unlike selfishness, self-love is not associated with vice, unless it is in an immoderate degree. Hutcheson’s terminology is very similar. Selfishness (in the sense of excessive self-affections) and self-love (in the generic sense) can be related as follows to Shaftesbury’s tables of the self-affections:

<i>degree of the affection</i>	<i>too weak</i>	<i>natural</i>	<i>too strong</i>
<i>kind of affection</i>			
<i>self-affections</i> • self-love	ill or vicious, leading to self-destruction	naturally good or virtuous, leading to self-preservation (and indirectly to the preservation of the species)	ill or vicious, • selfishness , • selfish passion , • self-passions

Yet, there are traces of another notion of self-love. In the *Sensus Communis*, Shaftesbury attacks Hobbes’, Rochester’s and La Rochefoucauld’s views of human nature. Firstly, he defends the irreducibility of all the natural affections to the affections of the “selfish kind”.¹⁴⁴ Human behaviour cannot be explained in terms of self-affections only, and we must assume with the Ancients that there is a sense of the common good.¹⁴⁵ In other words: there are other than self-interested motives, a claim that boils down to an assertion of a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

Secondly, and most interestingly, Shaftesbury then attacks the opposition between private and public interest that seems to be suggested by authors such as La Rochefoucauld:

Other authors there have been of a yet inferior kind, a sort of distributors and petty retailers of this whit, who have run changes and divisions without end upon this article of self-love. You have the very same thought spun out

¹⁴⁴ Shaftesbury, “Sensus Communis”, p. 55f.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 48.

a hundred ways and draws into mottoes and devices to set forth this riddle, that ‘act as disinterestedly or generously as you please, *self* still is at the bottom, and nothing else’. Now if these gentlemen who delight so much in the play of words, but are cautious how they grapple closely with definitions, would tell us only what self-interest was and determine happiness and good, there would be an end of this enigmatical wit. For in this we should all agree – that happiness was to be pursued and in fact was always sought after. But, whether found in following nature and giving way to common affection or in suppressing it and turning every passion towards private advantage, a narrow self-end or the preservation of mere life, this would be the matter in debate between us. The question would not be ‘who loved himself or who not?’ but ‘who loved and served himself the rightest and after the truest manner?’¹⁴⁶

Shaftesbury’s argument in this passage can be reconstructed as follows: At the beginning, he insists that self-affections and natural affections have to be clearly distinguished. Otherwise, we slip into tautological egoism, i.e. a claim in which every action is said to be selfish *by definition*. Tautological egoism, however, has no empirical content. Given a proper distinction between self-affections and natural affections, the question can be asked whether we best promote our happiness a) in satisfying both natural affections *and* self-affections (which is in accordance with nature since both are part of human nature) or b) by frustrating the natural affections in favour of the satisfaction of the self-affections (which is unnatural). Clearly, Shaftesbury opts for the first point: Happiness is found in following nature, i.e. in gratifying both natural and self-affections, which is to love oneself in the rightest manner.¹⁴⁷ This expression is quite peculiar. Loving oneself, in this context, is not to be mistaken for the gratification of self-affections. Rather, it concerns the promotion of one’s true happiness. In Shaftesbury’s Stoic view, true happiness is promoted by following one’s nature and thus by being virtuous, which includes the gratification of both natural affections and self-affections. In this sense, self-love is concerned with gaining happiness

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁴⁷ Note, however, that his argument presupposes the truth of the psychological claim about the reality of the natural affections.

by means of realising the agent's true nature, which is to be virtuous. What is only suggested in Shaftesbury is fully developed in Butler's *Sermons*, where we find a concept of self-love as respect of self, as will be argued in chapter V.

3. Admiratio sui ipsius, superbia and pride in the *Pathologia* and in the *Miscellaneous Reflections*

3.1. Preliminary remarks

In section 2 of this chapter, it has been emphasised that in the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury's treatment of the different kinds of affections (the *Inquiry*'s generic term for calm and violent emotions) and their evaluation in terms of natural goodness and moral virtue depends heavily on their degree of strength. Having both natural affections and self-affections in their natural degree is a necessary condition for both natural goodness in non-rational creatures and virtue in rational creatures. Yet, natural affections and self-affections can become too strong or too weak and thus turn out to be ill or vicious.

The present section introduces Shaftesbury's discussion of the emotions¹⁴⁸ of rational creatures as elaborated in the *Pathologia*¹⁴⁹ (a still unpublished Latin manuscript written in 1705/06), and as reflected in the

¹⁴⁸ Shaftesbury uses the expression "motus animi" in his manuscript, which literally means "movements of the soul" and in the context of his typology is best translated with the term "emotions". *Motus animi* is an expression that refers to both *perturbationes*, or violent passions, and *constantiae*, or calm affections. Similarly, we will use "emotions" as a general term to refer to both violent passions and calm affections.

¹⁴⁹ Shaftesbury, "Pathologia" (PRO30/24/26/1). A translation is currently in preparation by Laurent Jaffro (Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand II), Alain Petit (Université Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand II) and the author of the present study.

*Miscellaneous Reflections*¹⁵⁰ (published as an appendix to several other texts in the *Characteristics* in 1711). We will discuss neither the *Pathologia* nor the *Miscellanies* in their entirety, but concentrate on a series of aspects that are particularly relevant for our study: After a brief presentation of Shaftesbury's account of Stoic moral ontology, which is fully developed in the *Pathologia* and in the background in the *Miscellanies*, we will examine his discussion of Stoic moral psychology, which is largely based on Cicero's account of the emotions in the *Tusculan Disputations*.¹⁵¹ The typology of the emotions presented there is also essential for Hutcheson's account of the emotions in the *Essay*. Besides providing a typology of the emotions, the *Pathologia* explores a series of psychological mechanisms between the different calm affections and violent passions. We will concentrate our analysis on a paradigmatic case of a self-directed passion in the *Pathologia*, namely *admiratio sui ipsius* ("self-admiration") or *superbia* ("pride"). This is reflected in the *Miscellanies*, where we will focus on Shaftesbury's discussion of pride and admiration.

It has been mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that many commentators on Shaftesbury's moral philosophy have focused on the *Inquiry*, mainly because this is his most systematic text. One might argue that Shaftesbury conceived both the *Miscellanies* and the *Pathologia* only as additions or appendices to other texts. For the *Miscellanies* as a whole, this is obvious from the title ("*Miscellaneous Reflections on the Preceding Treatises and Other Critical Subjects*"). Shaftesbury affirms this link with the *Inquiry* at the beginning of the fourth *Miscellany*.¹⁵² Also obvious from the title, the *Pathologia* is primarily intended to explain the human affections according to the Socratics ("*Explicatio Affectuum humanorum*,

¹⁵⁰ Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections" Henceforth, we will refer to the *Miscellaneous Reflections on the Preceding Treatises and Other Critical Subjects* as the *Miscellanies* and to the most relevant passage for this analysis, chapter 1 of the fourth *Miscellany*, as *M IV, 1*.

¹⁵¹ We will use the Loeb edition, translated by J.E. King: Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanae* (London, Cambridge Mass.: William Heinemann Ltd, Harvard University Press, 1960)

¹⁵² Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections", p. 419.

secundum Doctrinam Socraticorum”).¹⁵³ However, the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* reveal important aspects of Shaftesbury’s moral philosophy. One of the main goals of the *Pathologia* is to improve our understanding of Horace by means of a thorough reconstruction of the Stoic theory of the emotions.¹⁵⁴ Besides its philological focus, however, the manuscript elucidates Shaftesbury’s account of the affections and passions in the *Miscellanies*, where he relies on the same typology that he presents in much greater detail in the manuscript.

The *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* are not intended to propose a revised account of the moral philosophy in the *Inquiry*, rather to provide some precisions. Yet, they suggest an approach to moral psychology that differs to some extent from the one in the *Inquiry*. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss these writings and to draw attention to some contrasts with the *Inquiry* that also concern the treatment of self-love. It is useful to highlight in advance some of the most fundamental differences between the *Inquiry* on the one hand and the *Miscellanies* and the *Pathologia* on the other hand. The *Inquiry* gives an account of the emotions not only in human beings but also in non-rational creatures. This is the basis for a discussion of virtue and natural goodness with their respective relations to the emotions. On the other hand, the *Pathologia* and the pertinent passages in the *Miscellanies* focus exclusively on the emotions of rational beings, analysing them in view of moral virtue but not of natural goodness. Next, in contrast to the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury elaborates a distinction in *kind* between calm affections and violent passions in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*. In the *Inquiry*, he suggests a distinction in degree between a) affections (in the generic sense) that

¹⁵³ Shaftesbury, "Pathologia" , p. 1. Laurent Jaffro, "Which Platonism for Which Modernity? A Note on Shaftesbury's Socratic Sea-Cards" in *Platonism at the Origins of Modernity: Studies on Platonism and Early Modern Philosophy* (Springer, 2008), p. 255 specifies that for Shaftesbury, "being a disciple of Socrates meant that he was not a Platonist but a Stoic, insofar as the Stoics drew the ultimate consequences of the Socratic idea of virtue as knowledge."

¹⁵⁴ It is noteworthy that Shaftesbury wrote the *Pathologia* in the context of his discussions and correspondence with Pierre Coste on Horace.

are in a moderate degree and b) affections (in the generic sense) that are in a passionate or excessive degree. In the *Miscellanies* and the *Pathologia*, the *Inquiry's* degree approach to the evaluation of affections is substituted by a distinction in kind between calm affections and violent passions. This again is based on a distinction in moral ontology between the objects of the *motus animi*. Furthermore, in contrast to the *Inquiry's* typology of the affections, the distinction between private and public good plays almost no role in the *Pathologia*. At the end of this chapter, we will discuss a point of tension between the *Inquiry's* account of virtue and the point of view of the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*.

3.2. Stoic moral ontology in the *Pathologia*

At the very beginning of the *Pathologia*, Shaftesbury presents a sketch of the Stoic moral ontology he will adopt in the *Miscellanies*:

Omnia sunt vel Bona, vel Mala, vel Neutra.

Bona vera, vel opinata, præsentia Gaudium efficiunt: absentia Dolorem: sicut et Mala præsentia Dolorem, absentia Gaudium: Neutra neutrum neque ullius Affectus Causæ sunt.

[...] Bona vera sunt quæ vere nostra & in nobis sita: qualia sunt Bona Animi omnia.

Bona opinata sunt quæ non vere nostra, vel juris nostri, sed extra nos.¹⁵⁵

Things (or objects and states of affairs) are classified as good, evil and indifferent. For the Stoics and for Shaftesbury, there is a distinction between things that are *truly* good or evil and things that are only *imagined* thus. The only truly good thing is virtue (or virtuous dispositions

¹⁵⁵ Shaftesbury, "Pathologia" , p.1. "All things are either good, or evil, or indifferent.

Good things, whether they are truly good or believed to be so, produce joy when they are present, and pain when they are absent. Likewise, things that are evil produce pain when they are present, and joy when they are absent. Things that are indifferent produce neither of both, and they do not cause any affection.

[...] Truly good things are those which are truly ours, and which are located in us. Such are all the goods of the soul.

Things that are believed to be good are not truly ours, nor in our governance, but outside us." (Translation Jaffro/Petit/Maurer)

of the mind). Virtue is an internal good, in the sense that it is a disposition of the mind that is claimed to be fully “within our power”¹⁵⁶, as Shaftesbury expresses himself in *M*, IV, 1. Correspondingly, the only truly evil thing is vice (or vicious dispositions of the mind). Vice, too, is internal in the sense that it is a disposition of the mind that is in the agent’s power. All things that are not truly good things (i.e. virtuous dispositions of the mind) or truly evil things (i.e. vicious dispositions of the mind) are in reality indifferent.¹⁵⁷ This is the case for all external things.

External things (or objects and states of affairs), such as the possession of riches and one’s health or friends, and also the well-being of others and the public good (a point which is not discussed by Shaftesbury, and on which we shall focus again at the end of this chapter), are things that are not fully in the agent’s power. They are not truly good, but they may be erroneously represented or imagined as good things and respectively cause emotions. According to the Stoics, it is a psychological fact that since external things are not completely in the agent’s power, desires with external things as their objects are very likely to be frustrated. This holds especially if desires are based on an opinion of an external thing as truly good and not just as a means or convenience, which is in reality indifferent.¹⁵⁸ To represent an external thing as truly good (and not just as a *means* to obtain some true good) is to make an erroneous judgement, which has to be rectified in a process of self-cultivation.¹⁵⁹ Rational beings have the liberty to assent to such judgments or to reject them, and thus to control their emotions.

¹⁵⁶ Shaftesbury, “Miscellaneous Reflections” , p. 422.

¹⁵⁷ Shaftesbury does not discuss the further distinction of indifferents into preferred, non-preferred and indifferent indifferents as found in some of the Stoics. Health, in this understanding, would be a preferred indifferent, and sickness a non-preferred indifferent. Cf. Sellars, *Stoicism* , pp. 111f.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. also Shaftesbury, “Miscellaneous Reflections” , p. 422.

¹⁵⁹ Shaftesbury mentions this point in *Ibid.*, pp. 422f. Cf. furthermore Cicero on the *perturbationes*: “Sed omnes perturbationes iudicio censent fieri et opinione; itaque eas definiunt pressius, ut intelligatur non modo quam vitiosae, sed etiam quam in nostra sint potestate.” – “But all disorders are, they think, due to judgment and belief. Consequently they define them more precisely, that it may be realized not only how wrong they are but to what extent they are under our control.” Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanae* , pp. 342f.

The following table sums up the fundamental traits of Stoic moral ontology as discussed by Shaftesbury:

<i>classification of things (objects or states of affairs) on an ontological level:</i>	truly good (bonum) ¹⁶⁰	truly evil (malum)	indifferent (neutrum)
<i>relation to agent's power:</i>	internal (internum), fully in her power	internal (internum), fully in her power	external (externum), not fully in her power
<i>things (objects or states of affairs) that are classified as truly good, truly evil, or indifferent:</i>	virtue or virtuous disposition of the mind (virtus)	vice or vicious disposition of the mind (vitium)	all other things
<i>representation of indifferent things (objects or states of affairs):</i>			- indifferent things may be correctly represented as a means for acquiring something truly good - they may be erroneously represented as being truly good or evil

3.3. Shaftesbury's typology of the emotions in the *Pathologia* and in the *Miscellanies*

3.3.1. The basic typology of the emotions in the *Pathologia*

The distinctions on the level of moral ontology provide the foundation for the basic typology of the *motus animi* (“emotions” in the generic sense) or *affectus* (“affections” in the generic sense) in Stoic moral psychology. To elaborate a typology of the emotions is one of the main goals of Shaftesbury's *Pathologia*, and it again influences his discussion in the *Miscellanies* to a large extent. In the *Pathologia*, Shaftesbury distinguishes four basic emotions or *motus animi*:

¹⁶⁰ In this and in the subsequent tables, the Latin terms are from the *Pathologia*, the English terms either from the *Miscellanies*, or from the translation (Jaffro/Petit/Maurer). Not all points from the *Pathologia* figure in the *Miscellanies*, however.

Sic Quatuor modis movemur. Omnis enim Motus sive Affectus noster vel de Bono Malove absenti est; futurumque spectans vel Appetitionem, vel Aversionem efficit: vel de Bono Malove praesenti est (praeteritum enim tamquam praesens nos afficit, neque ulla est vel Appetitio vel Aversatio praeteriti;) efficitque vel Gaudium vel Dolorem.¹⁶¹

Thus, we get the following basic typology of the emotions or *motus animi*:

<i>object of emotion is:</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>absent or future</i>
<i>object of emotion is:</i>		
<i>good (truly or imagined)</i>	joy (gaudium)	desire (appetitio)
<i>evil (truly or imagined)</i>	pain or grief (dolor)	aversion (aversatio)

(neutral things do not cause any emotions)

Let us note that this typology does not yet distinguish between a) emotions that are caused by correct representations of internal objects as truly good or evil and b) emotions that are caused by erroneous representations of external objects as good or evil. In *M IV, 1*, Shaftesbury writes in a similar vein about the basic emotions (which he calls “affections” in the generic sense):

The affections of which I am conscious are either grief or joy, desire or aversion. For whatever mere sensation I may experience, if it amounts to neither of these, it is indifferent and no way affects me.

That which causes joy and satisfaction when present causes grief and disturbance when absent, and that which causes grief and disturbance when present does, when absent, by the same necessity occasion joy and satisfaction.¹⁶²

The distinctions introduced on the level of moral ontology have systematic consequences for further refinements of the basic typology of the emotions in moral psychology. Features of the object of the emotion determine the emotion’s own features. We have mentioned that the objects or states of affairs that cause the emotions are either really good (or evil) or erroneously imagined to be so. Every representation of something as good or evil causes emotions such as those which figure in

¹⁶¹ “So we are moved in four ways. For every emotion or affection of ours is either about an absent good or evil (with respect to the future, it produces desire or aversion) or about a present good or evil (the past affects us in the same way as the present, and there is no desire for or aversion to past things), in which case it produces joy or pain.” (Translation Jaffro/Petit/Maurer)

¹⁶² Shaftesbury, “Miscellaneous Reflections”, p.421.

the basic typology. If these representations have a true good as their object (i.e. an internal good of the soul), then they have the quality of *constant* dispositions. If they are directed to something that is erroneously imagined to be good, then they are *perturbed* and violent, and are likely to be frustrated.¹⁶³ This point is well elaborated in the *Pathologia*, but only shines through in Shaftesbury's discussion of the passions for riches in the *Miscellanies*. The discussion goes back to Book IV, Section IV of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, a text that is again quoted by other authors, such as Hutcheson and Campbell.

3.3.2. The typologies of constant emotions (*constantia*) and of perturbed emotions (*perturbationes*) in the *Pathologia*

Based on Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, Shaftesbury refines the basic typology of the emotions and distinguishes between constant or calm and perturbed or violent emotions (*constantia* and *perturbationes*). In Hutcheson's *Essay*, the distinction between *constantia* and *perturbationes* reappears as the distinction between calm affections and violent passions.¹⁶⁴ According to Shaftesbury's and Cicero's¹⁶⁵ account of Stoic moral psychology, constant or calm emotions (which are appropriately called "affections" in English) can be distinguished into:

¹⁶³ Shaftesbury, "Pathologia" : "Qui verè gaudet et de vero Bono (constanti scilicet securo, & semper parabili) is constanter gaudet; & est Gaudium ejus serenum & tranquillem, sedatum, æquale. Qui de inconstanti, non inseguro, non nec semper parabili Bono gaudet; is non constanter sed perturbatè gaudet, exultat, pavitat, trepidat, apud se non est." – "He who truly rejoices and who rejoices at a true good (i.e., a good which is constant, secure, and always at hand) is rejoicing in a constant way, and his joy is serene, quiet, still, and equal. He who rejoices at a good which is inconstant, insecure, and never at hand, is not rejoicing in a constant way, but in a perturbed way; he is overexcited, stands in fear, in trepidation, he is out of his sense."

¹⁶⁴ Cf. chapter IV, sections 2.2. and 3.2.5. The English term "passions" is a common translation of the Latin term "perturbationes" in many translations of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*. King, however, translates with "disorders". Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanæ*, p. 343.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 338 - 343.

<i>object of constant emotion is:</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>absent</i>
<i>object of constant emotion is:</i>		
<i>true good (bonum verum)</i>	joy or contentment (gaudium vel satisfactio)	will (voluntas)
<i>true evil (malum verum)</i>	∅	aversion (cautio) ¹⁶⁶

According to the Stoics and Shaftesbury, there is no calm or constant emotion to a true present evil: The wise man, who has only calm emotions, is not exposed to true present evil, since all true evil things (which are internal states of the mind) can be avoided by wisdom.¹⁶⁷ Thus, there is no constant affection towards present evil.

Perturbed or violent emotions (which are appropriately called “passions”), can be distinguished into:¹⁶⁸

<i>object of perturbed emotion is:</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>absent</i>
<i>object of perturbed emotion is:</i>		
<i>imagined good (bonum opinatum)</i>	overwhelming pleasure or sensual delight (laetitia gestiens vel voluptas)	lust or yearning (libido vel cupido)
<i>imagined evil (malum opinatum)</i>	grief or pain (aegritudo vel dolor)	fear or fright (metus vel timor) ¹⁶⁹

In the course of the *Pathologia*, both typologies are much further elaborated, and we do not need to go into all the details here. Yet, we will analyse how the concept of self-love is linked with the passions or the perturbed movements of the soul, as discussed in section 3.3.4.

¹⁶⁶ The English terminology in this table is suggested by Jaffro / Petit / Maurer.

¹⁶⁷ “Praesentis autem mali sapientis adfectio nulla est” – “The wise man, however, is not subject to the influence of present evil”. Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanae*, pp. 340ff. This point will be important for Hutcheson (cf. chapter IV, sections 2.2.2. and 3.2.5.).

¹⁶⁸ We will see below that Hutcheson, in his treatment of the emotions in the *Essay*, replaces the table of the basic emotions with Cicero’s table of the *perturbationes* without discussing the *constantiae*. Cf. chapter IV, sections 2.2.2. and 3.2.5.

¹⁶⁹ The English terminology in this table is suggested by Jaffro / Petit / Maurer.

3.3.3. Important aspects of Shaftesbury's treatment of the emotions in the *Miscellanies*

In Shaftesbury's English writings, there are some terminological differences between the *Inquiry* on the one hand and the *Miscellanies* on the other hand. In the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury speaks of "affections" and "passions" almost interchangeably (with a slight tendency to think of passions in the specific sense as violent emotions). Both terms are frequently used to refer to all emotions or *motus animi*, violent and calm ones. Note that in the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury is less preoccupied with the Stoic typology of the emotions, but rather with the function of the emotions in the relation between individual creature, species, and the universe.

He adopts a different terminology in the *Miscellanies* (and in the Latin *Pathologia*). When introducing the abovementioned basic typology of the emotions in *M, IV, 1*, the term "affections" is first used in a generic sense referring to both calm affections and violent passions. Later in the chapter, there is an implicit distinction between calm affections and violent passions, the former being associated with the *constantia*, the latter with the *perturbationes* in the sense of the *Pathologia*.¹⁷⁰ The following table provides an overview of the terminological differences between the *Inquiry* on the one hand and the *Miscellanies* (and the *Pathologia*) on the other hand:

language/ text	Latin - <i>Pathologia</i>	English (translation Jaffro/Petit/ Maurer of the <i>Pathologia</i>)	English - <i>Miscellanies</i>	English - <i>Inquiry</i>
emotions referred to				
all emotions (generic)	"motus animi" sive "affectus"	"movements of the soul", "emotions" (or "affections" in the generic sense)	"affections"	"affections" (or "passions")

¹⁷⁰ This is clearly the case in Shaftesbury's discussion of the "passions" of "avarice, pride, vanity, or ambition": Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections", p. 422.

<i>calm emotions</i>	“constantiae”	“constant dispositions” or “affections” in the specific sense	“affections”	(“affections in a natural or moderate degree”)
<i>violent emotions</i>	“perturbationes”	“perturbations” or “passions” in the narrow sense	“passions” (sometimes: “affections”)	“affections in a passionate degree”, “passions”

It has been pointed out above that in the *Miscellanies* and the *Pathologia*, Shaftesbury discusses the emotions from a different perspective than in the *Inquiry*. The *Inquiry*’s important notions of the *public good* and the *private good* (which are the basis for the distinction between natural affections and self-affections) play no significant role in the former writings. Rather, the analysis of the emotions is developed in close relation with Stoic moral ontology, which leads to a significant shift of attention.

Cicero had already highlighted the intimate relation between emotions and judgement. Emotions are caused by judgement (“iudicium”) and belief (“opinio”), and therefore they are under the control of the rational agent, who can correct her opinions and thus indirectly influence her emotions.¹⁷¹ This concerns especially the correction of erroneous judgements of external things as true goods. The same point is strongly emphasised by Shaftesbury in his discussion of the emotions of rational creatures. In some passages from *M*, IV, I that deal with self-cultivation, he writes:

So that the affections of love and hatred, liking and dislike, on which the happiness or prosperity of the person so much depends, being influenced and governed by opinion, the highest good or happiness must depend on right opinion and the highest misery be derived from wrong.

[...] Here, therefore, arises work and employment for us within, *to regulate fancy and rectify opinions, on which all depends*. For if our loves, desires, hatreds and aversions are left to themselves, we are necessarily exposed to endless vexation and calamity, but, if these are found capable of amendment or in any measure flexible of variable by opinion, we ought,

¹⁷¹ Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanae*, pp. 342f.

methinks, to make trial, at least, how far we might by this means acquire felicity and content.

Accordingly, if we find it evident, on one hand, that by indulging any wrong appetite (as either debauch, malice or revenge) the opinion of the false good increases and the appetite, which is a real ill, grows so much the stronger, we may be as fully assured, on the other hand, that, by restraining this affection and nourishing a contrary sort in opposition to it, we cannot fail to diminish what is ill and increase what is properly our happiness and good.

On this account, a man may reasonably conclude that *it becomes him, by working upon his own mind, to withdraw the fancy or opinion of good or ill from that to which justly and by necessity it is not joined, and apply it with the strongest resolution to that with which it naturally agrees*. For if the fancy or opinion of good be joined to what is not durable nor in my power either to acquire or to retain, the more such an opinion prevails, the more I must be subject to disappointment and distress. But if there be that to which, whenever I apply the opinion or fancy of good, I find the fancy more consistent and the good more durable, solid and within my power and command, then the more such an opinion prevails in me, the more satisfaction and happiness I must experience.

Now, if I join the opinion of good to the possessions of the mind, if it be in the affections themselves that I place my highest joy and in those objects, whatever they are, of inward worth and beauty (such as honesty, faith, integrity, friendship, honour), it is evident I can never possibly, in this respect, rejoice amiss or indulge myself too far in the enjoyment.¹⁷²

On several occasions, Shaftesbury highlights the intricate relation between opinions or representations and the emotions. Emotions depend on opinions in that they are caused by the representation of something as good or evil. Emotions also have a cognitive aspect, since they can be correct or incorrect, and they can be rectified by means of the correction of the opinions on which they depend.¹⁷³ Violent passions, or *perturbationes*, are caused by erroneous representations of external things as being truly good or evil. Calm affections are caused by correct representations of internal dispositions of the mind as being truly good or evil.

Next, it seems a psychological fact for Shaftesbury that if the agent indulges in “wrong appetites” or passions, she thereby reinforces the

¹⁷² Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections", pp. 421 - 423.

¹⁷³ Jaffro, "Emotions et jugement moral chez Shaftesbury, Hutcheson et Hume".

erroneous opinion and, in turn, the wrong passion.¹⁷⁴ This latter, however, is likely to be frustrated and to cause the unhappiness of the agent. Passions are psychologically and morally problematic (“a real ill”) and have to be avoided.¹⁷⁵ In the subsequent analysis of Shaftesbury’s discussion of pride and the passions for riches, it will become clearer that passions are very likely to activate psychological mechanisms that result in the agent’s being opposed to virtue and thus to her own happiness.

Given the abovementioned cognitive features of the emotions and the moral values of the different kinds of emotions, self-cultivation or the “work and employment for us within” must consist in the rational control or regulation of the agent’s opinions or representations in view of her happiness. External things, in contrast to the “possessions of the mind”, must not be erroneously represented as truly good or evil. Thus, uncontrollable passions towards external things that are not in the agent’s power can be avoided. The correct representation of internal goods as truly good causes calm affections, which are constant emotions that will not be disappointed.

3.3.4. *The paradigmatic example of pride in the Pathologia and in the Miscellanies*

The self-affections, to which a lot of attention is paid throughout the *Inquiry*, are not discussed under this heading in the *Pathologia* or in the *Miscellanies*. Shaftesbury’s treatment of the self-affections depends largely on the opposition between private and public good, but this is not the focus of these latter writings. Nevertheless, Shaftesbury discusses

¹⁷⁴ In this passage, Shaftesbury does not really provide an explanation why it is the case that indulging in a “wrong appetite” reinforces the linked erroneous opinion. Yet according to the *Pathologia*, indulging in a wrong appetite causes overwhelming pleasure (*laetitia gestiens*). The erroneous opinion that the thing enjoyed is truly good may thus be reinforced on the basis of this experience.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. the remarks in Cicero: “Est igitur Zenonis haec definitio, ut perturbatio sit, quod *páthos* ille dicit, aversa a recta ratione contra naturam animi commotio.” – “This is then Zeno’s definition of disorder, which he terms *páthos*, that is an agitation of the soul alien from reason and contrary to nature.”

examples of emotions that are self-affections in the sense of the *Inquiry*. Particularly interesting for the present study are *admiratio sui ipsius* (self-admiration) and *superbia* (pride). Furthermore, he gives an account of the psychological mechanisms that lead to these forms of self-love.

a) *Superbia and admiratio sui ipsius in the Pathologia*

In the *Pathologia*, Shaftesbury discusses the desires for external things. Since they are based on an erroneous representation of external things as true goods, they are likely to cause the passion of pride:

Quoniam ergo necessarium omnino est ut quod Pulchrum quis credit, Bonum credat & amat, & prosequatur; quod Turpe, hoc enim Malum credat & odio habeat, necessario evenit ut qui externa ista (nimirum Divitias Honores Voluptates & Voluptatum Causas) *admiratur*, is impensè cupiat, atque istis contraria quæque et obstantia (qualia sunt plerumque Virtus, & Probitas, & Justitia) aspernatur & detestatur omnibus modis.

Hinc *ADMIRATIO* omnium Vitiorum causa maxima, & Augmentatio & Confirmatio. *CONTEMPLATIO* vero (quæ summa res & ingredientibus difficilis admodum & periculosa) omnium Virtutum Conciliatrix & Fautrix & ut ita dicam perfectiva: nimirum quæ nobis semper Pulchritudinem præ oculis ponit, efficitque ut Divinitatis simus participes, Deo similes & Divinæ Gubernationi consentientes.

Ea interim externarum rerum vis est quando *ADMIRATIONE* ferè perpetuâ pro maxime Pulchris habentur, ut earum Possessor tamquam magnum aliquod Bonum adeptus magnum etiam sibi Pulchrum imputat & *seipsum admiratur*. unde pessima illa lactantia, viz: *SUPERBIA* & Insolentia; quæ est Lætitia quædam petulans sæviens & ferociter se gerens propter opinata ista Bona externa tamquam Pulchra interna, propria, & sibi adhærentia. Sic enim Vitia ista utriusque Tabulæ conjuguntur; sicuti et illorum Germana & dependentia. Nam cujus est lactantia ista pessima sive *SUPERBIA* ab *Admiratione* profecta, ejus etiam est *AMBITIO* & Avaritia enormis, a Cupiditate; ejus etiam est *Contemptus* & *Fastidium Maximum*; ejus quoque odium inveteratum. [My emphases]¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Shaftesbury, "Pathologia" , p. 4: "It is absolutely necessary that the thing which is believed to be beautiful is also believed to be good, and is loved and pursued, and that the thing which is believed to be ugly is indeed believed to be bad and is the object of hate. Therefore it is necessarily the case that he who wonders at external things (such as riches, honours, pleasures and causes of pleasures), strongly yearns for the thing believed to be beautiful, and that he rejects and detests in all ways things that are contrary and against them (such as mostly virtue, probity, and justice).

Hence wonder is the greatest cause of all vices, and that which increases and strengthens them. Contemplation on the other hand, which is the highest concern and which is utterly difficult and dangerous for beginners, supports and favours all virtues and, so to speak, perfects them. And surely it always puts beauty right in front of our eyes and makes us participate in the Divinity, become similar to God and approve of Divine government.

In the *Pathologia*, *superbia* is defined as “Admiratio sui ipsius & Gaudium propter externa Pulchra supra alios”.¹⁷⁷ *Superbia* is a form of self-admiration that includes the joy that stems from the opinion of being superior to others in virtue of the possession of external goods (more precisely external beautiful things, which one necessarily thinks of and desires as good things).¹⁷⁸ Yet, how are the desires for external goods supposed to cause *superbia* or pride? In the quoted passages, Shaftesbury suggests the following account of the psychological mechanisms:

i) The erroneous opinion that external things (such as riches) are truly good or beautiful (or “excellent in themselves”, as he writes in the *Miscellanies*), and not just a useful means to achieve a true good, causes a violent passion towards those external things. This is the passion of *wonder* or *admiration*, which is a passionate form of the basic emotion of joy. *Admiration* is elsewhere defined as “Lætitia exultans, ex conspectu opinati Pulchri externi”.¹⁷⁹ ii) *Admiration* is directed towards external things and again causes strong desires (i.e. violent passions) and

Meanwhile, such is the effect of external things, when through an almost perpetual wonder they are mistaken for the highest beauties, that their possessor, as if he had obtained a great good, also attributes no lesser beauty to himself and wonders at himself. Therefore, this form of pride is the worst of all: It is arrogance and insolence, which is a sort of overriding, violent pleasure, behaving wildly towards these external things believed to be good, as if they were internal and proper beauties, attached to oneself. In this way those vices in both tables are conjoined, and so are their relatives and subordinates. For that is the object of the worst pride, namely arrogance, which draws on admiration, and that is also the object of ambition and excessive avidity, which draws on yearning [*cupiditas*, not *cupido*]; that which is the object of contempt and distaste in the highest degree is also the object of inveterate hate.” (Translation Jaffro/Petit/Maurer)

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. , p. 4: “self-admiration and joy occasioned by our being superior to others because of external beautiful things.” (Translation Jaffro/Petit/Maurer)

¹⁷⁸ The *comparative* aspect of pride will be strongly emphasised by Mandeville, who bases his moral psychology on an Augustinian understanding of the passion. To remain focused on the passions of pride and self-admiration, we will not discuss all the details of Shaftesbury’s further distinction of the *motus animi* as directed towards a) “Pulchrum & Turpe nostrum sive internum” and towards b) “Pulchrum & Turpe externum”. Ibid. , p. 3. The central claim is that beautiful things (which can be external, i.e. not attached to the agent, as well as internal, i.e. attached to the agent) are necessarily thought to be good and are desired as such. Thus, Shaftesbury discusses the emotions directed to true and mistaken internal beauty (and ugliness) as opposed to emotions directed to true and mistaken external beauty (and ugliness).

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. , p. 3: “exulting pleasure in view of a thing believed to be beautiful”. (Translation Jaffro/Petit/Maurer)

dispositions towards these external things. iii) At the same time, *admiration* causes passions against those things that are opposed to the external things the agent desires. Since having virtuous dispositions causes the agent to disapprove of her passionate desire for external things, *admiration* makes the agent turn herself against *virtue*. iv) The agent who comes into possession of external things that she passionately desires in the way described is likely to erroneously attribute internal true goodness or beauty to herself, and to think of herself as better than others. In other words: Admiration of external things the agent possesses leads to admiration of oneself, i.e. to *admiratio sui ipsius* and *superbia*, which includes the joy of being superior to others in view of the possession of these external things.

Superbia is thus explained as a morally problematic passion that is based on the erroneous attribution of internal beauty or goodness to the agent herself. This self-attribution of goodness is again based on her possessing external goods that she passionately desires because they are misrepresented as truly good. Shaftesbury's concept of *superbia* in the *Pathologia* has some essential features of the Augustinian concept of self-love as excessive pride, as discussed in great detail by Mandeville. It involves a highly positive but unjustified self-evaluation of the agent, and a comparative tendency to consider oneself as superior to others. On the other hand, Shaftesbury does not emphasise the competitive behavioural tendencies Mandeville describes in great detail for his concept of self-liking. Shaftesbury's concepts of pride and self-admiration correspond to excessive self-affections in the *Inquiry's* moral psychology. However, in the *Pathologia* the morally problematic features of pride are not explained as a matter of degree of the self-affection, but as caused by the erroneous representation that is at the basis of the emotion. This shift is important for questions of self-cultivation, since representations can be corrected in reflection, as the discussion in the *Miscellanies* highlights.

b) Admiration and pride in the Miscellanies

In *M*, IV, 1, Shaftesbury discusses the following example of passionate desires for external things that are erroneously imagined as being truly good, or as excellent in themselves, and tells us how we have to avoid these passions:

Again, I consider with myself that I have the imagination of something beautiful, great and becoming in things. This imagination I apply perhaps to such subjects as plate, jewels, apartments, coronets, patents of honour, titles or precedencies. I must therefore naturally seek these not as mere *conveniences, means or help in life* (for as such my *passion* could not be so excessive towards them) but as *excellent in themselves*, necessarily attractive of my *admiration* and directly and immediately causing my happiness and giving me satisfaction. Now if the *passion* raised on this opinion (call it *avarice, pride, vanity or ambition*) be indeed incapable of any real satisfaction, even under the most successful course of fortune, and then too, attended with perpetual fears of disappointment and loss, how can the mind be other than miserable when possessed by it? But, instead of forming thus the opinion of good, if instead of placing worth or excellence in these *outward subjects*, we place it where it is truest, *in the affections or sentiment, in the governing part and inward character*, we have then the full enjoyment of it *within our power*: the imagination or opinion remains steady and irreversible, and the love, desire and appetite is answered without apprehension of loss or disappointment. [My emphases]¹⁸⁰

The admiration of external things raises further passions, such as pride, vanity and ambition – as has been elaborated in greater detail in the *Pathologia*. Yet, all these passions necessarily make the person unhappy, since their object is not in her power, and because they are “incapable of any real satisfaction”. Since these passions are likely to remain ungratified, they cause the further passion of fear that the original passion is not satisfied.

In contrast, the correct representation of the virtuous dispositions of the soul (which are fully in the agent’s power) as truly good results in a “steady and irreversible” opinion, and is a foundation for calm affections or *constantia*. “Placing worth or excellence” in the internal goods of the

¹⁸⁰ Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections", p. 422.

soul allows the person to have “the full enjoyment” of what is within her power. In other words, if an agent values her virtuous dispositions, she develops affections, the gratification of which is possible “without disappointment”, whereas the valuing of external things necessarily leads to misery.

Shaftesbury insists in the subsequent passages on self-cultivation that the agent has to “rectify opinions”. The erroneous representation of external things as truly good or excellent in themselves causes violent passions that lead to the person’s misery, whereas the correct representation of virtuous dispositions as good in themselves, and of external things as instrumentally good causes calm affections, which are in the power of the agent and allow for constant gratification.

3.4. A problem with virtue

Following Shaftesbury’s exploration of harmful passions for external things, we have focused our analysis of the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* on his paradigmatic treatment of self-admiration and pride, which are self-affections according to the *Inquiry*’s typology of the emotions. They are treated as examples of morally problematic violent emotions or *perturbationes* that involve erroneous representations of external things as truly good. As examples for external goods, Shaftesbury lists in the *Miscellanies* “plate, jewels, apartments, coronets, patents of honour, titles or precedencies”¹⁸¹, and in the *Pathologia* “Divitas Honores Voluptates & Voluptatum Causas”¹⁸². These things are not fully in the agent’s power, thus cannot be “excellent in themselves”¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections" , p. 422.

¹⁸² Shaftesbury, "Pathologia" , p. 4: “riches, honours, pleasures and causes of pleasures” (Translation Jaffro/Petit/Maurer)

¹⁸³ Shaftesbury, "Miscellaneous Reflections" , p. 422.

and raise incontrollable passions if erroneously represented as truly good. As a virtuous agent, I am thus required to make “those fancies themselves the objects of my aversion which justly deserve it, by being the cause of a wrong estimation and measure of good and ill and, consequently, the cause of my happiness and disturbance.”¹⁸⁴

However, an important aspect of this Stoic perspective in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* is not spelled out. Not only money, riches, and sensual pleasures are external things, which are not fully in the agent’s power, but also the public good and the happiness of others. Pushed to its extreme, it seems a consequence of the *Pathologia*’s and the *Miscellanies*’ treatment of external things that the agent should detach herself from her natural desire of promoting the good of others – the Stoic paradoxical treatment of mercy and commiseration as vices could be taken as a confirmation of this point.¹⁸⁵ This is in sharp contrast with the *Inquiry*, which puts the natural affections and the notion of the public good in the very centre of its conception of virtue. Certainly, the *Inquiry* does not rule out the possibility that the natural affections can become morally problematic – which is the case if they are in an excessive degree. Pity, for example, can become excessive, yet as a natural affection in its natural degree, it is not problematic. However, in neither rational nor non-rational creatures is the question of when an affection becomes problematic tied to the distinction between internal and external goods, which is the basis for the typology of the emotions in the *Pathologia*. In terms of the latter, natural affections involve a dependence on the happiness of others, i.e. on an external good – even in rational creatures that are capable of exerting control over their emotions. They tie the creature to an external good, which is not in its power – and this is

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 424.

¹⁸⁵ In the *Pathologia*, Shaftesbury writes: “Nam *Misericordia* sive *Commiseratio*, Perturbatio cum sit & Ægritudo misera, inter Virtutes tamen vulgo numeratur: a Stoicis verò inter Vitia & morbos.” – “For instance mercy or commiseration, although it is a perturbation and a miserable grief, is commonly reckoned among virtues. But by the Stoics it is reckoned among vices and illnesses.” Shaftesbury, “Pathologia” , p. 6.

a state that should be avoided. This point creates a conflict between the *Inquiry*'s account of virtue and the point of view of the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*.

A possible solution for Shaftesbury might be to rely on the Stoic distinction between different kinds of indifferents and to range the happiness of others and the public good among the preferred indifferents.¹⁸⁶ This would allow him to claim within the Stoic approach developed in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* that there are appropriate forms of other-concern that involve appropriate and moderate emotional reactions with respect to the happiness of others (such as the natural affections in their natural degree). However, this would still be far from the core position Shaftesbury attributes to the public good in his conception of virtue in the *Inquiry*. Another solution might be a less strict interpretation of the definition of virtue as an internal good. According to the *Inquiry*, being virtuous is having one's first-order affections in their natural degree and having the right second-order affections. If we consider this state of the affections as an internal good, which is in our power, we would still have to accept that virtue involves a certain degree of dependence on the happiness of others – if this is not the case, then the natural affections must be said to be too weak or absent. Ultimately, it seems doubtful that Shaftesbury could accept all the consequences of the *Pathologia*, given his view of virtue in the *Inquiry*.

We shall see in chapter IV that Hutcheson addresses the conflict between the two approaches in his theory of self-cultivation.¹⁸⁷ He modifies the traditional Stoic typology of the passions precisely because

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Sellars, *Stoicism*, p. 111: "The threefold distinction of good, bad and indifferent [...] is credited to Zeno. But in the light of criticisms from other schools the Stoic position was developed further [...]. The category of 'indifferents' (*adiaphora*) was itself subdivided into 'preferred indifferents' (*proêgmenon*), 'non-preferred indifferents' (*apoproêgmenon*) and what we might call genuinely 'indifferent indifferents' or 'neutral indifferents'."

¹⁸⁷ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.5.

he rejects the claim that our concern for the well-being of others should be diminished during the process of self-cultivation.

Conclusion

Besides the problem just highlighted, our analysis of Shaftesbury's theory of the emotions in this chapter has allowed for a clear picture of his account of the self-affections. We have highlighted that according to the *Inquiry*, the natural affections and the reflected pursuit of the public good are at the core of moral virtue, but that the self-affections, too, "become necessary and essential to goodness."¹⁸⁸ This point is emphasised by Smith in his discussion of Shaftesbury¹⁸⁹, and leads him to contrast Shaftesbury with Hutcheson, since the latter makes virtue consist only in benevolence. We will discuss some reasons to question the sharpness of this contrast in the chapter on Hutcheson. Shaftesbury's view of the self-affections as a necessary part of virtue seems neglected by Gill. When for example discussing Shaftesbury's claim that goodness is a matter of motives, and not of the consequences of actions, and that thus doing the right thing for selfish reasons is not being virtuous, Gill strongly emphasises Shaftesbury's anti-egoism and claims that "Shaftesbury hammers away at this anti-egoist point throughout the *Inquiry*, maintaining over and over again that a person who does good from selfish motives is morally equivalent to a person who does ill from selfish motives."¹⁹⁰ Yet, this point in Shaftesbury does not exclude the self-affections from playing a role in his concept of virtue. Thus, Gill has a

¹⁸⁸ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 197.

¹⁸⁹ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 346: VII, II, I, § 48.

¹⁹⁰ Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 90.

tendency to depict Shaftesbury's moral philosophy as an ethics of benevolence¹⁹¹, which may be motivated by Gill's (correct) view of Shaftesbury as a proponent of the non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, but which is not appropriate in view of Shaftesbury's claim that being virtuous also requires having one's self-affections in their natural degree. It is certainly correct that Shaftesbury asserts a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and a positive answer to the Human Nature Question, but he also refrains from a critical view of egoistic self-love (if it is in its natural degree) and includes it in his account of full virtue in the *Inquiry*.

We shall now turn to Bernard Mandeville, who attacks both, Shaftesbury's positive answer to the Human Nature Question and his non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 92, 119.

Chapter III: Mandeville – Self-Love and Self-Liking

1. Introduction

1.1. Mandeville and his writings

Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733) was baptised in Rotterdam in 1670. He attended the Erasmian School in Rotterdam until 1685, where he probably heard Pierre Bayle lecture, and then studied medicine at the University of Leyden until 1690, to become a physician like his father. In 1693 Bernard Mandeville moved to London. Soon he started to publish verse. His most famous piece is *The Grumbling Hive* (1705), which later became part of the *Fable of the Bees*. It is a fable about a beehive, the wealth of which is based on the vices of its members. When vice is eliminated, wealth decreases and the number of inhabitants shrinks dramatically. The *Moral* of the *Grumbling Hive* is a theme in many of Mandeville's writings: "So vice is beneficial found,/ When it's by Justice lopt and bound;/ [...] Bare Virtue can't make Nations live/ In Splendor [...]"¹.

The first two editions of the *Fable of the Bees* were printed in 1714. They included the *Grumbling Hive*, the *Enquiry into the Origin of Moral*

¹ Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The First Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1714]), p. 37. The claim will be discussed in more detail in section 4 of the present chapter. All references to the first and the second volume of the *Fable of the Bees* are made to the Liberty Fund reprint of the edition by F.B. Kaye from 1924 at Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Virtue, and a series of *Remarks* aimed at explaining the *Grumbling Hive*. It was, however, only the next edition of the *Fable* in 1723 that established Mandeville's notoriety. It now included the *Essay on Charity, and Charity-Schools*, in which he claimed to unmask the real motives for the institution of charity-schools, and argued that they had negative consequences for the prosperity of society. Furthermore, he added the *Search into the Nature of Society*, where he argued for the same point as in the *Grumbling Hive*. After this publication, a series of authors attacked Mandeville, including the authors we are going to investigate in the subsequent chapters.² The *Fable* was reprinted in 1724, 1725 and 1728. In 1729, Mandeville added a second volume. In the form of dialogues, he discussed themes like the selfish roots of social virtues and politeness, the civilising process, and the origin of social institutions and norms. Several reprints of both parts followed, until in 1734 an edition comprising both parts was published. In 1732, Mandeville published the *Enquiry into the Origin of Honour, and the Usefulness of Christianity in War*, where he discussed, again in the form of dialogues, the concept of honour and its relation to the Christian religion.³

Bernard Mandeville is known as one of the most scandalous writers and philosophers in Britain at the beginning of the 18th century. His claims about human nature, society and morality, which he formulated in a provocative and often ironic style, produced harsh reactions from philosophers and theologians of all stripes. At the same time Mandeville regularly emphasized that he was a sincere Christian who defended *real*

² Cf. furthermore the lists in Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, pp. 401 - 417 and J. Martin Stafford, ed., *Private Vices, Publick Benefits? The Contemporary Reception of Bernard Mandeville* (Solihull: Ismeron, 1997).

³ Other writings of Mandeville include medical writings, such as *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Passions* (1711), prose works, such as *The Virgin Unmask'd* (1709), numerous contributions to the *Female Tatler* (1709 - 1710), *The Mischiefs that Ought Justly to be Apprehended from a Whig-Government* (1714), *Free Thoughts on Religion, the Church, and National Happiness* (1720), *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews or, an Essay upon Whoring As It Is Now Practis'd in These Kingdoms* (1724) and *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Frequent Executions at Tyburn* (1725).

virtue against hypocrisy. His declared aim was to unmask the hidden motives behind what appeared to be morality, and to expose the concealed selfish dimensions of the rules of politeness and honour in society. As a reaction, Mandeville was often accused of being a promoter of vice and atheism. Defending the *Fable of the Bees*, he says in the voice of *Cleomenes* about its author, i.e. himself:

It is his Opinion, that there is no solid Principle to go by but the Christian Religion, and that few embrace it with Sincerity: Always look upon him in this View, and you'll never find him inconsistent with himself. Whenever at first sight he seems to be so, look again, and upon nearer Enquiry you'll find; that he is only pointing at or labouring, to detect the Inconsistency of others with the Principles they pretend to.⁴

Firstly, this passage draws attention to one of Mandeville's main themes: the unmasking of apparent virtue, which is actually based on flattery and incompatible with the Christian religion, since it does not require the denial of one's selfish passions. Secondly, the passage also makes clear that Mandeville does not always present his theses and arguments as clearly as one might expect in philosophical debates. His remark sounds like methodological advice: The reader has to bear in mind that Mandeville is not only a philosopher, but also a brilliant and witty writer. If for this reason Mandeville the philosopher is not as strict in method or in argumentation as other great authors of the 18th century, his writings are still of great importance. Firstly, they were extremely influential throughout the 18th century, especially during the first half. His theories of human nature, society and morality, which incorporate a series of Augustinian themes, shaped the argumentative framework for many philosophical debates. The opposition between Augustinian and Stoic theses is particularly apparent in the relation between Mandeville and authors such as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Butler. Secondly, his contribution to the British debates on self-love is original and worth investigating not only because of its influence on other authors.

⁴ Mandeville, *Fable*, Volume II, p. 102.

1.2. Some of Mandeville's principal themes: Selfish passions, flattery, sociability and virtue

Mandeville provides a thorough analysis of *human nature* and the *passions*. With respect to these issues, commentators have highlighted a series of Augustinian themes in Mandeville, such as the dominance of the selfish desire for pleasure in human nature and its corruption after the Fall, his criticism of the social virtues and his emphasis on morally problematic dimensions of pride.⁵ Mandeville asserts that man's passions determine his will – reason is powerless.⁶ The emphasis of some other moralists on reason as a feature that distinguishes man from animal is only a form of flattery and aims at making mankind more tractable.⁷ The love human beings have for themselves manifests itself in their susceptibility to flattery and pride: "There is no Man of what Capacity or Penetration soever, that is wholly Proof against the Witchcraft of Flattery."⁸ The selfishness of the passions determining the will proves the corruption of man's soul after the Fall: The motives for human actions are ultimately rooted in the individual's natural quest for pleasure, and in the superior value every human being naturally attributes to itself. "There is nothing so universally sincere upon Earth as the Love which all Creatures, that are capable of any, bear to themselves."⁹ It seems that according to Mandeville, human beings are not capable of genuine disinterested

⁵ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 62, 114, 147; Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable. Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society*, pp. 32f., 144, highlighting some contrasts in anthropology in p. 37f. We will regularly draw attention to the striking parallels with the treatment of these issues in Pierre Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre" in *Oeuvres philosophiques et morales* (Hildesheim, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970).

⁶ Bernard Mandeville, "Remarks" in *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The First Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1714]), p. 201.

⁷ Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 42.

⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

⁹ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 200.

benevolence, and barely (if at all) capable of genuine virtue. Mandeville's egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is very obvious, and his answer to the Human Nature Question is negative. In the arguments for both claims, self-love of some kind plays the central role.

Concerning *society*, Mandeville is known for arguing against the "Noble Writer"¹⁰, Shaftesbury, that there is no natural inclination in man to society. Because of their selfishness, human beings can only be socialised with great difficulty. Paradoxically, it is also selfishness that ultimately makes them apt for society. Here, Mandeville relies on an Augustinian scheme of providence, emphasising that stability in society, given the corrupt selfish nature of fallen man, is reached by the competition of the members of society.¹¹ The civilising process does not change the fundamental human passions: it only modifies them through skilful inventions, such as rules of honour and politeness. Since not reason but only other passions can counteract passions, the business of politics is to elicit the right mixture of passions to make human beings governable. In this way, a commercial society of merely self-interested individuals becomes possible. Human beings still engage in the quest for pleasure and superiority over others, yet they do so in a modified and rule-based framework. Society, Mandeville claims notoriously, benefits from the vices of its members, not from their virtues.

Next, according to Mandeville, what is generally thought of as *moral virtue* in a given society is merely the "Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride."¹² Rules of honour or chastity play on basic human passions such as pride and shame. This also explains why human beings –

¹⁰ Bernard Mandeville, "A Search Into the Nature of Society" in *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The First Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1723]), p. 323.

¹¹ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, p. 83. Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre", pp. 179ff. describes the morally problematic yet ultimately useful dimensions of the passion of *amour-propre* in great detail. "Cette disposition tyrannique étant empreinte dans le fond du coeur de tous les hommes, les rend violents, injustes, cruels, ambitieux, flatteurs, envieux, insolents, querelleurs." Still, it is the passion of *amour-propre* that unites men in society: "[L]'amour-propre qui est la cause de cette guerre saura bien le moyen de les faire vivre en paix."

¹² Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 51.

against their original passion of fear of natural evils – can be made to engage even in practices that might lead to their death, such as duelling or war. These practices, which are in accordance with honour, are in conflict with the precepts of the Christian religion. Having established this, Mandeville concludes that true virtue cannot be reached without the denial of one's passions.¹³ Other contemporary moralists, including Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler, are mistaken in their claims that virtue is inherent in human nature, or that virtue requires living according to human nature. These views are against the "Generality of Moralists and Philosophers", who all agreed that "there could be no Virtue without Self-denial".¹⁴

Mandeville's theses about human nature, society and morality were immediately associated with Hobbes and others "atheists", "sceptics", and "Epicureans".¹⁵ Indeed, many of Mandeville's claims were provocative for the same reasons that Hobbes' were: the claims of both authors were held to reduce human nature to selfishness, to be inimical to society and religion, to be incompatible with the distinction between moral good and evil, and to have immoral consequences. We have to note, however, that their theories differ in important respects, some of which shall be mentioned right away. Most relevant for the present study is that for Mandeville, self-liking or self-love as excessive pride is the passion that is central for society. Whereas in Hobbes, the passion that keeps the members of society from going back to the state of nature is fear of death, it is fear of shame in Mandeville, which is an aspect of self-liking. Furthermore, Mandeville's reconstruction of the civilising process does not

¹³ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, pp. 42 – 45; Mandeville, "Remarks", pp. 221 – 223.

¹⁴ Mandeville, "Search", p. 323.

¹⁵ Alexander Innes' plagiarised version of Campbell's *Inquiry*, for example, has the following full title: "Aretê-Logia or, an Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue; Wherein the False Notions of Machiavel, Hobbes, Spinoza, and Mr. Bayle, as they are Collected and Digested by the Author of *The Fable of the Bees*, are Examined and Confuted; and the Eternal and Unalterable Nature and Obligation of Moral Virtue is Stated and Vindicated. [My emphasis]"

rely on the contractualist elements that are essential in Hobbes'. For Mandeville, a stable society is the result of the manipulation of the individuals' passions by skilful politicians. Next, Mandeville's moral theory makes repeated references to the Augustinian doctrine of the Fall of mankind after the original sin, whereas Hobbes is generally read in a secular manner and frequently accused of atheism by his contemporaries.¹⁶

As to Epicureanism, Mandeville's repeated emphasis on the moral corruption of mankind after the Fall, his religiously motivated moral condemnation of selfishness and his proximity to other Augustinians in a series of questions mark him as an Augustinian, rather than as an Epicurean.¹⁷ Yet, his alleged proximity to Hobbes and his suspected atheism and moral scepticism made him a target for theologians - in spite of his repeated insistence that he was a sincere Christian and of his emphasis on the theological theme of the moral corruption of mankind after the Fall. Furthermore, again as in the case of Hobbes, Mandeville's pessimism about human nature was in sharp contrast to the views of philosophers such as Cumberland, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Butler, who argued for the reality of some sort of benevolent affection in human nature. The same holds for his analysis of society as the product of politicians, who flatter man's pride.

¹⁶ We have highlighted in chapter I, section 2.1., however, that the secular interpretation of Hobbes has been challenged by Martinich.

¹⁷ Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable. Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society*, p. 37 seems to contradict this interpretation: "Mandeville's morals, by contrast [to the Augustinians], explicitly grounded in a thorough-going naturalistic anthropology. For him, the image of a virtuous but depopulated terrestrial Jerusalem was nothing more than an absurd figure of derision. In this way Mandeville abandoned the Augustinian premises, not only of Calvin and the Jansenists, but also of Bayle." I agree with Hundert that Mandeville's moral philosophy emphasises elements that may not be found as prominent in earlier Augustinians (such as his physiological approach to the passions in the *Remarks*, his emphasis on the role of politicians in his story of the civilising process, and his highly elaborated natural history of this process). Yet I do not agree that he abandons the Augustinian premises, if by that we understand central concepts such as the original sin. His egoistic answer to the Motivation Question comes clearly alongside a negative answer to the Human Nature Question that bears all the marks of Augustinianism. For example, we will repeatedly highlight Mandeville's proximity to the Augustinian Pierre Nicole in his version of the civilising process in section 3.

Furthermore, Mandeville was held to attack morality when he asserted that “Moral Virtues are the Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride”¹⁸, and to claim that moral virtues have their origin in self-love. Theologians and philosophers of all stripes were opposed to this view, as well as to the most provocative thesis that a society benefits more from its individuals’ vices than from their attempts to live a virtuous life. This claim is enigmatically captured in the famous formula “Private Vices, Publick Benefits” - the subtitle of the *Fable of the Bees*.¹⁹ Mandeville was accused not only of undermining the distinction between moral good and evil on a theoretical level, but also of recommending vicious actions.²⁰ Whether this accusation is justified will be subject to further investigation.

Section 2 of this chapter provides an analysis of Mandeville’s *moral psychology* that concentrates on his theory of self-love (i.e. hedonistic self-love) and self-liking (i.e. self-love as excessive pride) as two fundamental features of human nature. Section 3 takes a closer look at the consequences for Mandeville’s theory of the *civilising process* and at the question of how the potentially negative consequences of human nature can be avoided and turned into benefits. Section 4 discusses several aspects of Mandeville’s *moral theory* with respect to self-love. In order to analyse Mandeville’s view of self-love, we will mainly examine the two parts of the *Fable* and the *Enquiry into the Origin of Honour*. In these

¹⁸ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 51.

¹⁹ That this was extremely provocative for Mandeville’s contemporaries can already be seen from some titles of treatises against Mandeville, for example John Dennis’ “Vice and Luxury Publick Mischiefs: or, Remarks on a book intituled, the *Fable of the Bees*” (1724), George Bluet’s “An Enquiry whether a General Practice of Virtue tends to the Wealth or Poverty, Benefit or Disadvantage of a People” (1725), and Archibald Campbell’s third Treatise in his *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* (1733) with the title “Treatise III, shewing That *Moral Virtue* promotes *Trade* and aggrandizes a *Nation*”.

²⁰ Goldsmith emphasises that “in the eighteenth century, Bernard Mandeville was regarded as a proponent of vice and an opponent of virtue and religion.” M. M. Goldsmith, “Regulating Anew the Moral and Political Sentiments of Mankind: Bernard Mandeville and the Scottish Enlightenment” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49, no. 4 (1988), p. 160.

writings, which occasioned most of the criticisms by Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell, Mandeville is most precise about his theory of self-love.

2. "All Passions center in Self-Love"²¹

In the *Introduction* to the first part of the *Fable*, Mandeville writes: "As for my Part, without any Compliment to the Courteous Reader, or my self, I believe Man (besides Skin, Flesh, Bones, &c. that are obvious to the Eye) to be a compound of various Passions, that all of them, as they are provoked and come uppermost, govern him by turns, whether he will or no."²² Human beings are determined by their passions. At the beginning of his *Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*, Mandeville is more precise about the fundamental qualities of these passions, when he describes humans before the civilising process:

All untaught Animals are only solicitous of pleasing themselves, and naturally follow the bent of their own Inclinations, without considering the good or harm that from their being pleased will accrue to others. This is the Reason, that in the wild State of Nature those Creatures are fittest to live peaceably together in great Numbers, that discover the least of Understanding, and have the fewest Appetites to gratify; and consequently no Species of Animal is, without the Curb of Government, less capable of agreeing long together in Multitudes than that of Man; yet such are his Qualities, whether good or bad, I shall not determine, that no Creature besides himself can ever be made sociable: But being an extraordinary selfish and headstrong, as well as cunning Animal, however he may be subdued by superior Strength, it is impossible by Force alone to make him tractable, and receive the Improvements he is capable of.²³

The last part of this passage opens a cluster of questions about the origin and governance of society, and about the impact of the civilising process on the human passions. These questions will be treated in section 3 of this chapter. Before that, we will focus on Mandeville's general account of

²¹ Mandeville, "Remarks" , p. 75.

²² Mandeville, *Fable* , p. 39.

²³ Mandeville, "Enquiry" 41f.

human nature in terms of his moral psychology. Mandeville claims at the beginning of the quoted passage that untaught animals, including human beings in the “wild state of nature”, only seek pleasure for themselves, without considering the well-being of others around them. The quest for pleasure for oneself is the basic motivational source of all behaviour. This claim – in Hume’s terms the “selfish hypothesis”²⁴ – is not only one of the central points of attack for 18th-century criticism against theories of human nature that attribute too much importance to self-love, but it is also the basis for the widespread 20th-century classification of Mandeville as a *psychological hedonist*. Psychological hedonism, as discussed in the introduction to this study, is the claim that all actions are ultimately motivated by a self-directed desire for pleasure.²⁵ The classification of Mandeville as a psychological hedonist is encouraged by much of what he claims about human nature. However, his moral psychology is more complex, as we will see during the course of this chapter, and was subject to changes over the years.²⁶

In the passage quoted above, Mandeville writes that *untaught* animals only desire pleasure for themselves. This includes human beings in the state of nature. We will see in section 3 that even within a cultivated society, the quest for pleasure remains a constant motivational feature of human nature. However, the human system of passions and desires, which is gradually more complex than other animals’, becomes even more complex and diversified in the civilising process. The difference between

²⁴ Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, p. 298.

²⁵ Cf. chapter I, section 4.2. We will see in section 2.2.3. that Mandeville seems to treat pity as a genuinely other-directed passion. An agent acts on the emotion of pity, however, is ultimately motivated by a self-directed desire to remove her own uneasiness.

²⁶ It is important to note that in the *Enquiry*, Mandeville does not use the term “self-love” in the context of his account of psychological hedonism. In the first part of the *Fable*, the term is used quite ambiguously and refers to the concepts of self-love as love of praise (cf. Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 55 and Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 213), and self-love as excessive pride (cf. Mandeville, “Search”, p. 342 and p. 344). In the *Dialogues* in the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour*, Mandeville introduces a distinction between what he calls “self-love” and “self-liking”. In that work, the term “self-love” refers to the hedonistic concept of self-love, as will be argued below, and will be clearly distinguished from pride.

the psychology of human beings and animals, however, seems to be only a difference in degree, but not in kind. Human beings are complex animals.

It is precisely this gradual difference that leads Mandeville to claim that, in comparison with other animals, human beings are naturally the least capable of living in groups. This point rests on the assumption that all appetites are self-directed and best satisfied alone. A complex structure of self-directed desires causes more problems for their satisfaction,²⁷ and the presence of other agents makes these obstacles even more severe, since it adds a competitive dimension. The problems arise because human beings are “extraordinary selfish and headstrong, as well as cunning” animals. However, Mandeville claims that they are also the only creatures that can be *made* sociable. Even if they are not *naturally* sociable as Shaftesbury argued, the selfish structure of their desires can be used and modified in the civilising process. Sociability is a result of manipulation of unsociable passions.²⁸

In the following subsection (2.1.), the focus will be on the moral psychology of human beings before its modification in the civilising process. Already at this stage, two concepts of self-love play a fundamental role, and we will focus on them first. On the one hand, there is a hedonistic concept of self-love, which Mandeville calls “self-love” in the second part of the *Fable*. On the other hand, and more importantly, there is a concept of self-love as excessive pride, which Mandeville sometimes calls “self-love” in the first, and “self-liking” in the second part of the *Fable*. The passion of self-liking is fundamental for his theory of the civilising process. In section 2.2., we will examine Mandeville’s treatment of suicide with respect to his distinction between self-love and self-liking.

²⁷ Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 206.

²⁸ Again, we should note the fundamental difference between the Stoic account of providence, which emphasises the harmony between private interests and society, and the Augustinian account of providence, which emphasises the emergence of stability through conflicting interests. Cf. the discussion of this point in Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 76ff.

In section 2.3., other fundamental passions, such as fear, anger and pity will be explained in relation to the two concepts of self-love. The passion of pity deserves special attention, since Mandeville's analysis provoked many reactions by the other authors investigated. In section 3, we will take a closer look at Mandeville's account of how these passions are modified by the "skilful politicians" in order to make man "tractable".

2.1. Mandeville's distinction between "self-love" and "self-liking"

Mandeville's treatment of the concepts of self-love can be distinguished into two phases. On the one hand, in the first part of the *Fable of the Bees* (1714/1723), he uses the term "self-love" in a rather ambiguous way and has a tendency to associate it with pride. On the other hand, in the second part of the *Fable* (1729) and in the *Enquiry into the Origin of Honour* (1732), he distinguishes systematically between "self-love" and "self-liking".²⁹ The distinction leads to a refined account of moral psychology and of the civilising process, and allows for a more sophisticated approach to phenomena such as pride, honour, and politeness in society.

2.1.1. Some remarks on the first part of the Fable

It is appropriate to take a look at Mandeville's use of the term "self-love" in the first part of the *Fable*, before presenting a more detailed discussion of the distinction between self-love and self-liking in the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour*. In the *Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue*, the *Remarks*, the *Essay on Charity*, and *Charity-Schools* and

²⁹ It has been suggested that this alteration has a link with Butler's treatment of self-love: Cf. Kaye's footnote in Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, pp. 129f. Our analysis of Butler's concept of self-love will disconfirm this, however. The differences between Butler's concept of self-love as self-respect and Mandeville's concept of self-love as excessive pride are too substantial. Mandeville seems rather to refine his theory of the civilising process and therefore provides a more thorough discussion of hedonistic self-love and self-love as excessive pride.

in the *Search into the Nature of Society*, the term “self-love” is used in a rather ambiguous way. Two principal uses can be distinguished, which will be reflected in the later distinction between self-love and self-liking.

1. In the first part of the *Fable*, the term “self-love” is sometimes used in the sense of the hedonistic concept of self-love. Mandeville relies considerably on psychological hedonism. In the *Search*, he claims that “we are always forc’d to do what we please.”³⁰ We have seen that the *Enquiry* begins with the claim that “all untaught Animals are only solicitous of pleasing themselves, and naturally follow the bent of their own Inclinations, without considering the good or harm that from their being pleased will accrue to others.”³¹ From this point of view, human beings are not different from animals. They only have a more complex structure of self-directed desires, appetites, and passions. The civilising process will not change this; it will only modify the direction of some emotions. But all desires, appetites and passions, in the end, can be traced back to the search for pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Mandeville relates this to self-preservation:

There is nothing so universally sincere upon Earth, as the Love which all Creatures, that are capable of any, bear to themselves; and as there is no Love but what implies a Care to preserve the thing beloved, so there is nothing more sincere in any Creature than his Will, Wishes, and Endeavours to preserve himself. This is the Law of Nature, by which no Creature is endued with any Appetite or Passion but what either directly or indirectly tends to the Preservation either of himself or of his Species.

The Means by which Nature obliges every Creature continually to stir in this Business of Self-Preservation, are grafted in him, and (in Man) call’d Desires, which either compel him to crave what he thinks will sustain or please him, or command him to avoid what he imagines might displease, hurt or destroy him.³²

Hedonistic self-love, and the resulting pleasure-seeking and pain-avoiding behaviour, secures the self-preservation of the creature. Mandeville frequently encourages the view that *all* desires ultimately aim at pleasure

³⁰ Mandeville, “Search” , p. 349.

³¹ Mandeville, “Enquiry” , p. 41.

³² Mandeville, “Remarks” , p. 200.

for the agent.³³ Note, however, that in the quoted passage he also mentions the preservation of the species as one of the possible objects of one's passions. It will be argued below that self-preservation seems to be an effect of pleasure-seeking and pain-avoiding behaviour rather than its goal. The same holds for the preservation of the species.

In the same passage, Mandeville uses the terms "passions", "appetites", and "desires". Throughout his writings, he does not seem to have provided a typology of the emotions that would allow him to distinguish clearly between desires, passions, affections, instincts and appetites; nor does he distinguish between calm and violent emotions, which might allow a refined view of their moral value. This is tailored to corroborate his negative answer to the Human Nature Question, in which passions and moral corruption are tied together. However, amongst the states of mind that motivate actions, he seems to distinguish roughly between *appetites* or *instincts* (such as hunger and lust, which he calls the principal appetites³⁴), which do not presuppose a representation of external objects, and *desires* or *passions* (such as fear, anger, pity etc.), which do presuppose a representation or "apprehension"³⁵. All "center in Self-Love"³⁶, however, and none can be influenced by reason, since only passions can counteract passions.³⁷

2. On the other hand, the term "self-love" is more frequently associated with self-love as excessive pride – the French Augustinians' *amour-propre*. In the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour*, Mandeville elaborates this concept and calls it "self-liking". In the first part of the *Fable*, the term "self-love" is frequently used in the context of Mandeville's discussion of the importance of flattery and pride in the

³³ Cf. e.g. Mandeville, "Search" , p. 348: "But be we Savages or Politicians, it is impossible that Man, mere fallen Man, should act with any other View but to please himself while he has the Use of his Organs, and the greatest Extravagancy either of Love or Despair can have no other Centre."

³⁴ Mandeville, "Remarks" , pp. 202, 204.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 201.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 75; and Mandeville, "Search" , p. 344.

³⁷ Mandeville, "Remarks" , p. 201f.

civilising process. This process involves the modification and restriction of one's natural impulses, in order to give access to new sources of pleasure.

As to flattery and pride, he writes:

The meanest Wretch puts an inestimable value upon himself, and the highest wish of the Ambitious Man is to have all the World, as to that particular, of his Opinion. [...] A Man, who is conscious of having perform'd a noble Action, enjoys in Self-love, whilst he is thinking on the Applause he expects of others.³⁸

To discuss the concept of self-love as excessive pride in greater detail, we will now look at his analyses in the second part of the *Fable* (1729) and in the *Origin of Honour* (1732).

2.1.2. The distinction between “self-love” and “self-liking” in the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Enquiry* into the Origin of Honour

In his later writings, Mandeville refines his theory of self-love and elaborates a distinction between “self-love” or hedonistic self-love, and “self-liking” or self-love as excessive pride.³⁹

a) In the second part of the *Fable*, Mandeville claims that “Self-love was given to all Animals, at least, the most perfect, for Self-Preservation”⁴⁰. Yet, neither in the second part of the *Fable* nor in the *Origin of Honour* does Mandeville give a very detailed account of what he refers to by the term “self-love”. He distinguishes self-love from self-liking, the latter being self-love as excessive pride, and claims that the two are “plainly distinct”⁴¹. Because of what he has to say on the problem of suicide in connection with self-liking, and because he associates self-love with self-preservation as in the discussions analysed above, “self-

³⁸ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 54f.

³⁹ Rousseau's distinction between “amour de soi” and “amour-propre” shares a series of features with Mandeville's distinction between self-love and self-liking. Rousseau's *amour-propre* is a comparative and competitive form of love for oneself, as the Mandevillian *self-liking* and the French Augustinian's *amour-propre*. Rousseau's *amour de soi* is closely tied to self-preservation as Mandevillian *self-love*. However, there are far-reaching differences: Mandeville assumes that *self-liking* is as natural as *self-love* for human beings after the Fall. In Rousseau, the morally corrupt passion of *amour-propre* is a product of the civilising process.

⁴⁰ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 129.

⁴¹ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 3.

love” is best interpreted in terms of the *hedonistic concept of self-love*.⁴²

Self-love is a fundamental motivational power that makes the creature seek pleasure and avoid pain.

This reading suggests the following link between hedonistic self-love and self-preservation: Hedonistic self-love has as its normal effect that the individual preserves its own life, without necessarily intending it.⁴³ Normally, hedonistic self-love, and the resulting pleasure-seeking and pain-avoiding behaviour leads to the preservation of the creature, but there is no essential link between the former and the latter. As we shall see in section 2.2., Mandeville claims that hedonistic self-love can prompt us to suicide if self-liking (i.e. self-love as excessive pride) is totally absent. On this reading, hedonistic self-love is an unspecified source of motives and desires, which have pleasure and pain for the agent as their objects. An agent loves herself or acts out of self-love in this sense, if she acts on a self-directed hedonistic desire, i.e. if she intends to procure herself pleasure or to avoid pain. The normal effect of this kind of behaviour is that she preserves herself.

In the second part of the *Fable*, Mandeville adds that self-love, in the state of nature,

[...] would first make [a creature] scrape together every thing it wanted for Sustenance, provide against the Injuries of the Air, and do every thing to make itself and young Ones secure. Self-liking would make it seek for Opportunities, by Gestures, Looks, and Sounds, to display the Value it has for itself, superiour to what it has for others.⁴⁴

Self-love, in the state of nature, causes behaviour that secures self-preservation. In contrast, self-liking rather puts the creature in danger.

b) *Self-liking*, which Mandeville distinguishes from hedonistic self-love, is said to be “that *great Value*, which all Individuals set upon their

⁴² Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.1.

⁴³ Mandeville, *Fable*, Volume II, p. 139.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 133.

own Persons; that *high Esteem*, which I take all Men to be born with for themselves. [My emphases]”⁴⁵ Self-liking is not self-love as self-esteem, however, and it involves much more than just a kind of psychological primacy of self-concern over other-concern. Firstly, self-liking makes the individual value itself *more than all other* creatures – it is linked with a belief in one’s superiority over all others. Self-liking is the creature’s “real liking to its own Being, *superior* to what they have to *any other* [My emphasis].”⁴⁶ Secondly, Mandeville claims that human beings not only have a high esteem of themselves, but that they *overestimate* their own value. Self-liking is an instinct, given from nature, “by which every Individual values itself *above its real Worth* [My emphasis].”⁴⁷ Mandeville does not explain in greater detail what the real worth of an individual consists in, but he seems to contrast subjective self-approbation with the objective reality of mankind after the Fall: The self-approbation involved in self-liking is not justified, since after the Fall all human beings are equally corrupt and incapable of being morally virtuous.⁴⁸ From the moral point of view, which seems to be the only criterion to justify self-approbation in Mandeville, no human agent is justified in approving of herself. Thirdly, Mandeville’s detailed description of the consequences of self-liking, and his discussion of the origins of politeness in society⁴⁹ make it obvious that self-liking engenders competitive behavioural tendencies that are problematic for society, unless the passion is modified by politicians: “Self-liking would make [the creature] seek for Opportunities, by Gestures, Looks, and Sounds, to display the Value it has for itself, superiour to what it has for others.”⁵⁰ Unmodified self-liking causes

⁴⁵ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 3

⁴⁶ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 129.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 130. The same point is highlighted about pride in Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 124, where Mandeville claims that “every Mortal that has any Understanding over-values, and imagines better Things of himself than any impartial Judge, thoroughly acquainted with all his Qualities and Circumstances, could allow him.”

⁴⁸ Mandeville’s moral theory will be discussed in section 4 of this chapter.

⁴⁹ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 138.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 133. Cf. also Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 6.

conflicts, as we shall see in section 3.1. Self-liking is thus *self-love as excessive pride*.⁵¹

Mandeville then points out a problem with the belief in one's superiority. Human beings are generally intelligent enough to have at least a suspicion that they overvalue themselves, or that their belief in their own superiority, which is caused by an instinct⁵², is in reality not justified. The valuing oneself over one's real worth and over the worth of others

[...] in us, I mean, in Man, seems to be accompany'd with a Diffidence, arising from a Consciousness, or at least an Apprehension, that we do over-value 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.⁵³

Self-liking and, especially, the belief in one's superiority are undermined by the (correct) belief or apprehension that the superior value the agent attributes to herself is not justified. Such doubts are raised by the apprehension of others expressing their own beliefs in their superior value (but not because of the recognition that the belief in one's superiority, in reality, is incorrect). Mandeville highlights a far-reaching consequence of this situation: The passion of self-liking (i.e. self-love as excessive pride) is in danger, and therefore human beings' *love of praise* is strengthened.⁵⁴ Being praised gives the agent an external confirmation of her own value and reinforces her belief in her superiority. This confirmation is needed to overcome the doubts which put the gratification of self-liking in danger. Mandeville regularly highlights the power of love of praise in human motivation and explains that many apparently benevolent actions are in fact motivated by love of praise, i.e. by a selfish desire for approbation from other agents.⁵⁵ Ultimately, this serves the passion of self-liking. On

⁵¹ Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.4.

⁵² Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 130.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 130.

⁵⁴ Again, we can note the parallel to Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre", pp. 183ff.: "Que la plus générale inclination qui naisse de l'amour-propre est le désir d'être aimé."

⁵⁵ Cf. Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 130; Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, pp. 4, 6. Cf. furthermore Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 55.

this point, our analysis contradicts Lovejoy, who claims that pride or self-liking in Mandeville is approbateness, i.e. self-love as love of praise.⁵⁶ Mandeville clearly treats love of praise as a consequence of self-liking, i.e. of self-love as excessive pride.

Mandeville emphasises that human beings accept and even indulge in praise when they suspect that the praise is inappropriate or rests on false assumptions. Human beings are so eager to be praised that *any* praise is welcome and will provide them joy.⁵⁷ They do not distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate praise, which might serve as a criterion to distinguish between “love of true glory” and “love of vanity”, as suggested by Adam Smith (as well as Hutcheson and Campbell).⁵⁸ Praise is an “imaginary” reward⁵⁹, which is solely based on human beings’ susceptibility to flattery, and which provides the receiver with unjustified “superlative Felicity”.⁶⁰ Yet, besides the pleasures of being praised for false reasons, it does not involve any benefits.

An increase in self-love as love of praise is not the only consequence of the insecurity of the gratification of self-liking. In the state of nature, where manners are not yet cultivated in a social context with others who share the same problematic feature, human beings tend to display their assumed superiority in a way that offends others.⁶¹ Others’ expression of their self-liking tends to undermine one’s own self-liking. Therefore, human beings in the state of nature tend not only to be egoistic, but also competitive and aggressive in order to secure their self-liking.⁶² Self-

⁵⁶ Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 171.

⁵⁷ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 7. Cf. the discussion of this subject in chapter I, section 3.2.2.

⁵⁸ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 364: VII, II, IV, 7.

⁵⁹ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 42. In the context of Mandeville’s discussion of honour and shame, he indicates what makes a reward imaginary: the pleasurable experience is caused by something that “has no Existence but in our own Reflection on the Opinion of others.” Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 95.

⁶⁰ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 55.

⁶¹ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 133.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 138. Cf. furthermore Bernard Mandeville, “An Essay on Charity, and Charity-Schools” in *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The First Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1723]), p. 281.

deception provides another way of securing the gratification of the passion of self-liking in spite of the awareness that it rests on a false belief. Mandeville also frequently emphasises the human tendency to conceal the real motives for one's actions from others and from oneself.⁶³ This will be discussed in more detail in section 3.

Mandeville calls self-liking a *passion*.⁶⁴ Without drawing any distinction between calm, controllable and violent, uncontrollable emotions, he emphasises that we cannot govern our passions and that they cannot be counteracted by reason - only by other passions.⁶⁵ Still, self-liking can have different degrees of strength, from "excessive" to "moderate and well regulated"⁶⁶ to weak or even absent, which is unnatural. Mandeville highlights that there is a policy with respect to the names that are given to the different degrees of self-liking:

[Self-liking], when it is moderate and well regulated, excites in us the Love of Praise, and a Desire to be applauded and thought well of by others: but that the same Passion, when it is excessive, or ill turn'd, whatever it excites in our Selves, gives Offence to others, renders us odious, and is call'd *Pride* [my emphasis].⁶⁷

And:

When it is kept out of Sight, or is well disguis'd as not to appear in its own Colours, *it has no Name*, tho' Men act from that and no other Principle [my emphasis].⁶⁸

Self-liking in both its moderate and its excessive degree results in self-love as love of praise. Self-liking increases love of praise due to the insecurity of the belief in the agent's own superiority in view of others' expressions of their own self-liking. *Moderate* self-liking is not offensive to others, since it may be concealed in a civilised society. This concealment

⁶³ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 139. Cf. furthermore Mandeville, "Remarks", pp. 135 and 230; Mandeville, "Essay on Charity", pp. 281f.

⁶⁴ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 2 and Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 138.

⁶⁵ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 201.

⁶⁶ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 6f.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 6f.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

is essential for social practices like politeness, but it remains a form of self-love as excessive pride, since it involves the belief in one's superiority as well as modified tendencies to express superiority and to compete with others. When self-liking is *excessive*, however, it cannot be concealed and is necessarily offensive to other agents, since they see their own self-liking and the belief in their own superiority undermined by the others' displaying their belief in their own superiority. In this case, self-liking is given the names of "pride" or "vanity" in a civilised society.⁶⁹ One of the main goals for politicians in the civilising process is thus to move the subjects to conceal their self-liking in order to avoid tensions with others members of society.

When discussing *honour*, *politeness* and related social practices, Mandeville claims that they function on the basis of the psychological mechanisms of self-liking. For the civilising process, self-liking is far more important than self-love. In the *Origin of Honour*, Mandeville discusses pride and shame, which have honour and dishonour as their objects. He corrects his earlier view in *Remark C* in the first part of the *Fable*, where he took pride and shame to be two distinct passions.⁷⁰ In the *Origin of Honour*, he claims that they are different "symptoms" of the same passion of self-liking. Only a creature that is subject to the passion of self-liking can be affected with pride or shame. Thus, they are "different Affections of one and the same Passion."⁷¹ Pride provides us pleasure, shame makes us feel pain. In the civilising process, they are tied to the artificial notions of honour and dishonour.⁷²

⁶⁹ Pride and vanity, according to Mandeville, are the same. He neither draws a distinction between justified and unjustified comparative self-esteem, nor between comparative and non-comparative self-esteem. It seems that in his view all forms of self-esteem are essentially comparative and competitive and, given man's corrupted nature, unjustified.

⁷⁰ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 67f.

⁷¹ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 13. It has to be noted that this unusual use of the term "affection" does not imply a distinction between calm and violent emotions.

⁷² Cf. our discussion in section 3.2.2.c) as well as Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 92 and 95.

2.1.3. Self-liking and self-love in Mandeville's analysis of suicide

The psychological hedonist, who puts forward an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, has to explain how it is possible that a creature, which according to his view is determined to seek pleasure and avoid pain, can deliberately commit suicide.⁷³ Mandeville suggests an interesting analysis of suicide as an interplay between self-love and self-liking. Whereas in the first part of the *Fable*, he claims that the search for pleasure is the only motive for human actions, he makes a different case in the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour* on several occasions: Not hedonistic self-love, but self-liking, i.e. self-love as excessive pride is the only motive for human actions: "Men act from that and no other Principle."⁷⁴ This thesis can be spelled out as the claim that all human actions are ultimately motivated by the desire to confirm one's belief in one's superiority over others, or by related desires, such as the desire to express the belief in one's superiority, or the desire to have one's belief confirmed through the approbation of others.

The claim that self-liking is the only motive for human actions needs to be discussed. It seems doubtful that Mandeville would maintain it even for actions that merely aim at the satisfaction of bodily appetites such as hunger. Furthermore, it has already been mentioned that Mandeville thinks that a creature's self-liking can have different degrees of strength, and even disappear entirely. Yet, we might say that Mandeville claims that self-liking is the only motive for human actions under the following conditions: Firstly, the action takes place in some kind of *social context*, where the belief in one's superiority can be undermined and / or sensibly expressed, and where love of praise can emerge. Secondly, the agent has a *minimal degree of self-liking*.

⁷³ Cf. Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, p. 114 on the Augustinian background in Mandeville's treatment of suicide. Furthermore, cf. our discussion of Campbell's account of suicide in chapter VI, section 2.1.

⁷⁴ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 3.

For Mandeville, the question of suicide emerges in cases where the passion of self-liking is absent, which is unnatural.⁷⁵ In the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour*, he suggests an analysis that rests on the absence of self-liking. Let us recall one of the passages where Mandeville distinguishes self-love and self-liking:

That self-love was given to all Animals, at least, the most perfect, for Self-Preservation, is not disputed; but as no Creature can love what it dislikes, it is necessary, moreover, that every one should have a real liking to its own Being, superior to what they have to any other. I am of Opinion, begging Pardon for the Novelty, that if this Liking was not always permanent, the Love, which all Creatures have for themselves, could not be so unalterable as we see it is.⁷⁶

Self-liking guarantees the effectiveness of hedonistic self-love for self-preservation by directing it to the well-being of one's beloved self. A few pages later, Mandeville claims that without self-liking, the creature "can taste no Pleasure"⁷⁷. The ability to have pleasurable experiences seems to presuppose that the creature has the passion of self-liking in some minimal degree. Thus, it will not commit suicide. Yet, if self-liking is entirely absent, hedonistic self-love will cause the agent to kill herself:

[N]o Man can resolve upon Suicide, whilst Self-liking lasts: but as soon as that is over, all our Hopes are extinct, and we can form no Wishes but for the Dissolution of our Frame: till at last our Being becomes so intollerable to us, that Self-love prompts us to make an end of it, and seek Refuge in Death.⁷⁸

In other words: Self-liking, the passion that is grounded in the belief in one's superior value over others, is the condition for hedonistic self-love to take the direction of self-preservation. If the creature has no self-liking, it will have a tendency to avoid the pain of being intolerable to itself by suicide. It is interesting to note that Mandeville seems to suggest that the

⁷⁵ When discussing the notion of self-denial in section 3.2.2.b), it will be suggested that even in the case of virtuous self-denial, which requires the voluntary frustration of the passion of self-liking, the passion is still there.

⁷⁶ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 129. In *Remark R*, however, he relates the action of committing suicide to "Horror against Shame"⁷⁶, i.e. to a kind of fear. Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 209. On this account, the aversion to shame can grow so strong as to override the aversion to death.

⁷⁷ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 136.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

absence of the passion of self-liking is the same as self-hatred. There is no neutral state with respect to one's self. Also, he does not discuss the case of the agent who thinks of herself as equal to others, and likes herself for that reason. It is an Augustinian feature of his anthropology that it is clearly determined to draw a picture of man as a selfish and unduly proud creature – maybe at the cost of accuracy.

Mandeville's assertion that hedonistic self-love prompts the agent to suicide, exerting itself as a tendency to avoid pain in case self-liking has ceased, supports the view that there is no essential link between self-love and self-preservation. Self-love, the motivating source for pleasure-seeking and pain-avoiding behaviour, normally has self-preservation as its effect. However, this holds only if the creature has a minimal degree of self-liking. If the creature loses the belief in her superiority, it becomes intolerable to itself, and then pain-avoiding behaviour will prompt her to self-annihilation. Mandeville claims in his analysis of the civilising process that excessive self-liking can also lead to self-destruction by making the creature go to war or to engage in the practice of duelling. This has its roots in the concept of honour and the passion of fear of shame, which we will examine in section 2 of this chapter.

2.2. The passions of fear, anger and pity

Self-love, i.e. hedonistic self-love, and self-liking, i.e. self-love as excessive pride, are the two fundamental passions in human nature according to Mandeville. All other passions "centre" in them, which seems best understood in the sense that the other passions are instrumental to furthering the self-directed aims of self-love (experiencing pleasure, avoiding pain) and self-liking (confirming the belief in one's superiority). Mandeville analyses other passions and distinguishes simple passions from

complex or compound ones.⁷⁹ Examples of simple passions are fear, anger and pity. They will be focused on here because of their relevance to the civilising process.⁸⁰ Complex passions are compounds of simple passions. Jealousy, for example, is a compound of “Love, Hope, Fear, and a great deal of Envy”⁸¹.

It has been highlighted above that according to Mandeville, the individual cannot control her passions by reason. Only other passions of superior strength can successfully oppose a passion. During the civilising process, skilful politicians modify the individual’s passions by redirecting them to new objects, or by inciting passions that oppose others.⁸² It is the task of the politicians to accomplish this modification in order to make creatures governable and in order to create a stable society. The following simple passions are especially relevant for the civilising process.

2.2.1. Fear

Fear is defined as “the Passion that is rais’d in us when we apprehend that Mischief is approaching us”⁸³. Fear is egoistic, since it concerns the agent’s well-being. Mandeville highlights that its violence or strength is not proportional to an objective degree of danger, but to the agent’s representation or apprehension of the danger. Thus, it is possible to feel fear of something that is no real danger (which is the case in fear of

⁷⁹ Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 140.

⁸⁰ Paulette Carrive suggests to include pride as a further simple passion, distinct from self-liking. However, Mandeville’s discussion in the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour* does not allow for this interpretation. According to Carrive, “orgueil [pride] et amour-propre [self-liking] sont distincts comme l’effet et la cause (II, 136), et aussi comme le vice et l’innocence.” Cf. Paulette Carrive, *Bernard Mandeville. Passions, Vices, Vertus* (Paris: Vrin, 1980), p. 47. This interpretation is based upon a passage in the second part of the *Fable*, where Cleomenes, Mandeville’s voice, takes up Horatius’ summary of their conversation, that “Self-liking is evidently Pride”, and replies as follows: “I believe it is, or at least the Cause of it. [My emphasis]” Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 131. Carrive’s interpretation does not take into consideration the first part of the sentence, nor the further evidence for claiming that the term “pride” refers to a excessive degree of self-liking. In the *Origin of Honour*, Mandeville is very clear about the fact that the term is used to refer to the passion of self-liking “when it is excessive, or ill turn’d, whatever it excites in our Selves, gives Offence to others, renders us odious”. Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 6.

⁸¹ Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 141.

⁸² Cf. our discussion in section 3 of the present chapter.

⁸³ Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 200.

shame), or to feel no fear of something that is a real danger (which is the case in war or duelling). Naturally, human beings are afraid of *death*, which is essential for self-preservation. In a civilised state, however, another kind of fear can be stronger than fear of death: fear of *shame*, which is based on the concept of honour.

It is fear of shame that allows politicians to influence the citizens' behaviour, since fear of shame "varies with Modes and Customs, and may be fix'd on different Objects, according to the Lessons we have receiv'd, and the Precepts we are imbued with"⁸⁴. The passion, fear of shame, is *real* in Mandeville's terminology, but its object is imaginary, since "the Evil to be fear'd from it is altogether imaginary, and has no Existence but in our own Reflection on the Opinion of others."⁸⁵ In other words: the passion is really felt, but the evil represented does not exist independent of the agent's mind. This is different with bodily pains or death. Fear, Mandeville claims, is "the only useful Passion then that Man is posses'd of toward the Peace and Quiet of a Society."⁸⁶ Here emerges a difference between Hobbes' and Mandeville's theories of the conditions of stability in the civilised state: whereas Hobbes claims that fear of *death* is the passion that prevents the citizens from going back to the state of nature, Mandeville claims that fear of *shame* is much more important for the persistence of society.

2.2.2. Anger

The contrary passion to fear, and the passion which is apt to overcome the passion of fear, is anger.⁸⁷ It is "that Passion which is rais'd in us when we are cross'd or disturb'd in our Desires."⁸⁸ Like fear, anger is linked with self-preservation. Under normal conditions, the satisfaction of the agent's

⁸⁴ Mandeville, *Fable*, Volume II, p. 95.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 95.

⁸⁶ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 206.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 202.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 202.

desires leads to the preservation of herself. In an excessive degree, however, anger can lead to the destruction of the creature. Anger has to be curbed to make a stable civilised society possible. It is generally opposed by fear of punishment.⁸⁹ Courage, which is naturally based on anger, should not be totally eradicated in a civilised society, since without it the subjects will be unable to defend their state against enemies. During the civilising process, however, pride replaces natural courage.

The strength of the desires that cannot be satisfied influences in turn the strength of the passion of anger. Naturally, this concerns the two principal appetites of *hunger* and *lust*, which guarantee the preservation of the creature and of the species.⁹⁰ “[I]n all Brute Beasts the Proneness to Anger and Obstinacy in fighting generally depend upon the Violence of either or both those Appetites together.”⁹¹ Obviously, anger is also raised if the gratification of the passion of self-liking is in danger, for example if another agent undermines the agent’s belief in her own superiority. Since this is one of the effects of self-liking’s expressive tendencies, these have to be suppressed in the civilising process to make society possible.

Mandeville discusses further simple and compound passions, such as envy⁹², hope⁹³, love⁹⁴, jealousy⁹⁵, malice⁹⁶. Due to its importance for the present study, we are now going to examine what he writes about the passion of pity.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 206.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 204. We must note that Mandeville, as mentioned already, does not clearly distinguish between desires, appetites and passions. However, we might think of the appetites of hunger or lust as feelings that give rise to desires for actions. In case the satisfaction of these desires is impossible, the passion of anger is raised, which again may give rise to desires for actions.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 205.

⁹² Ibid., 134

⁹³ Ibid., p. 141.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 142f.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 141.

⁹⁶ Mandeville, "Essay on Charity" , p. 259f.

2.2.3. Pity

Pity is another simple passion.⁹⁷ According to Mandeville's view in the *Essay on Charity*, pity is an impulse of nature, or a passion "which consists in a Fellow-feeling and Condolence for the Misfortunes and Calamities of others".⁹⁸ We have to note that this differs from Hobbes' widely discussed egoistic analysis in *Human Nature*. In the quoted passage, Mandeville does not claim that pity consists in an ultimate concern for one's own well-being. Is pity thus a passion that does not "centre" in self-love? Given this analysis, pity could motivate altruistic actions, which would conflict with Mandeville's psychological egoism.

In the *Enquiry*, however, Mandeville relies on an analysis of pity as a passion that motivates ultimately self-directed actions. He discusses this point in the context of an objection to the claim that human beings perform actions that are in accordance with virtue without the ultimate aim of gaining applause. Mandeville asserts that it is false to suppose that pity motivates actions with the ultimate goal of promoting others' well-being:

Pity, tho' it is the most gentle and the least mischievous of our Passions, is yet as much a Frailty of our Nature, as Anger, Pride, or Fear. The weakest Minds have generally the greatest Share of it, for which reason none are more Compassionate than Women and Children. It must be own'd, that of all our Weaknesses it is the most amiable, and bears the greatest Resemblance to Virtue; nay, without a considerable mix of it the Society could hardly subsist: But as it is an Impulse of Nature, that consults neither the publick Interest nor our own Reason, it may produce Evil as well as Good. It has help'd to destroy the Honour of Virgins, and corrupted the Integrity of Judges; and whoever acts from it as a Principle, what good soever he may bring to the Society, has nothing to boast of but that he has indulged a Passion that has happened to be beneficial to the Publick. There is no Merit in saving an innocent Babe ready to drop into the Fire: The

⁹⁷ Mandeville uses the term "compassion" as a synonym for pity. We will thus use the terms interchangeably. - For the importance of Mandeville's discussion for Rousseau, cf. e.g. Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 34 - 42.

⁹⁸ Mandeville, "Essay on Charity", p. 254. Pity is distinct from charity, which is "that Virtue by which part of that sincere Love we have for our selves is transferr'd pure and unmix'd to others, not tied to us by the Bonds of Friendship or Consanguinity, and even meer Strangers, whom we have no obligation to, nor hope or expect any thing from." According to Mandeville, pity resembles charity, and is often mistaken for it, but it is a mere passion without self-denial and does not count as a virtue. Mandeville, "Essay on Charity", p. 256.

Action is neither good nor bad, and what Benefit soever the Infant received, *we only obliged our selves; for to have seen it fall, and not strove to hinder it, would have caused a Pain, which Self-preservation compell'd us to prevent:* Nor has a rich Prodigal, that happens to be of a commiserating Temper, and loves to gratify his Passions, greater Virtue to boast of when he relieves an Object of Compassion with what to himself is a Trifle. [My emphasis]⁹⁹

Let us first focus on some general features of pity according to Mandeville. Pity is a passion that stops anger.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, it appears as amiable and is useful, even necessary for society.¹⁰¹ However, it only resembles moral virtue, yet does not require self-denial.¹⁰² As a passion, pity is not in the agent's voluntary control, and it is not informed by reason. In other words, it involves a judgment neither about the consequences of the actions it motivates, nor the needs of the person in misery. Hence, it cannot be said to aim at public interest. Actions motivated by pity can both promote and obstruct the well-being of others.¹⁰³ If an action motivated by pity has good consequences for others, this is by mere chance. Because it is a passion that does not require self-denial, pity does not have any intrinsic moral value, even in case it has beneficial consequences.

The point about pity being self-interested is stated in the last third of the quoted passage. On this point, Mandeville differs substantially from Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler. He claims in accordance with other Augustinians that pitiful actions, which involve attempts to bring relief to the sufferer, are not motivated by an ultimate concern for the other person's well-being. They are motivated by ultimately self-directed desires

⁹⁹ Mandeville, "Enquiry" , p. 56.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 56; Mandeville, "Essay on Charity" , p. 254; Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II* , p. 202.

¹⁰¹ However, Mandeville also highlights that pity can have harmful effects for society, for example if judges are influenced by it: Mandeville, "Essay on Charity" , p. 272.

¹⁰² This is what distinguishes the passion of pity from the virtue of charity: Cf. Ibid., pp. 253ff., 256. For Mandeville's concept of moral virtue, cf. section 4 of this chapter. On this point, Mandeville highlights again that we are often deceiving ourselves about our real motives and mistake pity for genuine charity: Mandeville, "Essay on Charity" , p. 282.

¹⁰³ Note that Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler all agree with Mandeville on this point. Yet, they differ in that they take the passion of pity to prove the reality of other-directed motives, as in the case of natural affections or benevolence.

to avoid pain for the agent herself. In his example, the passion of pity is raised upon the imagination of the baby suffering the pain of being burned. The action performed thereupon ultimately aims at avoiding the pain or uneasiness involved in observing such a scene, and has thus a self-directed goal. In another passage from the *Essay on Charity and Charity-Schools*, Mandeville says that pity

is raised in us, when the Sufferings and Misery of other Creatures make so forcible an Impression upon us, as to make us uneasy. It comes in either at the Eye or the Ear, or both; and the nearer and more violently the Object of Compassion [i.e. pity] strikes those Senses, the greater Disturbance it causes in us, often to such a Degree as to occasion great Pain and Anxiety.¹⁰⁴

There is a correlation between the intensity of pity and the intensity of the perception of another in distress. Mandeville does not attempt to explain *why* we feel distress in seeing others in distress, however. Interestingly, he does not claim with Hobbes that we imagine ourselves to be in the observed situation. Another possible answer would be that there is a psychological mechanism of sympathy, but he does not make this claim and merely marks *actions* motivated by pity as egoistic. His discussion of pity is ultimately tailored to reinforcing the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and, indirectly, the negative answer to the Human Nature Question.

In the *Enquiry*, Mandeville does not rely on the actual perception of someone in distress, but on the imagination of it. The central point, however, remains the same: When human beings imagine or perceive someone in distress, they become uneasy themselves. Actions that are motivated by pity ultimately aim at avoiding the agent's own pain or uneasiness, which is caused by the perception or imagination of someone else in distress. Bringing relief to the sufferer is only instrumental to furthering one's own well-being. Thus, even if the passion of pity involved a concern for the well-being of another agent, subsequent actions would

¹⁰⁴ Mandeville, "Essay on Charity", p. 254f.

still be motivated by the ultimately self-directed desire of avoiding pain for the agent herself. Hutcheson and Butler will attack this point.

3. Self-liking and the civilising process

In the previous section, Mandeville's distinction between self-love (hedonistic self-love) and self-liking (self-love as excessive pride) has been examined. It has already been mentioned that according to Mandeville, the civilising process does not have an impact on the fundamental framework of the passions, since in a civilised society, self-love and self-liking remain the fundamental motivational powers in human agents.¹⁰⁵ Given the problematic characteristics of the passion of self-liking, however, Mandeville needs to explain how a society of individuals that are determined by the passion of self-liking is possible. The worry is presented in Horatius' words: "This Self-liking, you say, was given to Creatures for Self-preservation;¹⁰⁶ I should think rather that it is hurtful to Men, because it must make them odious to one another."¹⁰⁷ What characterises a society of agents who are determined by self-liking, and how can the negative effects of the passion be corrected or avoided?¹⁰⁸

The present section treats Mandeville's account of the civilising process and the interplay with the human passions. We will first discuss

¹⁰⁵ This is a fundamental difference to Rousseau's conception of *amour-propre* as being caused by the civilising process.

¹⁰⁶ More precisely, the combination of self-love (which produces pleasure-seeking and pain-avoiding behaviour) and self-liking (which directs self-love towards the preservation of the beloved self) tends to the self-preservation of the creature.

¹⁰⁷ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 134. The same point is made in Nicole's story of the civilising process: Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre", p. 180.

¹⁰⁸ Mandeville's answers to these questions bear striking similarities to the Augustinian Pierre Nicole's answers in *De la charité et de l'amour-propre* in his *Essais de morale* (1671 – 1678). In order to illustrate the Augustinian background of Mandeville, we will occasionally draw attention to passages in Nicole.

the negative consequences of unmodified self-liking for a society of human beings. Then, we will concentrate on the civilising process, which makes a society of human beings possible by means of a modification of the passions. According to Mandeville, human beings did first group together for protection against wild animals. The problems that are produced by the mutual exposure to the consequences of each others' self-liking need now to be solved by "skilful politicians".¹⁰⁹ Flattery and the invention of honour, politeness and social virtues help to modify self-liking and make the individuals capable of living together, still allowing them to gratify their self-liking. Other passions such as fear and anger are redirected to new objects (fear of shame becomes stronger than fear of death) or opposed by other passions (anger is restricted by fear of punishment). The problematic passion of self-liking proves to be the element in human nature which, given an appropriate set of rules of behaviour, makes a stable society possible. This point will then lead us to a discussion of some aspects of Mandeville's moral theory in section 4.

3.1. The problematic consequences of self-liking

There are several striking differences between Mandeville's and Shaftesbury's views of human nature and society. Shaftesbury assumes that human beings have natural kind affections to the other members of their species, which incline them to promote others' well-being, and which make them form societies. Mandeville himself comments on his opposition to Shaftesbury:

This Noble Writer (for it is the Lord *Shaftesbury* I mean in his *Characteristicks*) Fancies, that as Man is made for Society, so he ought to be born with a kind Affection to the whole, of which he is a part, and a Propensity to seek the Welfare of it. [...] The attentive reader, who perused

¹⁰⁹ M. M. Goldsmith, *Private Vices, Public Benefits. Bernard Mandeville's Social and Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 47-77 provides a discussion of Mandeville's account of the civilising process and of his notion of the skilful politicians.

the foregoing part of this Book, will soon perceive that two Systems cannot be more opposite than his Lordship's and mine. [...] I design to expatiate on some things which hitherto I have but slightly touch'd upon, in order to convince the Reader, not only that the good and amiable Qualities of Man are not those that make him beyond other Animals a sociable Creature; but moreover that it would be utterly impossible, either to raise any Multitudes into a Populous, Rich and Flourishing Nation, or when so rais'd, to keep and maintain them in that Condition, without the assistance of what we call Evil both Natural and Moral.¹¹⁰

Mandeville neither denies the possibility of a well-functioning society, nor that man is made for society. He denies, however, that there are natural kind affections, and that society is founded on them. Instead he claims “that what we call Evil in this World, Moral as well as Natural, is the grand Principle that makes us sociable Creatures”.¹¹¹ This point is closely linked with his analysis of self-liking.

Several problematic characteristics of the passion of self-liking or self-love as excessive pride have already been pointed out. It involves an overestimation of one's own value in comparison with others, going hand in hand with tendencies to display this supposed superiority, to compete with others, and to desire to have one's superiority acknowledged and confirmed by others. Self-liking causes an increase in self-love as love of praise. This is reinforced by the fact that the human agent is more or less aware that her belief in her superiority is not justified.

The predominance of the passion of self-liking in human nature has problematic consequences for groups of human agents. Their shared tendencies to express their supposed superiority over the others and to seek confirmation cannot be satisfied altogether. As a consequence, hate and anger emerge:

[F]rom the nature of that Passion [i.e. self-liking] it must follow, that all untaught Men will ever be hateful to one another in Conversation, where neither Interest nor Superiority are consider'd: for if of two Equals one only values himself more by half, than he does the other; tho' that other should

¹¹⁰ Mandeville, "Search", pp. 323 – 325.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 369.

value the first equally with himself, they would both be dissatisfied, if their Thoughts were known to each other: but if both valued themselves more by half, than they did each other, the difference between them would still be greater, and a Declaration of their Sentiments would render them both insufferable to each other; which among unciviliz'd Men would happen every Moment, because without a Mixture of Art and Trouble, the outward Symptoms of that Passion are not to be stifled.¹¹²

“Untaught”, i.e. uncivilised human beings in the state of nature, dominated by self-liking and without control of their natural passions, must necessarily be in conflict when together. The structure of the passion of self-liking entails that, whenever two human beings come together and display the “outward Symptoms of that Passion”, self-liking cannot be gratified in either of them. Their respective beliefs in their own superiority over the others are mutually exclusive. The competing claims cannot be true, and because both agents’ passion of self-liking brings about the tendency to express their respective beliefs, their mutual presence will become unbearable to them - unless there is an institutionally established superiority, such as between a king and his subject, or unless both have private interests that can be promoted by the other’s presence. Otherwise, human agents will constantly violate the others’ self-liking by acting in order to gratify their own. The passion of self-liking – due to its tendency to make the agent display “the most natural Symptoms”¹¹³ of the high value she has of herself, and to seek external confirmation of this superiority – makes the peaceful coexistence of two agents subjected to self-liking impossible. Thus, self-love as excessive pride poses a serious problem for a society of human agents. In the civilising process, this must be solved. The contrast with Shaftesbury’s view of human nature as naturally tending to society is striking.

¹¹² Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 138. Nicole, “De la charité et de l’amour-propre”, p. 180 highlights that “l’amour-propre des autres hommes s’oppose à tous les désirs du nôtre.”

¹¹³ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 138.

A slightly different point is emphasised in the first part of the *Fable*. In the *Enquiry*, Mandeville claims that the natural instincts of human agents, as untaught animals, make it difficult to keep them in a community. The *diversity* and *number* of appetites in human beings, as well as their comparatively powerful understanding, which allows them to use rather complex means to gratify their appetites, furthermore their being “extraordinary selfish and headstrong, as well as cunning”,¹¹⁴ creates serious problems. Mandeville concludes that force alone cannot make human beings tractable. The *fewer* desires a creature has, the easier it is for itself and for others¹¹⁵, and the more fit it is for society. Human agents are driven by a great variety of desires, and therefore there is a high probability that there are desires that cannot be satisfied. *Anger* is raised whenever the gratification of passions, desires or appetites is disturbed. On this basis, Mandeville claims that

[...] an Hundred of them that should be all Equals, under no Subjection, of Fear of any Superior upon Earth, could never Live together awake Two Hours without Quarrelling, and the more Knowledge, Strength, Wit, Courage and Resolution there was among them, the worse it would be.¹¹⁶

Not only the particular passion of self-liking but also the sheer diversity of the human passions pose problems for a society of human agents. Given these psychological facts about “untaught”, i.e. uncivilised human agents, Mandeville must provide an explanation for the fact that societies exist and how they came about. He does this in his theory of the civilising process.

¹¹⁴ Mandeville, "Enquiry" , p. 42.

¹¹⁵ Mandeville, "Search" , p. 355.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 348.

3.2. A reconstruction of the civilising process

In Hobbes' account of the origin of society, it is the *fear of a violent death* that unites individual creatures and prompts them to take the instrumentally rational decision to accept a contract in order to leave the state of nature. Later, it is fear of death by punishment and fear of death by going back to the highly insecure state of nature that maintains them in society. Neither Hobbes nor Mandeville presuppose "amiable qualities" as the basis for society. They also agree that fear of death is a primary motive for uniting in small groups. Mandeville, however, has a different story to tell about the reasons that keep human agents in society. His account of the civilising process does not rely on any contractualist elements, but on a process of modification of the passions, which makes the civilising process irreversible. He emphasises that the motive for staying in society is not fear of *death*, but fear of *shame*, thus an "imaginary evil" that "has no Existence but in our own Reflection on the Opinion of others."¹¹⁷ In other words, self-liking or self-love as excessive pride guarantees a stable society.

3.2.1. Protection against wild animals as the origin of society

According to Mandeville in the second part of the *Fable*¹¹⁸, the first reason human beings had to form families or small groups in the state of nature, was to protect themselves more effectively against attacks from wild animals – in other words for self-preservation and the preservation of the species.¹¹⁹ However, without further measures, these societies are extremely unstable due to the passion of self-liking. "The second Step to Society, is the Danger Men are in from one another: for which we are beholden to that stanch Principle of Pride [i.e. self-liking] and Ambition,

¹¹⁷ Mandeville, *Fable*, Volume II, p. 95.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 230f.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 230.

that all Men are born with”¹²⁰. The constitution of their passions makes human agents, or the families in which they group, a danger for each other. Given this, Mandeville claims that

[...] if by Society we only mean a Number of People, that without Rule or Government should keep together out of a natural Affection to their Species or Love of Company, as a Herd of Cows or a Flock of Sheep, then there is not in the World a more unfit Creature for Society than Man.¹²¹

The groups that have been formed in order to provide more security against wild animals must now be transformed into societies with rules of behaviour and governance. The goal is to avoid the conflicts that are unavoidable in a primitive society due to the passion of self-liking. The transformation process rests basically upon a complex play on the natural features of human psychology. Without further discussion of their special status, their interests, and their origin, nor about the laws they formulate, Mandeville presupposes the existence of what he calls “skilful politicians”, or “moralists”, who establish and maintain society by manipulating the subjects’ passions.¹²² The government has its origin neither in a contract nor in any kind of natural sociability. However, a transformation of the psychological constitution of the members of society is necessary, given the problematic features of man’s untaught nature. The process of transformation is managed by skilful politicians, who manipulate the passion of self-liking and make it useful for society.¹²³

3.2.2. The process of civilisation and human psychology

a) Fear of punishment opposes anger

Anger, a simple passion in human nature, has harmful consequences for society. It arises when the gratification of passions is disturbed. The first step to secure society consists in controlling the passion of anger in the

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 266.

¹²¹ Mandeville, "Search", p. 347.

¹²² Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, pp. 42f., pp. 208f.; Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 128, p. 321.

¹²³ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 124.

subjects. This is achieved with the institution of a legal framework and by threatening the members of society with punishments.¹²⁴

The first Care therefore of all Governments is by severe Punishment to curb his Anger when it does hurt, and so by increasing his Fears prevent the Mischief it might produce. When various Laws to restrain him using Force are strictly executed, Self-Preservation must teach him to be peaceable [...]¹²⁵

Fear of punishment opposes anger and provides a first motive for the agent to control her behaviour. According to what has been said above about the link between hedonistic self-love and self-preservation, it seems appropriate to claim that hedonistic self-love motivates the agents to act according to the laws that have been instituted in order to avoid the pains involved in punishment. On this point, Mandeville follows Hobbes, and claims that fear is the “only useful Passion then that Man is posses’d of toward the Peace and Quiet of a Society”¹²⁶. However, society needs to defend itself against external threats. Anger is the basis for natural courage, and courage is needed in war. Thus, in the civilising process anger and natural courage have to be replaced by artificial courage, which is based on pride and fear of shame.¹²⁷

b) Rules of politeness and self-denial

Besides the control of anger, the main problem that must be solved in the civilising process lies in the problematic potential of the passion of self-liking. Rules for behaviour are needed to promote the concealment of the expressive tendencies of self-liking, which cause the most serious

¹²⁴ In the context of the legal framework invoked here, Heath interpretes Hundert as speaking of a model of ruling with the *visible* hand. On this basis, there will be an unintended evolution of nonlegal social norms of behaviour, which is the ruling of the *invisible* hand. Cf. Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable. Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society*, pp. 75 – 77 and Eugene Heath, "Mandeville's Bewitching Engine of Praise" *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (1998), p. 207. In my view, however, Heath, "Mandeville's Bewitching Engine of Praise", p. 211 misreads Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 47, as presupposing a legal framework for the development of nonlegal social norms of behaviour. This may be true in his account in the second part of the *Fable*, but not in the *Enquiry*, where Mandeville wants to show that society is entirely based on flattery.

¹²⁵ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 206.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 207 – 211.

problems for any group of human agents. It renders human beings unbearable, “insufferable” and “hateful” to each other and threatens the cohesion of society.¹²⁸ The agent’s belief in her own superiority is undermined by the expression of the self-liking of others. Therefore the passion is in danger, and anger is raised. The concealment of the passion of self-liking avoids these consequences, and the means to conceal the passion are “what we call good Manners and Politeness.”¹²⁹

What exactly are politeness and good manners? In the voice of Cleomenes, Mandeville insists on a claim he previously made in the first part of the *Fable*, namely that “all good Manners consist in flattering the Pride of others, and concealing our own.”¹³⁰ Politeness and good manners have two principal aspects. Firstly, they involve praising and flattering others, and thus indirectly gratifying their self-liking by satisfying their love of praise. Since the praising agent still believes in her own superiority over the praised person, the praise cannot be sincere. Even if the praised person may be aware of this, the praise is still causally efficient due to the eagerness of being praised. Secondly, politeness involves concealing one’s own self-liking by suppressing or denying its expressive tendencies, and thus refraining from offending other agents’ self-liking. It has to be noted, however, that the concealment of a passion’s expressive tendencies is not the same as frustrating the passion. Rather, politeness is still rooted in self-love and self-liking.¹³¹

A clarifying note on the crucial notion of *self-denial*¹³² is required. It is important to see that Mandeville speaks of “self-denial” in two different

¹²⁸ Mandeville, *Fable*, Volume II, p. 138.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 138.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 108.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 133.

¹³² The notion of self-denial, or of the denial of one’s corrupt and fallen nature, is essential to Augustinianism. In chapter VI, section 3.4.2. we will see how Campbell has to defend his theory against the charges of the Church of Scotland that it contradicts the “divine Commands to Self-denial”. Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks upon some Passages in Books Publish’d by Mr. Archibald Campbell, S.T.P. Professor of Divinity and Ecclesiastical History in the University of St.*

senses. Mainly in the first part of the *Fable*, where the distinction between self-love and self-liking is not yet introduced, he associates self-denial with the modification and concealment of one's natural passions during the civilising process.¹³³ In this sense, the "denial" of one's natural passions and appetites consists in their redirection towards new objects (fear of death becomes fear of shame), in their concealment or opposing by other, stronger passions (anger is opposed by fear of death). It also includes not giving way to self-liking's expressive tendencies, yet it is compatible with the satisfaction of self-liking in a modified social framework. The passion of self-liking, and selfish impulses in general, do not have to be frustrated or suppressed. This form of self-denial, which involves the *modification* of the passions, but not their frustration, is perfectly compatible with acting on selfish desires and with gratifying one's self-liking. This shall be referred to as the *weak sense of self-denial*.

In his later writings, Mandeville uses the term "self-denial" in a different sense, which involves the denial of self-liking in the sense of its voluntary frustration.¹³⁴ This shall be referred to as the *strong sense of self-denial*. As we shall see in section 4, it is obvious from his distinction between moral virtue and the social virtues that the mere *modification* of one's natural passions (i.e. self-denial in the weak sense, which is required by the social virtues) is different from self-denial in the strong sense of *frustration* of the passions, which is required for moral virtue. The

Andrews, with His Explications on them. (Committee of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for Purity of Doctrine) (1735), p. 9.

¹³³ Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 42; Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 222.

¹³⁴ In Bernard Mandeville, *Free Thoughts on religion, the Church, and National Happiness* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, London: Friedrich Fromann Verlag (Günther Holzboog), 1969 [1729]), pp. 8f., he says about the difficulties of self-denial in the sense of the frustration of one's passions: "The greatest difficulty of our religion is to live up to the rules of christianity. To conquer our passions, and mortify our darling lusts, is, what few of us set about in earnest [...]. [A]ll the rules of morality, and other duties incumbent on a christian, are not to be perform'd for any worldly consideration, or other reason, but the love of GOD and holiness; and consequently, that to judge from our actions, we ought to enquire into the motives that set us to work." Modifying one's passions for a "worldly consideration", for example in view of the praise of others, is thus not self-denial in the strong sense. According to the *Free Thoughts*, it must be done for the love of God: "The chief duty then of real religion among christians, consists in the sacrifice of the heart, and is a task of self-denial to be perform'd with the utmost severity against nature." Mandeville, *Free Thoughts on religion, the Church, and National Happiness*, p. 16.

modification of the passions during the civilising process, which aims at behaving according to the rules of politeness, involves being rewarded with praise and thus satisfying the passion of self-liking. Self-denial in the strong sense, on the other hand, involves the frustration of the passion of self-liking. Moral virtue requires self-denial in a strong sense. This, according to Mandeville, is the fundamental difference between politeness and virtue.

Even if what counts as good manners varies in different societies, the psychological mechanism behind the rules of politeness remains the same. Behaviour in accordance with good manners ultimately aims at getting praise for oneself, and thus at satisfying the passion of self-liking in a civilised social framework. Mandeville claims that the seeds of politeness “are lodg’d in this Self-love and Self-liking.”¹³⁵ Human agents have *self-interested reasons* to conceal their passion of self-liking, or to perform self-denial in the weak sense.¹³⁶ Once the rules of politeness have been installed through education and psychological manipulation, human agents have an interest in obeying them. Violating them with unconcealed passions will deprive the agent of the applause she needs to gratify her love of praise, and it will cause her trouble with other members of society.

Mandeville highlights that in a civilised society, men are taught “to be proud of hiding their Pride”.¹³⁷ Since concealing one’s self-liking is socially approved, the agents are psychologically manipulated to be able to gratify their passion of self-liking from the mere fact that they suppress its expressive tendencies. Concealing one’s self-liking (without frustrating it) counts as good manners and as praiseworthy, and thus appears to be a sign of superiority over those who do not. In another

¹³⁵ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 133.

¹³⁶ Mandeville does not claim, however, that the process of acquiring good manners and politeness is a process which is based on reflection. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

passage, Mandeville goes even further and claims that self-liking “is not to be gratify’d without being conceal’d, and never enjoy’d with greater Ecstasy than when we are most fully persuaded, that it is well hid”.¹³⁸ This holds, we can assume, for civilised societies, which declare the expression of one’s self-liking to be against the rules of politeness.

Excessive self-liking (i.e. an excessive form of self-love as excessive pride), or self-liking with unconcealed expressive tendencies is called “pride” and considered a vice. But as a matter of fact, self-liking remains the basic motive for human actions, even if the members of a civilised society conceal it. Concealing the passion is not to deny or conquer it (in the strong sense of frustrating it).¹³⁹ In Mandeville’s moral theory, self-denial in the strong sense is one of the conditions for *real* virtue, and not for what is commonly called virtue in society.¹⁴⁰ Good manners have

[...] nothing to do with Virtue or Religion, tho’ it seldom clashes with either. [...] All the Precepts of good Manners throughout the World have the same Tendency, and are no more than the various Methods of making ourselves acceptable to others, with as little Prejudice to ourselves as is possible: by which Artifice we assist one another in the Enjoyments of Life, and refining upon Pleasure; and every individual Person is rendred more happy by it, in the Fruition of all the good Things he can purchase, than he could have been without such Behaviour.¹⁴¹

c) Praise and the concepts of honour and shame

Whereas the rules of politeness have the principal function of restricting the expressive tendencies of self-liking, honour serves as a source of reward for creatures determined by self-liking. Mandeville discusses the concepts of honour and shame in several writings: In the *Enquiry*, in the *Remarks*, and especially in the second part of the *Fable* and in the *Origin of Honour*. The introduction of the concepts of honour and shame, he claims, is one of the most important steps during the civilising process.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 100.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 109.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 109.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 146f.

According to Mandeville, “Honour owes its Birth to this Passion [i.e. self-liking].”¹⁴² Politicians observe the “inward make” of human agents, and discover that they have a strong passion of self-liking and a strong desire for praise, which makes them susceptible to flattery. Acting according to the rules of honour, which are specified by the politicians in function of the promotion of the desired behaviour, provides the agent with praise or flattery from others, satisfies her desire for praise and thus, ultimately, her self-liking. Acting against the rules of honour is blamed as shameful and puts the gratification of self-liking in danger. In virtue of this psychological mechanism, the natural passion of self-liking provides the agent with powerful self-interested motives to act according to the specified rules of honour. This holds even if honour and shame are invented or artificial concepts.¹⁴³

The story behind the concepts of honour and shame is that, during the civilising process, politicians have to give their subjects a reward in order to facilitate the modification of their passions (or the denial in the weak sense of their natural passions).¹⁴⁴ Due to the lack of resources, they invent an imaginary reward, which has the advantage that it serves “on all Occasions, and without costing any thing either to themselves or others, be yet a most acceptable Recompense to the Receivers.”¹⁴⁵ The pleasure the subjects derive from being praised for acting in accordance with the rules of honour is real, yet it is caused by a belief in a good that has no reality independent of the agent’s mind, as we have highlighted above.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 7.

¹⁴³ “Honour in its Figurative Sense is a Chimera without Truth or Being, an Invention of Moralists and Politicians, and signifies a certain Principle of [social] Virtue not related to Religion, found in some Men that keeps ‘em close to their Duty and Engagements whatever they be [...]” Mandeville, “Remarks”, p. 198.

¹⁴⁴ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 42.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁴⁶ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 6.

When elaborating his account of honour in the *Essay*, Mandeville invokes two different kinds of praise. The first kind of praise is about the qualities of human agents *qua* human agents, without attention to their individual merits, and consists in the following:

Making use of this bewitching Engine, they [i.e. the politicians] extoll'd the Excellency of our Nature above other Animals, and setting forth with unbounded Praise the Wonders of our Sagacity and Vastness of Understanding, bestow'd a thousand Encomiums on the Rationality of our Souls, by the Help of which we were capable of performing the most noble Atchievements.¹⁴⁷

This kind of praise focuses on the invented superiority of mankind over other animals, rooted in understanding or rationality. It does not serve to gratify the individual's self-love as excessive pride, since it is directed without distinction to all human beings and does not stimulate a belief in superiority over the others. However, it might increase a creature's general self-esteem and make it more susceptible for flattery. Thus ridiculing the supposed superiority of mankind, Mandeville attacks Shaftesbury. In reality, man is just a gradually more complex animal.

The second kind of praise is linked with the notions of honour and shame (or "dishonour"¹⁴⁸). Praise is given for acting according to a set of rules of honour, and it is thus dependent on the agent's actual behaviour, not on her being a member of the human species. This kind of praise gratifies the individual's passion of self-liking. The notions of honour and shame, and associated rules of behaviour have to be taught during the civilising process.¹⁴⁹ They are to a great extent arbitrary. Honour in the sense of a taught set of rules, in tandem with fear of shame or dishonour, "may be fix'd on different Objects, according to the different Lessons we have receiv'd, and the Precepts we are imbued with; [...] tho' Shame is a real Passion, the Evil to be fear'd from it is altogether imaginary, and has

¹⁴⁷ Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 43.

¹⁴⁸ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 9f.

¹⁴⁹ Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 43; Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 92.

no Existence but in our own Reflection on the Opinion of others.”¹⁵⁰ In this way, the politicians can direct the individual’s passions and behaviour with a set of rules that is determined in view of the desired behaviour.

The individuals are likely to act according to these rules because it allows them to gratify their passion of self-liking. Fear of dishonour or shame, i.e. fear of an imaginary object, can be so strong as to overcome fear of death, which is a natural fear of a real evil.¹⁵¹ After the suppression of the natural passion of anger, however, honour and shame are used by the politicians to create a certain degree of artificial courage, and to increase fear of shame in order to engage the members of society to participate in wars.¹⁵² A corollary effect of artificial courage is the persistence of the practice of duelling, which is a consequence of the constellation of the passions of a civilised (male) human being.

Honour and *moral* virtue are not related, as we shall discuss in greater detail in section 4 of this chapter. Honour can only be linked with *social* virtues. “Honour”

[...] is a Technic Word in the Art of Civility, and signifies a Means which Men by Conversing together have found out to please and gratify one another on Account of a palpable Passion in our Nature, that has no Name, and which therefore I call Self-liking. [...] Honour signifies likewise a Principle of Courage, Virtue, and Fidelity, which some Men are said to act from, and to be aw’d by, as others by Religion.¹⁵³

Mandeville asserts that honour, even if it is often erroneously counted as a virtue, is not a *real* virtue, since it does not require self-denial in the strong sense, and since it often encourages actions that are in conflict with the precepts of religion.¹⁵⁴ But when comparing honour with religion, Mandeville admits that the former, for psychological reasons, is “more

¹⁵⁰ Mandeville, *Fable*, Volume II, p. 95.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁵² Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 211.

¹⁵³ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. 14.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 43, 45.

skilful adapted to our inward Make.”¹⁵⁵ By means of the gratification of the passion of self-liking, honour provides the agent with reward without requiring self-denial, and is thus a more successful means to influence the subjects’ behaviour.

In the *Enquiry*, Mandeville describes the consequences of the invention of honour and shame for the civilising process. Politicians are aware of the negative effects of natural passions such as anger and lust for society. To make their subjects governable, politicians make them believe that “it was more beneficial for every Body to conquer than indulge his [natural] Appetites, and much better to mind the Publick than what seem’s his private Interest.”¹⁵⁶ After having praised the rational nature of human agents, and after having instructed them with the notions of honour and shame, politicians link the notion of honour with the suppression of one’s natural appetites, and invent a division of the human species into two classes. The members of the first are “wholly incapable of Self-denial, and without regard to the good of others [...]”¹⁵⁷ The members of the second class are “lofty high-spirited Creatures, that free from sordid Selfishness, esteem’d the Improvements of the Mind to be their fairest Possessions; [...] and making a continual War with themselves to promote the Peace of others, aim’d at no less than the Publick Welfare and the Conquest of their own Passions.”¹⁵⁸

The effect of this imaginary division is that some members of society make serious efforts to conquer their passions and to become part of the second, invented class of society. Others, who do not care and continue to directly gratify their selfish passions, will still praise the invented second class in order to avoid conflicts with those members of

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁵⁶ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 42.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 44.

society who attempt to conquer their passions. It should be noted, however, that in Mandeville's theory all members of society still indulge in the gratification of their self-liking. At this stage, the civilising process becomes irreversible. The conditions for the satisfaction of the agent's passions have altered, and fundamental psychological mechanisms have been manipulated. According to this theory, the origin and persistence of society depends entirely on the selfish passions.¹⁵⁹

4. Mandeville on morality: "Private Vices, Publick Benefits"

What Mandeville really claims about morality is often difficult to pin down. It is especially in this context that Mandeville the *writer* makes Mandeville the *philosopher* hard to understand. On the one hand, we find a series of highly provocative claims, such as that private vices are beneficial for the public, or that moral virtue is the offspring flattery begot upon pride.¹⁶⁰ These claims come in tandem with consequentialist arguments to judge the value of rules of behaviour, institutions, and social practices in view of their social utility. On the other hand, Mandeville puts forward what Kaye and others called an ascetic and rigorist conception of morality, which is based on self-denial in the strong sense.¹⁶¹ His conception of *moral* virtue is compatible with the reading that, in reality, there is no virtuous action at all.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Nicole's emphasis on the same point in Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre" , pp. 199ff. As has been mentioned in the chapter on Shaftesbury, this claim is at the core of the Augustinian scheme of providence, in which "the path to social order includes the notion that self-love makes us enemies to each other." Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith* , p. 83. This is a striking difference to Shaftesbury and other Stoics who focus on the natural affections as the core of sociability and do not accept the doctrine of the original sin.

¹⁶⁰ Mandeville, "Enquiry" , p. 51; Mandeville, "Search" , p. 369.

¹⁶¹ Mandeville, *Fable* , p. liv. Cf. also the discussion in Hector Monro, *The Ambivalence of Bernard Mandeville* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 223 - 237.

In view of this ambiguity, two basic lines of interpretation emerged during the 20th century. One of them emphasises Mandeville's consequentialist line and takes him to be insincere in his rigorism, or even to perform an ironical *reductio ad absurdum* of the suggested conception of moral virtue.¹⁶² The other line of interpretation takes seriously the claims about *real* virtue, which he often equates with religion and Christianity. In this reading, Mandeville's rigorism is not superficial, and he does not use it in order to argue for a consequentialist position by means of a *reductio*. Rather, his ethical position is paired with pessimism about human nature.¹⁶³ Given the corruption of human nature and the resulting inaccessibility of real virtue, a consequentialist view of human actions and a calculated manipulation of the human passions is appropriate.

The present analysis tends to take Mandeville's remarks in the second part of the *Fable* and his regular assertions to be a sincere Christian at face value, and prefers the second line of interpretation:

It is his [i.e. Mandeville's] Opinion, that there is no solid Principle to go by but the Christian Religion, and that few embrace it with Sincerity: Always look upon him in this View, and you'll never find him inconsistent with himself. Whenever at first sight he seems to be so, look again, and upon nearer Enquiry you'll find; that he is only pointing at or labouring, to detect the Inconsistency of others with the Principles they pretend to.¹⁶⁴

This is not to deny that Mandeville often relies on sarcasm. Yet, given the strong Augustinian background at the beginning of the 18th century with its emphasis on the corruption of human nature after the Fall, the second line of interpretation presents a coherent picture of his ethical and religious theory without declaring it to be a *reductio ad absurdum*.

¹⁶² Cf. Kaye on this point in his introduction to Mandeville, *Fable*, p. lv. According to Kaye, Mandeville's rigorism is arbitrary.

¹⁶³ Carrive, *Bernard Mandeville. Passions, Vices, Vertus*, p. 192; M. J. Scott-Taggart, "Mandeville: Cynic or Fool?" *The Philosophical Quarterly* 16, no. 64 (1966), p. 222.

¹⁶⁴ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, p. 102. All references to the first and the second volume of the *Fable of the Bees* are made to the Liberty Fund-reprint of the edition by F.B. Kaye from 1924 at Clarendon Press in Oxford.

Many of his contemporaries were very quick to read Mandeville as recommending vice and attacking morality. His moral theory provoked even harsher reactions than his account of human nature and society. The phrase “Private Vices, Publick Benefits”, which is the prominent subtitle to the *Fable of the Bees*, is just one of Mandeville’s many provocative theses that invited attacks. Concluding the *Search*, he writes for example:

After this I flatter my self to have demonstrated that, neither the Friendly Qualities and kind Affections that are natural to Man, nor the real Virtues he is capable of acquiring by Reason and Self-Denial, are the Foundation of Society; but that what we call Evil in this World, Moral as well as Natural, is the grand Principle that makes us sociable Creatures, the solid Basis, the Life and Support of all Trades and Employments without Exception: That there we must look for the true Origin of all Arts and Sciences, and that the Moment Evil ceases, the Society must be spoiled, if not totally dissolved.¹⁶⁵

In clear opposition to Shaftesbury and the Stoics, Mandeville claims that society and human sociability are not based on natural kind affections. In reality, society is founded on natural and moral evil. If there was no such evil, a given society could not possibly persist. Once society has been instituted by skilful politicians in the course of the civilising process, the opportunities created for the gratification of the passion of self-liking keep it together. This corroborates the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question as well as the negative answer to the Human Nature Question, given the negative moral value of self-liking. Furthermore, Mandeville seems not only to claim that private vices lead in some sense to public benefits, but also that the vices of the members of a society are *more* beneficial to it than their virtues.¹⁶⁶ As to the origin of moral virtues, he most notoriously asserts in the *Enquiry* the aforementioned claim that “the Moral Virtues are the Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride.”¹⁶⁷

Did Mandeville thus *encourage* vice and undermine the distinction between moral good and evil, as many of his contemporaries alleged on

¹⁶⁵ Mandeville, “Search”, p. 369. Similar in Mandeville, “Search”, p. 324f.

¹⁶⁶ Mandeville, “Search”, p. 365; p. 367.

¹⁶⁷ Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 51.

the basis of claims such as the ones above? Must his claims be understood as an attempt to reduce moral virtue to some kind of self-love? Was Mandeville a moral sceptic who undermined the distinction between moral good and evil? Undeniably, Mandeville argued that a lot of what is generally considered vicious (luxury, avarice, vanity, excessive drinking, prostitution, even robbery¹⁶⁸) had, under certain circumstances, useful consequences for society. Furthermore, he argued that a lot of what was generally counted as virtuous (such as building charity schools, being compassionate and acting from pity¹⁶⁹) had potentially harmful consequences for society. And he asserted that many so-called virtuous actions had concealed selfish motives. It has been mentioned before that one of Mandeville's declared goals was to unmask the hidden motives behind such actions. In line with many French Augustinian moralists from the 17th century, he argued that many so-called virtuous practices, and many rules of behaviour that mistakenly count as moral norms, had their origin in the passion of self-liking. And this is a morally dubious motive, as we shall see, even if resulting actions have good consequences. It will be argued that Mandeville's claims cannot simply be said to encourage vice, nor to undermine the distinction between virtue and vice.

In the present subsection, we will first concentrate on Mandeville's understanding of moral virtue as opposed to the social virtues. The previously discussed notion of self-denial plays a crucial role in this distinction. After that, we are going to take a closer look at a series of Mandeville's provocative theses in his moral theory in order to describe the role of self-love and self-liking in his moral theory. We will discuss the notorious claim that private vices are public benefits and the comparative claim that private vices are more beneficial to society than private

¹⁶⁸ Mandeville, "Remarks", pp. 86 – 93; pp. 100 – 102; p. 107; Bernard Mandeville, *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews or, an Essay upon Whoring As It Is Now Practis'd in These Kingdoms* (London: 1724); Mandeville, "Search", pp. 350 - 353

¹⁶⁹ Mandeville, "Essay on Charity", pp. ; p. 272

virtues. Then, Mandeville's claim concerning the origin of society in moral and natural evil and the claim that moral virtues are the political offspring flattery begot upon pride will be investigated.

4.1. *The notions of virtue and vice in Mandeville*

4.1.1. *Social and moral virtue*

In order to examine Mandeville's theses and to evaluate the objections against them, a preliminary analysis of his account of virtue and vice needs to be given. The claim defended here is that Mandeville, throughout his writings, speaks of "virtue" and "morality" in two fundamentally different senses.¹⁷⁰ Firstly, he refers to *social virtues*, rules and norms, which are the basis for the "invented" and artificial social practices of politeness, good manners and honour in a civilised society. Henceforth, we will use Mandeville's expression "social virtues".¹⁷¹

Social virtues are not to be confused with *moral virtue*, as we shall see. "Good manners have nothing to do with Virtue or Religion; instead of extinguishing, they rather inflame the Passions."¹⁷² Social virtues are, according to Mandeville, the invention of skilful politicians, and thus to a certain extent arbitrary and a matter of custom.¹⁷³ Yet, they are designed to effectively guide the behaviour of the members of a society and to allow for a peaceful and well-functioning society of individuals who are determined by self-love and self-liking. Most importantly, they fulfil this aim by imposing restrictions on the natural expressive tendencies of the

¹⁷⁰ Heath, "Mandeville's Bewitching Engine of Praise", p. 210 highlights this as well, but draws a terminological distinction between "virtue" (in the sense of *moral virtue*) and "morality" (in the sense of *social virtues*) that seems to be more strict than when handled by Mandeville, and not always in accordance with his texts. Throughout Mandeville's writings, he remains rather imprecise with the use of these terms.

¹⁷¹ Mandeville, "Search", p. 354.

¹⁷² Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 79.

¹⁷³ Cf. what he says under the heading of "morals" on polygamy, marriage in close kinship, etc. Mandeville, "Search", p. 330f.

passion of self-liking, i.e. by requiring self-denial in the weak sense. Social virtues aim at social utility or public benefit by means of rewarding the individual that complies with praise. Yet, acting in accordance with the social virtues does not require self-denial in the strong sense of frustrating one's self-liking (as discussed in section 3.2.2.b), but only in the weak sense of a modification of the natural passions during the civilising process. In that sense, the social virtues are based on self-liking. They provide reward for individual members of society in the form of the gratification of self-liking in a modified context. Thus, social virtues "inflamm" the passions rather than extinguishing them. All these points are part of an Augustinian critique of the social virtues. Yet, criticising the social virtues as being based on self-liking is not the same as recommending vice.

Secondly, Mandeville uses the terms "virtue" and "vice" in a proper *moral* sense, and sometimes speaks of *real* virtue as opposed to the social virtues, which are embodied in the rules of politeness and good manners.¹⁷⁴ Moral virtue tends to "extinguish" the passions instead of "inflaming" them. It is independent of the social virtues that are accepted by a given society: Acting in accordance with the social virtues does not imply being virtuous in the moral sense. Social virtues can even be in conflict with moral virtues, as in the case of honour, which incites to the vicious practice of duelling. This contradicts the precepts of the Christian religion,¹⁷⁵ which Mandeville seems to identify with moral virtue without further specification. The fact that Mandeville denies that the social virtues are moral virtues does not imply, however, that he denies the

¹⁷⁴ Mandeville, "Remarks" , p. 222.

¹⁷⁵ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour* , pp. 43-45. On p. 45, Mandeville describes the conflict between honour and Christianity in the following words: "What I would demonstrate, is, that there are many Allowances, gross Indulgences to Human Nature in the Principle of Honour, especially of modern Honour, that are always exclaim'd against by the Voice of Virtue, and diametrically opposite to the Doctrine of *Christ*." Cf. also Mandeville, "Remarks" , pp. 221f.; Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II* , p. 146: "[...] the Art of good Manners has nothing to do with Virtue or Religion, tho' it seldom clashes with either."

existence of moral virtues or attacks the distinction between moral virtue and vice, as claimed by several of his critics.

Mandeville defines moral virtue as “every Performance, by which Man, contrary to the impulse of Nature, should endeavour the Benefit of others, or the Conquest of his own Passions out of a Rational Ambition of being good.”¹⁷⁶ The claim is that an action is virtuous if the following three conditions are fulfilled: a) The action is motivated by *self-denial* (in the strong sense of a voluntary *frustration* of one’s selfish passions, as discussed in section 3.2.2.b), b) it is motivated by the *intention to benefit others*, and c) this intention is based on a *rational ambition of being good* (as opposed to being motivated by a mere natural kind affection).¹⁷⁷ The passage furthermore suggests that the mere “Conquest of his own Passions”, which is self-denial in a strong sense, without a subsequent action, is also virtuous if it is done out of a rational ambition of being good.

In Mandeville, whether an action counts as morally virtuous depends on its motives, and not on its consequences – even if these latter are paid a lot of attention in his story of the civilising process. Actions that are beneficial for others, but that are performed with the ultimate aim of gratifying the passion of self-liking (for example by means of getting praise) are not morally virtuous. This is the case with actions that merely presuppose a modification of one’s natural passions (for example the suppression of anger), but still involve the intention of gratifying one’s passion of self-liking within the social framework of a civilised society. The

¹⁷⁶ The passage in its entirety is: “[All the citizens agreed] to call every thing, which, without Regard to the Publick, Man should commit to gratify any of his Appetites, VICE; if in that Action there cou’d be observed the least prospect, that it might either be injurious to any of the Society, or ever render himself less serviceable to others: And to give the Name of VIRTUE to every Performance, by which Man, contrary to the impulse of Nature, should endeavour the Benefit of others, or the Conquest of his own Passions out of a Rational Ambition of being good.” Mandeville, “Enquiry”, p. 48.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. also Mandeville, “Essay on Charity”, p. 260: “ [...] to perform a meritorious Action, it is not sufficient barely to conquer a Passion, unless it likewise be done from a laudable Principle, and consequently how necessary that Clause was in the Definition of Virtue, that our Endeavors were to proceed from a *rational Ambition of being Good*.”

motives for moral actions cannot be selfish, excluding both hedonistic self-love and self-love as excessive pride.

A more specific point is that, even if pity motivated genuinely altruistic actions, these would not count as virtuous. This point is highlighted in another passage, where Mandeville opposes the “Friendly Qualities and kind Affections that are natural to Man” and the “real Virtues he is capable of acquiring by Reason and Self-Denial”.¹⁷⁸ Actions motivated by pity and not by the desire to get rid of the uneasiness of seeing someone in distress would not count as morally virtuous. This is not because their *consequences* could be negative (as he highlights in the *Enquiry*¹⁷⁹), but because of their being motivated by a passion. Following one’s natural inclinations or passions is not morally praiseworthy, even if pity closely *resembles* virtue.¹⁸⁰ Still, since pity is “an Impulse of Nature, that consults neither the publick Interest nor our own Reason, it may produce Evil as well as Good.”¹⁸¹

We have to note an important consequence of this definition, given Mandeville’s views of human nature and the dominance of self-love and self-liking: There are, in reality, very few virtuous actions, if any at all. If we take Mandeville to be a psychological egoist in his theory of human nature, there are no virtuous actions at all. This entirely negative answer to the Human Nature Question is a consequence of his egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, given his definition of virtue. Admittedly, there are certain passages where he seems to admit the reality of a very limited number of virtuous actions. In the *Enquiry*, he seems to speak in favour of

¹⁷⁸ Mandeville, “Search” , p. 369. Mandeville also contrasts the virtue of charity with partial motives, such as friendship, and pity, a passion: “Charity is that Virtue by which part of that sincere Love we have for our selves is transfer’d pure and unmix’d to others, not tied to us by the Bonds of Friendship or Consanguinity, and even meer Strangers, whom we have no obligation to, nor hope or expect any thing from. *If we lessen any ways the Rigour of this Definition, part of the Virtue must be lost.* [My emphasis]” Mandeville, “Essay on Charity” , p. 253. Charity counts as a virtue as long as it involves self-denial. Pity just counterfeits the virtue of charity, but does not involve self-denial. Mandeville, “Essay on Charity” , p. 254.

¹⁷⁹ Mandeville, “Enquiry” , p. 56.

¹⁸⁰ Mandeville, “Essay on Charity” , p. 254; Mandeville, “Enquiry” , p. 56.

¹⁸¹ Mandeville, “Enquiry” , p. 56.

the existence of at least a few “Heroes who took such extraordinary Pains to master some of their natural Appetites, and preferr’d the good of others to any visible Interest of their own [...]”¹⁸². Next, his comparison between virtuous and vicious actions and their benefits for society in the *Search* seems to presuppose the reality of a small number of morally virtuous actions. However, Mandeville has an overwhelming tendency to emphasise that the vast majority of actions that generally (and erroneously) count as *morally* virtuous do not satisfy the conditions specified above. This is linked with his aim to unmask the hidden selfish motives behind apparently virtuous actions, and with the importance he gives to self-deception. Furthermore, we all are obliged to be virtuous, even if the strength of our selfish passions does not allow for genuinely virtuous actions.

Another consequence of Mandeville’s definition of virtue concerns the Interest Claim. This was introduced as the claim that virtue is in some sense in the interest of the agent.¹⁸³ Again, the distinction between the social virtues and moral virtue is essential. Given what Mandeville claims about the social virtues and their function in the civilising process, it is evident that it is in the interest of human agents to act in accordance with the social virtues, since this allows them to gratify their self-liking. Yet, since moral virtue requires self-denial (i.e. the voluntary frustration of the selfish passions), and since human agents are determined by their selfish passions, it is against their interest to be morally virtuous. Thus, Mandeville asserts against Shaftesbury that virtue is against human nature, not in accordance with it.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 45. The qualification “visible”, however, if interpreted as “visible for the others”, will not encourage the suggested reading, but will relate to Mandeville’s discussion of strategies for hiding one’s selfish motives from others.

¹⁸³ Cf. chapter I, section 4.3.; and especially chapter II, section 2.4.

¹⁸⁴ In view of Mandeville’s combination of an extremely rigoristic approach to moral virtues and a utilitarian approach to social virtues, the question arises whether Mandeville’s rigorism is serious. Kaye, highlighting Mandeville’s utilitarianism in the realm of social virtues, argues that his rigorism is arbitrary. Thus, “viewed from his arbitrary rigoristic point of view, all actions were equally vicious. But practically, if not always theoretically, he was a utilitarian.” Mandeville, *Fable*, p. lxi (and p. lv). We

It is noteworthy that Mandeville regularly emphasises the intricate relation between moral virtue and the Christian religion, sometimes to the point of identifying them.¹⁸⁵ This puts him in a position to contrast the principles of honour with the principles of Christianity and to argue that “there are many Allowances, gross Indulgences to Human Nature in the Principle of Honour, especially of modern Honour, that are always exclaim’d against the Voice of Virtue, and diametrically opposite to the Doctrine of the Christ.”¹⁸⁶ However, it has been mentioned already that when comparing virtue and honour Mandeville admits that honour is “more skilfully adapted to our inward Make”¹⁸⁷ since it involves rewards in the form of gratification of self-liking, and is thus a more efficient principle for social manipulation. Given these psychological facts, the “Invention of Honour has been far more beneficial to the Civil Society than that of Virtue, and much better answer’d the End for which they were invented.”¹⁸⁸ Moral virtue, to sum up, is less *useful* than social virtues such as honour or politeness – given the corruption of human nature. This does not mean, however, that the obligation to be virtuous ceases to exist.

4.1.2. *The narrow and the broad sense of vice*

Vice is defined in the *Enquiry* as “every thing, which, without Regard to the Publick, Man should commit to gratify any of his Appetites [...], if in that Action there cou’d be observed the least prospect, that it might either be injurious to any of the Society, or ever render himself less serviceable to others.”¹⁸⁹ Thus, Mandeville claims that an action is vicious if it fulfils the following conditions: a) The action is performed to gratify a

have emphasised, on the other hand, the Augustinian background of Mandeville that suggests that we take his rigorism seriously. The problem of how to interpret the combination of rigorism and utilitarianism concerns also Nicole’s *De la charité et de l’amour-propre*.

¹⁸⁵ Mandeville, “Remarks” , p. 222; Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour* , pp. 42 - 45.

¹⁸⁶ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour* , p. 45.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁸⁹ Mandeville, “Enquiry” , p. 48.

passion (or appetite) without regard to the consequences for other agents and b) the action has possibly harmful consequences for others, either directly by harming others or indirectly by making the agent herself less useful for society. The expression “the *least* prospect” makes it clear that already the slightest possibility of harmful consequences makes an action vicious in this sense. Let us call this the *narrow* sense of vice to oppose it to a broad sense as discussed below.

This definition of vice takes into account the possible *consequences* of the action. Thus, not all actions that are motivated without regard to the consequences for others count as vicious in a narrow sense. If an agent acts on purely selfish motives without regard for the consequences for others, and if the resulting action has no possible negative effects for society, then it is *not* vicious in the narrow sense. This is the case in many actions where the agent has the intention of gratifying her self-liking by means of hiding its expressive tendencies and getting applause for her supposed modesty. Actions motivated by self-liking are vicious in the narrow sense, however, if they involve expressive tendencies that could negatively affect the gratification of the self-liking of others.

There seems to be another sense of the term “vice”, taken in a moral sense, which Mandeville does not spell out in his definition in the *Essay*, but which shines through in his later writings. From an Augustinian point of view, the selfishness inherent in human nature is a vice and proves the moral corruption of the human soul after the Fall. The negative answer to the Human Nature Question is based on an egoistic theory of human nature, which emphasises the dominance of the passions of self-love and self-liking. Thus, even if self-love and self-liking do not necessarily motivate actions that are vicious in the narrow sense because they could have negative consequences for others, they are considered vicious passions in a broad sense because they bring about some kind of

conflict with the precepts of the Christian religion, as conceived by Mandeville. Self-liking, pride, or vanity, even in cases in which they are not potentially harmful for society, are still examples of vices in the broad sense.

4. 2. Mandeville's provocative theses

4.2.1. Which private vices are public benefits?

Leaving the polemic context aside, we can state that both the non-comparative claim that private vices are public benefits¹⁹⁰, and the comparative claim that private vices are more beneficial to society than private virtues,¹⁹¹ are more specific than they are usually taken to be when quoted in the context of attacks against Mandeville. In the *Search*, Mandeville spells out that “Private Vices *by the dextrous Management of a skilful Politician may be turned into Publick Benefits*. [My emphasis]”¹⁹² And in the Moral to the *Grumbling Hive*, he writes: “*So Vice is beneficial found, / When it's by Justice lopt and bound;*”¹⁹³ There are specific requirements, i.e. a legal framework and guidance by politicians for vices to turn out to be useful for society. Furthermore, it seems doubtful that Mandeville claims that *all* vices *always* lead to public benefit. Another interesting point is that Mandeville himself contradicts his very thesis in the Preface to the *Origin of Honour*:

I am likewise fully persuaded, that to govern our selves according to the Dictates of Reason, is far better than to indulge the Passions without Stop or Controul, and consequently that Virtue is more beneficial than Vice, not only for the Peace and real Happiness of Society in general, but likewise for

¹⁹⁰ Mandeville places this claim very prominently as the subtitle of the *Fable of the Bees*.

¹⁹¹ Mandeville, "Essay on Charity", p. 261: "Pride and Vanity have built more Hospitals than all the Virtues together."

¹⁹² Mandeville, "Search", p. 369.

¹⁹³ Bernard Mandeville, "The Grumbling Hive: Or, Knaves turn'd Honest" in *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits. The First Volume. With a Commentary Critical, Historical, and Explanatory by F. B. Kaye* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988 [1714]), p. 37.

the Temporal Felicity of every individual Member of it, abstract from the Consideration of a future State.¹⁹⁴

Furthermore, it can be disputed whether Mandeville *recommends* vice or whether he just *describes* a causal relation between vicious actions and attitudes and their utility in view of the promotion of the public good.¹⁹⁵

Which are the examples of vicious actions Mandeville discusses? In *Remark G*¹⁹⁶, Mandeville argues that the activities of thieves, house-breakers, pick-pockets, highwaymen, and of others that are part of “the worst of all the Multitude”¹⁹⁷ have beneficial effects for a commercial society. Their activities obviously count as vices in the narrow sense, and they are useful to society in that they create employment. On the other hand, even if Mandeville claims that these private vices (in the narrow sense) *also* produce benefits for the public, he does not say anything about the ratio between private loss and public benefit. Are they only said to produce public benefits if they produce *more* public benefits than they cause private loss? This question remains unanswered.

Furthermore, there are vices in the broad sense, such as self-liking, pride or vanity, which do not necessarily bring about negative consequences for society, especially not if they are well hidden. Mandeville claims that “Pride and Vanity have built more Hospitals than all the Virtues together.”¹⁹⁸ Pride and vanity, in case they have no potential harmful effects, and maybe even have positive effects for society, count as vices in the broad sense, but not as vices in the narrow sense. Vices in the broad sense are essential for the persistence of society, since “the

¹⁹⁴ Mandeville, *Enquiry Into the Origin of Honour*, p. ii.

¹⁹⁵ Scott-Taggart highlights that “[...] although Mandeville did not plead the cause of vicious actions, he did make a plea for the toleration of many of these actions. It is still easy today, and was even more easy in the eighteenth century, to make the slide from the charge that someone is encouraging toleration through the charge that he is not discouraging vice to the conclusion that he is encouraging vice.” Scott-Taggart, “Mandeville: Cynic or Fool?”, p. 221.

¹⁹⁶ Mandeville, “Remarks”, pp. 86 – 93.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁹⁸ Mandeville, “Essay on Charity”, p. 261.

good and amiable Qualities of Man are not those that make him beyond other Animals a sociable Creature".¹⁹⁹ Given man's corrupt nature, society depends on its members' self-liking, which can be a very useful passion, as we have seen in our reconstruction of Mandeville's story of the civilising process. If self-liking is a vice in the broad sense, then this private vice has indeed beneficial effects for society. However, this depends on the framework provided by skilful politicians for the satisfaction of self-liking.

Can Mandeville be said to encourage the *performance* of all or some vicious actions? Does he encourage *toleration* of some vicious actions, or does he merely *state* a correlation between certain types of behaviour and public benefit? Given Mandeville's rhetorical strategies and his aim of unmasking hidden motives, it seems doubtful that we are in a position to give a definitive answer. He certainly attracts the reader's attention to the link between vicious behaviour (in both the narrow and the broad sense) and potential beneficial outcome for a commercial society. Furthermore, the passion of self-liking, a passion that is vicious at least in the broad sense, is depicted as the paradigmatic case for a private vice that produces public benefits. In a well-governed social structure, the pursuit of private interests leads to the flourishing of the whole. However, there seems to be no ground to suggest that Mandeville would furthermore seriously *recommend* the performance of vices in the narrow sense – which is precisely what many attacked him for. Rather, he repeatedly insists on the contrary. He comments on his recommendation of instituting public brothels in order to preserve the chastity of women as follows:

I am far from encouraging Vice, and think it would be an unspeakable Felicity to a State, if the Sin of Uncleaness could be utterly Banish'd from it; but I am afraid it is impossible: The Passions of some People are too violent to be curb'd by any Law or Precept; and it is Wisdom in all Governments to bear with lesser Inconveniences to prevent greater.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹ Mandeville, "Search", p. 325.

²⁰⁰ Mandeville, "Remarks", p. 95.

This is a paradigmatic example for Mandeville's pragmatic approach to vice: if it is impossible to get rid of it, try to restrict the damages, and make the best out of it. Nevertheless, it remains a vice.

4.2.2. *Society is based on vice, not on virtue*

Let us now take a look at the anti-Shaftesburian claim that society is based on moral and natural evil, and neither on the natural and amiable qualities in man, nor on moral virtue.²⁰¹ It seems unlikely that this claim refers exclusively to moral evils or vices in the narrow sense, which involve harm for the public. However, what Mandeville mainly emphasises in his story of the civilising process, which is based on self-liking, is the function and importance of pride and vanity (which are vices in the broad sense) for the persistence and cohesion of society.²⁰² He can also be taken to argue that *some* examples of vices in the narrow sense *also* have beneficial consequences for society. From this, we cannot derive that *all* vices in the narrow sense *always* have beneficial consequences for society to the degree that society could be claimed to be based on them. And again, we cannot derive that Mandeville *recommends* vice from the moral point of view. Also, we have to take into account that one of Mandeville's main targets is Shaftesbury's optimistic view of human nature, which he attacks by opposing a picture of human agents as entirely dominated by selfishness. Yet, he does not abandon the idea that a society made of selfish human beings can function in perfect harmony, if the vicious sides of human nature are managed by politicians. Thus, the unmasking of

²⁰¹ Mandeville, "Search" , p. 369, Mandeville states for example: "After this I flatter my self to have demonstrated that, neither the Friendly Qualities and kind Affections that are natural to Man, nor the real Virtues he is capable of acquiring by Reason and Self-Denial, are the Foundation of Society [...]"

²⁰² In a similar vein, Nicole emphasises that a society which is driven by *amour-propre* works perfectly: "Quelque corrompue que cette société fût au dedans et aux yeux de Dieu, il n'y aurait rien au-dehors de mieux réglé, de plus civil, de plus juste, de plus pacifique, de plus honnête, de plus généreux; et ce qui serait de plus admirable, c'est que, n'étant animée et remuée que par l'amour-propre, l'amour-propre n'y paraîtrait point, et qu'en étant entièrement vide de charité, on ne verrait partout que la forme et les caractères de la charité." Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre" , p. 200.

hidden selfishness in actions that are commonly thought to be unselfish or even virtuous is part of Mandeville's polemic strategy against Shaftesbury, and it relates to the argument that selfishness is an important basis for society.

4.2.3. Moral Virtues are the Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride

The *Enquiry's* most provocative phrase that "Moral Virtues are the Political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride"²⁰³ caused a series of attacks against Mandeville. Due to the developmental account of morality that can be read into this claim, he was accused of reducing morality to self-love. Given the essential Mandevillian distinction between social virtues and moral virtue, however, his critics are clearly mistaken about this. Mandeville's notorious formulation is tricky, and the conceptual opposition may be not entirely clear in the context of his discussion in the *Enquiry*, which was first published in 1714. In all his later writings (from 1723 onwards), however, it is obvious that he does not think of *moral virtue*, but of the *social virtues* as being a product of politicians that want to govern a society's members by flattering their self-liking. The social virtues have their origin in self-liking and do not require self-denial, but only the modification of the natural passions. They allow for the gratification of self-liking or pride by praise, and they are invented with the aim of making people governable. On this reading, Mandeville does not claim that there are no real moral virtues, or that there is no distinction between moral good and evil. Rather, he focuses on the social virtues and displays their origin, especially in the case of the rules of honour and politeness, which are commonly (and erroneously) held to be moral virtues.

²⁰³ Mandeville, "Enquiry", p. 51. Note that the expression "Moral Virtues" is in the plural form, whereas Mandeville often speaks of moral virtue or morality (as opposed to the social virtues) in the singular form.

Considering the definitions of virtue and vice discussed above, Mandeville cannot be said to have reduced moral virtue to self-love or self-liking, or to have undermined the distinction between virtue and vice. He may be counted as a sceptic and relativist with respect to social virtues, and he may be a sceptic with respect to the reality of morally virtuous actions in the world. According to Mandeville, the ultimate motive for actions that are in accordance with the social norms is self-liking, and the social virtues are to a certain extent arbitrary, since targeted to benefit society. But according to Mandeville, the social virtues have to be sharply distinguished from moral virtue, and any action motivated by self-liking, by definition, cannot be a moral action. Even if, in reality, there is no action that fulfils the conditions for being a *moral* action, this would still not allow for the conclusion that Mandeville undermines the distinction between virtue and vice, or that he reduces moral virtue to self-love.

Conclusion

Given the importance of Mandeville's contributions to the debates on self-love in particular, as well as to the Motivation Question and to the Human Nature Question in general, he is clearly underrepresented in Gill's study on the Human Nature Question. Furthermore, Gill's focus on the aspect of egoism in his treatment of Mandeville does not do justice to essential aspects of Mandeville's moral philosophy. Thus, we have highlighted a series of essential features in our analyses of Mandeville's concept of self-liking in terms of self-love as excessive pride, its relation with the concepts of hedonistic self-love and self-love as love of praise, and its

role in his theory of the civilising process and in his moral theory. We have also shown how Mandeville's egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is linked with a negative answer to the Human Nature Question. Moral virtue requires the denial of one's selfish passions, yet human agents are scarcely (or never) successful in achieving this. Due to the management of skilful politicians, however, a stable society of selfish individuals is possible. The social virtues allow for a gratification of the individuals' self-liking whilst modifying their behaviour. Thus, under certain conditions, the passion of self-liking is immensely useful for society.

Mandeville's egoistic answer to the Motivation Question as well as his negative answer to the Human Nature Question became the targets of a series of philosophers. Many authors attempted to refute his egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. Furthermore, his moral theory was subject to frequent attacks, although in often inappropriately polemic reconstructions, which exposed him to the accusation of denying the reality of moral distinctions. Based on the distinction between social virtues and moral virtue, as well as on the distinction between the weak and the strong sense of self-denial, we have raised doubts that such criticism is appropriate.

In his analysis of Mandeville's claim that private vices are public benefits, Hirschman claims that "Mandeville restricted the area in which he effectively claimed validity for his paradox to one particular "vice" or passion", namely "the passion for material goods in general, and for luxury in particular."²⁰⁴ Hirschman is certainly correct in highlighting the importance of the passion for material goods in Mandeville. Our discussion suggests, however, that Mandeville's scope is much broader. The most important and useful vice (in the broad sense) for society is self-liking or self-love as excessive pride. Self-liking is the passion that allows for a

²⁰⁴ Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, p. 18.

stable society, if managed by skilful politicians, since it is the foundation for politeness and honour. Mandeville's scope in his treatment of the concepts of self-love is thus not merely on economic aspects, but on more general questions of moral philosophy that are strongly influenced by Augustinian discussions of the Human Nature Question and the Motivation Question.

We shall now turn to Hutcheson, who is one of the most thorough critics of Mandeville's views. He attacks the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, yet his strategy to put forward a positive answer to the Human Nature Question does not only rely on a restriction of the role of egoistic self-love in motivation. Rather, it also incorporates a slightly positive view of egoistic self-love itself, as will be shown. Butler and Campbell will subsequently go much further in their rehabilitation of self-love.

Chapter IV: Hutcheson – Self-Love, Benevolence and Self-Cultivation

1. Introduction

The first edition of Francis Hutcheson's *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, which appeared in 1725, had the following lines added to the title page:

In which the principles of the late Earl of Shaftesbury are Explain'd and Defended, against the Author of the *Fable of the Bees*: and the Ideas of Moral Good and Evil are establish'd, according to the Sentiments of the Antient Moralists. With an Attempt to introduce a Mathematical Calculation in Subjects of Morality.¹

Hutcheson emphasises that one of his main targets in the *Inquiry* is Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*. His attacks against the philosophical promoters of self-love also concern some of Hobbes' theses, whom he counts among the "refin'd Explainers of Self-Love".² What Hutcheson remains discreet about, however, is the fact that the distinctively positive answer he gave to the Human Nature Question is also in conflict with the

¹ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 199. The two treatises are *Treatise I*, viz. *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, &c.*, in which Hutcheson elaborates his aesthetic theory, and *Treatise II*, viz. *An Inquiry Concerning the Original of our Ideas of Virtue or Moral Good*, where Hutcheson elaborates his moral philosophy. Henceforth, when speaking of the *Inquiry* without further specification, we will refer to the second *Treatise*. In the *Preface* to the *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions*, henceforth referred to as the *Essay*, Hutcheson announces that he refers to the *Essay* as *Treatise III*, and to the *Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, henceforth referred to as the *Illustrations*, as *Treatise IV*. Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 11.

² Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 92.

official Augustinian doctrine about the corruption of human nature after the Fall, which was also held by the Church of Scotland.³

Hutcheson (1694-1746) was born the son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister in Ireland. He studied in the Faculties of Arts and Divinity at Glasgow University between 1711 and 1718. During that period, Gershom Carmichael was teaching natural law, being the first professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow University. Carmichael's treatment of natural law had a strong influence on Hutcheson.⁴ According to the ODNB, he also studied with the professor of divinity John Simson, who would later be important for Campbell as well.⁵ Simson faced several trials for heresy because of his rejecting the claim that human nature was entirely corrupt and needed the Church for salvation. After his studies, Hutcheson went back to Ireland, where he had close contact with Viscount Molesworth and his circle. It was here that Hutcheson studied the writings of Shaftesbury, which proved to be very influential for his own philosophy. In 1729, Hutcheson was appointed to the chair of moral philosophy at Glasgow University, in succession to the recently deceased Carmichael. Hutcheson had already published the *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1st edition 1725, 2nd 1726, 3rd 1729 – the 4th edition follows in 1738), the *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of Our Passions and Affections* (1st edition 1728) and several letters in the *London Journal* (1724) and the *Dublin Weekly Journal* (1725). It is not without significance that his inaugural lecture at the University of Glasgow was entitled *De naturali hominum Socialitate oratio inauguralis* (printed in

³ For some remarks on Hutcheson and Augustinianism, cf. Haakonssen, "Natural Law and Moral Realism: The Scottish Synthesis", p. 64 and Moore, "The two Systems of Francis Hutcheson: On the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment", p. 47f. - The proximity to the Ancient Moralists, which is also mentioned on the title page, will be an occasional subject of discussion in this chapter.

⁴ Cf. Gershom Carmichael, *Natural Rights on the Threshold of the Scottish Enlightenment: the Writings of Gershom Carmichael* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002 [1724]), p. xv and James Moore and Michael Silverthorne, "Natural Sociability and Natural rights in the Moral Philosophy of Gershom Carmichael" in *Philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984), pp. 10f. on some aspects of this relation.

⁵ James Moore, "Hutcheson, Francis" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 997.

1730), or *Inaugural Lecture on the Social Nature of Man*.⁶ Human beings, Hutcheson argued throughout his writings, are not sinful by nature. Rather they are naturally endowed with benevolent and social affections, a moral sense, and a capacity for cultivating virtue in themselves.⁷

With these ideas, Hutcheson joined a line of thought that challenged the Augustinian mentality in Scottish Presbyterianism, which was still dominant in Scottish Universities. The Augustinians emphasised the sinfulness of postlapsarian man and claimed that there was a gap between the present world, corrupted through man's physical nature and his passions, and the heavenly world that man could access only through divine grace.⁸ A core feature of man's moral corruption was his selfishness. Hutcheson opposed these views in his theory of human nature, and he also criticised the dominant Pufendorfian view of obligation to the natural law or morality. Pufendorf's view was egoistic and prudentialist in its core and was associated with Hobbes' theory of obligation. Furthermore, in spite of adopting a Lockean theory of ideas, Hutcheson argued against Locke that our moral ideas come from a moral sense, and are neither based on the idea of a law, nor on fear of punishment and desire for reward.

Some further core features of Hutcheson's philosophy should be mentioned right away. Hutcheson's theory of human nature is directed against psychological egoism. He argues emphatically for a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. While adopting a hedonistic version of

⁶ Francis Hutcheson, "On the Natural Sociability of Mankind Inaugural Oration" in *Logic, Metaphysics, and the Natural Sociability of Mankind* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001 [1730]), henceforth referred to as *Inaugural Lecture* or *Oratio Inauguralis*.

⁷ Later works of Hutcheson, which he wrote in an academic context, are the *Philosophiae moralis institutio compendiaria* (1742), the *Metaphysicae synopsis* (1742), and the *System of Moral Philosophy* (published posthumously in 1755). Furthermore, a translation of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* by Hutcheson and James Moor appeared under the title *The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antonius* in 1742.

⁸ Moore, "The two Systems of Francis Hutcheson: On the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment" , p. 40. Moore speaks of Hutcheson becoming part of the "earliest and most direct challenges to the Augustinian mentality of Reformed scholasticism."

self-love, he claims that self-love is not the *only* source of motives, since there are also benevolent motives. Benevolence is as natural to mankind as self-love, and the former is irreducible to the latter. Furthermore, the moral sense, which makes human agents morally approve of actions motivated by benevolence, is disinterested and cannot be reduced to the agent's selfish interests. The moral sense is analogous to the sense of beauty, which provides us with disinterested aesthetic judgments.

One of the results of this chapter will be that Hutcheson can be said to have a somewhat more critical view of self-love's moral value than Shaftesbury. Yet, self-love is not deemed a source of corruption. Self-love as a motive for actions can be morally acceptable or even morally required, and calm self-love can be a motive of a higher order to cultivate benevolence. Hutcheson asserts with Shaftesbury that virtue and interest agree, yet he does not claim that self-love is the source of obligation for virtue and self-cultivation.

This chapter begins with an analysis of self-love in Hutcheson's theory of the emotions, focusing on the relation between self-love and benevolence and on the distinction between affections and passions (section 2). On this basis, we will be able to examine Hutcheson's arguments against psychological egoism and to compare his account with those of Shaftesbury and Mandeville. We will then take a close look at self-love in Hutcheson's moral theory and finally discuss the role of self-love in his theory of self-cultivation (section 3).

Our analyses will focus on what James Moore calls Hutcheson's "public philosophy".⁹ These writings form a relative unity and were mainly written in the 1720s, when Hutcheson was in Dublin and conducted a

⁹ Ibid., p. 41f. The public philosophy of Hutcheson, according to Moore, comprises the four *Treatises* (*Treatise I* and *II* of the *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, the *Essay* and the *Illustrations*) and the *Inaugural Lecture*. Moore's division of Hutcheson's philosophy into public and academic philosophy, and especially the claim that the two are incompatible, has been questioned in Haakonssen, "Natural Law and Moral Realism: The Scottish Synthesis" .

dissenting academy. Hutcheson's reflections on the questions of self-love in both his theory of human nature and in his moral theory occupy a remarkably central role in these texts. In his later academic writings, however, the debates on self-love are far less prominent, and Hutcheson takes more of an effort to inscribe his moral philosophy in a system of natural jurisprudence, which partly shifts his attention from the questions that were central in his public philosophy.

2. Self-love in Hutcheson's theory of the emotions

In the *Preface* to the *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Hutcheson asserts that "Human Nature was not left quite indifferent in the affair of Virtue"¹⁰. In many of his writings, Hutcheson argues at length that virtue is *natural* to mankind. This traditional Stoic claim, which incorporates a clearly positive answer to the Human Nature Question, has two essential dimensions in Hutcheson's moral philosophy. Firstly, he asserts that virtue is natural in the sense that human agents naturally have benevolent emotions that involve a tendency to perform virtuous actions. This is paired with a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.¹¹ Secondly, virtue is natural in the sense that human agents, due to their moral sense, are naturally able to make correct moral judgments. The present section mainly concentrates on the first aspect in order to give an account of self-love in Hutcheson's theory of the emotions.

¹⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 9.

¹¹ Hutcheson is aware that his non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question contradicts Epicurean and Augustinian views. He sees that both Epicureans such as Hobbes and "[o]ur *Christian Moralists*" want to reduce all desires of the human mind to self-love. Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 134. Yet, he mainly targets Hobbes and Mandeville, whom he counts as an Epicurean.

What Hutcheson means by “natural” when discussing the emotions and the tendencies to perform virtuous actions becomes more obvious from a passage in the *Essay*. He suggests that we call

[...] that *State*, those *Dispositions* and *Actions natural*, to which we are inclined by some part of our Constitution, antecedently to any *Volition of our own*; or which flow from some *Principles* in our Nature, not brought upon us by our own *Art*, or that of others.¹²

A feature is natural to an agent if its original existence depends on her constitution and neither on her direct choice, nor on her or others' indirect influence, for example by a mechanism of reward and punishments. That a feature is natural means that it is not the “effect of *Art, Education, Custom, Policy*, or subtle Views of Interest”¹³. Yet, this does not mean that natural features could and should not be cultivated, on the contrary - Hutcheson's theory of self-cultivation is an essential part of his moral psychology. One of the natural features of human agents is benevolence, as Hutcheson argues against Mandeville throughout his writings. Benevolence is neither voluntarily brought upon themselves, for example for the sake of later personal benefits, nor is it the simple effect of manipulation by others, for example by politicians. Nevertheless, benevolence can and should be cultivated and reinforced.¹⁴ When arguing that benevolence is natural to human beings, and that self-love is not the only source of motives, Hutcheson furthermore wants to show

That Virtue springs from some other Affection than Self-Love, or Desire of private Advantage. And where Self-Interest excites to the same Action, the Approbation is given only to the disinterested Principle [i.e. benevolence].¹⁵

¹² Ibid., p. 130. In the *Inaugural Lecture*, Hutcheson defines what is natural to man as follows: “I would say first of all, therefore, that those things are natural to man for which God has given our nature not only a natural desire but also the ability to obtain them.” Hutcheson, “Inaugural Lecture”, p. 197. Benevolence and self-love are both said to be natural in the sense that they are *natural appetites*, which do not depend on the agent's volition nor are brought upon her by herself or other agents.

¹³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 8.

¹⁴ This point will be discussed in greater detail in section 3.2.

¹⁵ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 218f.

This passage seems to suggest that from the moral point of view, there is some tension between self-love and benevolence as principles of actions. In section 3.1., this point will be analysed in greater detail.

We will now focus on Hutcheson's treatment of self-love in his theory of the emotions. This requires analysing his distinction between natural and moral good, and taking a look at the hierarchy of pleasures, as suggested by Hutcheson (2.1.). Self-love will then be discussed in its relation to benevolence and in the light of Hutcheson's distinction between affections and passions (2.2.).

2.1. Some preliminary remarks on natural and moral goodness

2.1.1. Natural goodness and the hierarchy of pleasures

The distinction between natural and moral good and evil is fundamental for both Hutcheson's theory of the emotions and his moral theory. As regards his theory of the emotions, the distinction is closely linked with the distinction between self-love and benevolence. Actions that are motivated by self-love aim at providing natural good to the agent herself, actions that are motivated by benevolence aim at promoting the (natural or moral) good of other agents, or of mankind in general. Benevolent actions, according to Hutcheson, constitute moral goodness.¹⁶

¹⁶ Roberts claims that Hutcheson wants to assert that morally good actions aim at the promotion of the *moral good* for mankind, not at the promotion of *natural good*. Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, pp. 21f. This interpretation does not seem correct to me, at least not for Hutcheson's early writings. There are numerous passages in both the *Inquiry* and the *Essay* that make clear that an action performed with the intention to promote the *natural* good of other agents is considered good in a moral sense. (For example Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 91: "It is true indeed, that the Actions we approve in others, are generally imagin'd to tend to the natural Good of Mankind, or of some Parts of it.") Cf. also Darwall, *British Moralists*, pp. 221f., who claims: "On his mature psychology [i.e. the psychology of the *Essay*] no motive can have moral good as object." It seems possible, however, that Hutcheson still admits the occurrence of actions that aim at promoting a moral good such as virtuous dispositions in other agents, without aiming at the promotion of natural good for them. This interpretation seems to be suggested in Hutcheson's discussion of Stoic moral theory in Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 84.

At the beginning of the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson introduces the notion of natural good:

The Pleasure in our sensible Perceptions of any kind, gives us our first Idea of natural Good, or Happiness; and then all Objects which are apt to excite this Pleasure are call'd immediately Good. Those Objects which may procure others immediately pleasant, are call'd Advantageous: and we pursue both Kinds from a View of Interest, or from Self-Love.¹⁷

Natural goodness is pleasure, and an object or state of affairs is qualified as naturally good if it directly or indirectly provides pleasure. In the *Essay*, Hutcheson gives the following definition of natural good and natural evil: “*Natural Good* is Pleasure: *Natural Evil* is Pain.”¹⁸ Given Hutcheson’s claim that something is naturally good if and only if it excites pleasure, it is obvious that he has a hedonistic conception of natural good.¹⁹ However, it is not egoistic in the sense that goodness would be a property an agent attributes to an object or state of affairs only if she desires it for self-directed reasons, as Hobbes suggests in the *Leviathan*.²⁰

For Hutcheson, there are different kinds of natural good or pleasure, which stand in a qualitative hierarchy. The idea that there are higher and lower forms of pleasure is present in all of Hutcheson’s writings.²¹ For example, he repeatedly refers to the “noble” pleasures gained from the internal or the moral sense, claiming that the latter are the “highest” and “sublimest” inner pleasures, while there are other, external and “ordinary” pleasures of life in which we can indulge.²²

¹⁷ Cf. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 86. This passage remains unchanged over the four editions of the *Inquiry*.

¹⁸ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 34.

¹⁹ John D. Bishop, “Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson’s Philosophy” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 57, no. 2 (1996), p. 283 argues that Hutcheson in his later writings tried “to get away from both egoistic and hedonistic theories of motivation and was trying to move towards a faculty based theory.” In both the *Inquiry* and the *Essay*, however, Hutcheson is clearly a hedonist.

²⁰ Hobbes, *Leviathan* (I, vi), p. 28f.

²¹ A similar point is made in Shaftesbury (cf. chapter II, section 2.4.1.), and again in Campbell (cf. chapter VI, section 2.3.2.).

²² Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 12, 77, 100, 218; Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 5, 129; Hutcheson, “*Essay*”, p. 203f.

In chapter V of the *Essay*, in which he elaborates a “Comparison of the Pleasures and Pains of the several Senses, as to Intenseness and Duration”, Hutcheson explains his idea of a hierarchy of different kinds of pleasures.²³ Hutcheson claims that there are five kinds of pleasure and pain, following his distinction between five different types of senses.²⁴ A *sense*, according to Hutcheson’s definition in the *Essay*, is “every *Determination of our Minds to receive Ideas independently on our Will, and to have Perceptions of Pleasure and Pain*”²⁵. According to Hutcheson, human agents are susceptible to perceive or sense firstly bodily pleasures of the external senses; secondly pleasures of imagination of the internal sense²⁶; thirdly social pleasures of the public sense, i.e. of “our Determination to be pleased with the *Happiness* of others, and to be uneasy at their *Misery*”²⁷; fourthly the pleasures of the sense of honour, “which makes the *Approbation*, or *Gratitude* of others, for any good Actions we have done, the necessary occasion of Pleasure; and their *Dislike*, *Condemnation*, or *Resentment* of Injuries done by us, the occasion of that uneasy Sensation called *Shame*, even when we fear no further evil from them”²⁸; and fifthly the moral pleasures of the moral sense, “by which we perceive *Virtue* or *Vice* in our selves, or others”²⁹. Accordingly, natural good, conceived in a hedonistic sense, can be distinguished into i) the pleasures and pains of the external senses; ii) the pleasures and pains of imagination or of the internal sense; iii) the pleasures and pains that have their origin in the social and kind affections of the public sense; iv)

²³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 87 – 109. Cf. furthermore on the same subject in the *System*: Francis Hutcheson, *A System of Moral Philosophy* (Hildesheim, Zürich, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1990 [1755]), pp. 116 – 148.

²⁴ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 88. Cf. Strasser’s discussion of Hutcheson’s account of the hierarchy of pleasures in the *System*. Mark Strasser, “Hutcheson on the Higher and Lower Pleasures” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25, no. 4 (1987), p. 517f. It has to be noted that in the *System*, Hutcheson reduces the number of assumed kinds of pleasures to four, leaving aside the pleasures of the sense of honour.

²⁵ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 17.

²⁶ The *inner sense* is also called the *sense of beauty*.

²⁷ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 17.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17. For his discussion of the different kinds of pleasures, cf. also Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 87f.

the pleasures and pains of the sense of honour; and v) the pleasures and pains of moral approbation and condemnation of one's own and others' actions.

As we shall discuss in greater detail in section 3.2.3., Hutcheson joins Shaftesbury in asserting the Interest Claim (i.e. the claim that virtue is in the agent's interest), and puts forward a hedonistic egoistic argument, which is based on his hierarchy of pleasures.³⁰ He affirms that the moral pleasures of self-approbation are the most valuable pleasures - in terms of their hedonic but not moral value. He first does so in the *Essay* (1728),³¹ and repeatedly highlights this point in the 3rd (1729) and 4th (1738) editions of the *Inquiry*.³² The moral pleasures of self-approbation are caused by the approbation of one's own actions, motives, and dispositions by one's moral sense. On the negative side, there is the extremely painful experience of moral self-condemnation, which is caused by reflection upon the absence of benevolence, or by the disapprobation of one's own vicious motives.³³

The value of a pleasurable experience is a function of its intensity and its duration.³⁴ Hutcheson argues that the pleasures of the moral sense are the most valuable pleasures, both in terms of *intensity* as well as *duration*:

The *moral Sense*, if we form *true Opinions* of the Tendencies of Actions, and of the *Affections* whence they spring, as it is the Fountain of the most *intense Pleasure*, so "it is in itself *constant*, not subject to Caprice or Change. If we resolutely incourage this Sense, it grows more acute by frequent *Gratification*, never cloyes, nor ever is surfeited. We not only are sure never to want *Opportunities* of doing good, which are in every one's power in the highest Degree; but each good Action is Matter of pleasant *Reflection* as long as we live. These Pleasures cannot indeed wholly secure us against all kinds of *Uneasiness*, yet they never tend naturally to increase them. On the contrary, their general Tendency is to lead the virtuous Agent

³⁰ Cf. section 3.2.3. for further discussions.

³¹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, especially p. 82, p. 131.

³² Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, especially p. 221, p. 226.

³³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 83.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

into all Pleasures, in the highest Degree in which they are consistent with each other.³⁵

The moral sense provides the agent with the most intense and most durable pleasures. Its frequent gratification does not diminish the pleasures it provides to the agent, as is the case of the external senses. The moral pleasures are not only gained during the performance of a virtuous action, but also when reflecting upon past actions. The pleasures of self-approbation involve a reflective awareness of one's benevolence: "each good Action is Matter of pleasant *Reflection* as long as we live."³⁶ According to Hutcheson, only an *experienced observer* recognises the truth of these claims. Experienced observers have "experienced all the several *kinds of Pleasure*, and have their *Senses* acute and fully exercised in them all."³⁷

It may be helpful to take a brief look at the *System* for a more thorough understanding of Hutcheson's idea of the hierarchy of the pleasures. In the *System*, Hutcheson claims that the moral pleasures arise upon the "consciousness of good affections and actions"³⁸, and that the painful sensations arising from the moral sense are almost perpetual. According to Hutcheson, the hierarchy between the different pleasures consists in the higher *kinds* of pleasures being both quantitatively and qualitatively better than the lower kinds of pleasures.³⁹ The moral sense provides the agent with the best kind of pleasures both quantitatively and qualitatively. The four kinds of pleasures discussed in the *System* are compared with respect to their duration and dignity. The dignity of a pleasing perception is a function of the excellence of the kind, which we

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 106f.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 106. Similarly, the *desire* for self-approbation must be conceived as a reflected second-order desire to desire benevolence. Cf. Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy", p. 286. Note that the desire for self-approbation is a *selfish* desire, because it aims at pleasure for the agent herself.

³⁷ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 89.

³⁸ Hutcheson, *System*, p. 131. Cf. also Strasser, "Hutcheson on the Higher and Lower Pleasures", p. 518.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 518.

discover by reflection, and from its intensity relative to other pleasing perceptions of the same kind.⁴⁰ The *tokens* of different kinds of pleasures, however, are incommensurable. It is possible to compare the duration and intensity of two tokens of pleasing perceptions of the same kind, but not of two tokens of two different kinds. Thus, we cannot compare a token of a pleasurable perception of the external senses with a token of a pleasurable experience of the moral sense. Hutcheson argues that the reflection upon the pleasure and its worth has to be taken into account when comparing the different kinds of pleasures. While reflecting, the person will enjoy having indulged in the higher pleasures. This enjoyment adds both to the intenseness and the duration of the higher kinds of pleasures.

It must be noted, however, that no form of pleasure has an *intrinsic moral value*, not even the pleasures of the moral sense. Thus, if an agent intends to provide herself moral pleasures, she is not aiming at moral, but at natural good and does not act disinterestedly. The moral pleasures are a consequence of our promoting the moral good, yet as a kind of pleasure they remain a form of natural good.

2.1.2. Moral goodness

Natural good and evil have to be distinguished from *moral* good and evil. Hutcheson states at the beginning of the *Inquiry* that the expressions “moral good” and “virtue” denote the idea of “some Quality apprehended in Actions, which procures Approbation, attended with Desire of the Agent’s Happiness.”⁴¹ Which exactly is this quality that makes an action morally good, according to Hutcheson?

⁴⁰ The concept of *dignity* is not yet elaborated in the *Essay*, in which Hutcheson speaks only of the *intensity* of the pleasures.

⁴¹ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 85 and 214. This is the text from the 3rd and 4th edition. It has to be noted that in the 1st and 2nd edition, this passage reads as follows: “The Word Moral Goodness, in this Treatise, denotes our Idea of some Quality apprehended in Actions, which procures Approbation, and Love toward the Actor, from those who receive no Advantage by the Action.” In the quoted 3rd and 4th editions, Hutcheson firstly drops the condition that the approver receives no advantage from the

In this context, it is important to stress that Hutcheson is not a consequentialist in the sense that he would analyse an action's moral goodness in terms of the naturally good consequences it produces. This holds in spite of his famous claim that "that Action is best, which procures the greatest Happiness [i.e. a *natural* good] for the greatest Numbers".⁴² He insists that the *intention* to produce good for other agents, and not the mere consequences of one's actions determines the moral value of an action.⁴³ The moral good stands in a relation with natural good in the sense that the natural good *intended* determines the moral value of an action.⁴⁴ Thus, Hutcheson also draws attention to the fact that there are "unsuccessful Attempts" to promote the good of others, which we do morally approve.⁴⁵ The actual promotion of the natural good of other agents does not seem to be a necessary condition for an action to count as morally virtuous.⁴⁶

In the *Essay*, Hutcheson states: "An Action is *good*, in a *moral Sense*, when it flows from benevolent Affection, or Intention of absolute Good to others."⁴⁷ Moral goodness is benevolence, i.e. intending to promote the well-being of others for their own sake, or an ultimate desire for other agents' happiness. The quality of an action that makes it *morally* good is its being motivated by benevolent affections or character traits.⁴⁸ Only the action's quality of moral goodness, not the quality of natural

action in question. This is consistent with the idea that virtuous actions, in spite of being disinterested, provide the agent with an advantage, namely the pleasures of self-approbation from the moral sense. Secondly, he replaces the term "love" with the expression "desire for the other agent's happiness". This makes his claim that moral approbation engenders benevolence (which he defines elsewhere as the desire for the other agent's happiness) more obvious.

⁴² Ibid., p. 125.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 131. Yet, it is true that moral goodness of an action is sometimes treated as being *partly* a function of the quantity of natural good intended to produce. Cf. section 3.1.1.c).

⁴⁴ This will be discussed in more detail in section 3.1.1. below.

⁴⁵ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 116, and 152.

⁴⁶ We are going to take another look at this point in our discussion of Hutcheson's moral mathematics in 3.1.1.c).

⁴⁷ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 36. Hutcheson defines "absolute good" as "that which, considered with all its concomitants and consequences, contains more *Good* than what compensates all its *Evils*." Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 34.

⁴⁸ In the *Inquiry*'s mathematical approach to moral goodness, Hutcheson is more specific and claims that the moral goodness of an action is inversely proportional to the abilities of the agent. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 128f. Cf. section 3.1.1.c) on his moral mathematics.

goodness, raises moral approbation in the observer.⁴⁹ Note that on this definition of moral goodness, actions that produce natural good for other agents are not classified as morally good if they have been performed with self-interested intentions.⁵⁰

2.1.3. *The irreducibility of moral goodness to natural goodness*

Against authors such as Mandeville and Campbell, Hutcheson argues at length that moral goodness is not reducible to natural goodness or pleasure. Many of his arguments actually concern questions of moral approbation rather than moral motivation. We will take a closer look at some of them in section 3, insofar as they concern the role of self-love in Hutcheson's moral theory. Yet, some preliminary remarks are in order.

In his discussion of the moral sense in the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson examines a series of cases in order to show that approval of moral goodness is not the same as approval of natural goodness. The quality observers morally approve of is not the pleasure or natural good of any kind that it might provide them. In section I of the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson appeals to introspection and argues at length that natural and moral good or evil provoke fundamentally different reactions in an observer. Possessions of natural goods - such as material possessions, fruitful fields

⁴⁹ On this basis, Hutcheson can be classified as a moral realist. The quality of benevolence in the observed agent, which is irreducible to subjective states of the observer, constitutes the facts that make moral judgments true or false. Cf. also Haakonssen, "Natural Law and Moral Realism: The Scottish Synthesis", p. 64, who claims that Hutcheson's moral theory is realist in the following sense: "It is realist in maintaining that moral judgments have truth-value; that there are facts about which some moral judgments are true; and that these facts are the presence of certain qualities in persons, which cannot be reduced to subjective states of the person who judges." Cf. furthermore Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 295 – 301 on different aspects of Hutcheson's moral realism.

⁵⁰ Hutcheson's distinction between natural and moral goodness differs slightly from Shaftesbury's. Both emphasise the importance of the intention to promote the good of others. Shaftesbury, however, claims that only *rational* beings with a notion of the public good can act morally good, whereas Hutcheson only emphasises that there must be an intention to ultimately and not instrumentally promote the well-being of others. Thus, Hutcheson has a tendency to attribute certain lower forms of virtue to non-rational creatures. In the 4th edition of the *Inquiry*, he makes this point rather explicit: "Again, 'tis plain there is something in certain Tempers of Brutes, which engages our Liking, and some lower Good-will and Esteem, tho' we do not usually call it Virtue, nor do we call the sweeter Dispositions of Children Virtue; and yet they are so very like the lower Kinds of Virtue, that I see no harm in calling them Virtues." Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 243.

and other things that are advantageous in the sense of procuring pleasure - cause different sensations and affections than possessions of moral goods - such as honesty, kindness or a noble character.⁵¹ The former raise a desire of possession of natural goods in the observer, the latter “Approbation, or Perception of moral Excellence”.⁵²

Next, if moral good could be analysed in terms of natural good, there would be no explanation for the fact that observers often approve of events or characters in distant places or ages where they cannot benefit from any natural advantage.⁵³ In the case of moral good, the observer approves in a moral way, independently of the natural benefit or disadvantage for herself. Next, an action represented as ultimately aiming at promoting the agent’s private good provokes different reactions in an observer from an action represented as benevolent or as ultimately aiming at promoting the good of someone else.⁵⁴ Only the latter makes us “feel Joy within us, admire the lovely Action, and praise its Author.”⁵⁵ Furthermore, actions represented as being motivated by vicious desires, which aim to harm others, are not morally approved of even if the observer derives a natural benefit from them. Rather, agents morally approve of disadvantageous actions that they see to be motivated by benevolence.⁵⁶ Analogously, moral evil is not reducible to natural disadvantage. If a natural disadvantage is in one case caused by a tempest and in another by a malevolent neighbour, the observer’s reactions are fundamentally different.⁵⁷ If there were no distinction between natural and moral good or evil, Hutcheson argues, the difference in the reactions could not be explained.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 89.

⁵² Ibid., p. 90 and 215. I quote the text of the 3rd and 4th editions.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 89.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 91.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 91.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 92f.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 90f.

2.2. Self-love in Hutcheson's theory of the emotions

In order to examine Hutcheson's approach to self-love in the writings of his public philosophy, and in order to discuss the moral evaluation of self-love, we must first situate it within the general framework of his theory of the emotions. This is characterised by two fundamental axes. On the one hand, self-love as a fundamental source of motives must be seen in its relation to benevolence, which is the other fundamental source of motives. This axis is put forward and most clearly elaborated in the *Inquiry's* moral theory. On the other hand, Hutcheson's treatment of self-love, especially in view of moral evaluation, is characterised by the distinction between affections and passions. This second axis is mainly elaborated in the *Essay* (1728) and influences the *Inquiry's* treatment of self-love and benevolence from the 3rd edition (1729) onwards.

2.2.1. The distinction between affections and passions

Like sensations, affections and passions are modifications of the mind.⁵⁸ *Sensations* are the "immediate Perceptions of Pleasure and Pain, upon the very Presence or Operation of any Object or Event, which are occasioned by some Impression on our Bodies".⁵⁹ Sensations are immediate and depend on the activity of the senses, external or internal. They cannot be controlled by volition.

Affections are

[...] those *Pleasures* or *Pains* not thus excited, but 'resulting from some *Reflection* upon, or *Opinion* of our Possession of any Advantage, or from a certain Prospect of future pleasant Sensations on the one hand, or from a like *Reflection* or *Prospect* of evil or painful Sensations on the other, either to our selves or others.'⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 30 and 49f.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49f.

The causal origin of affections is thus some kind of apprehension of an advantage or natural good (i.e. any kind of pleasure or, on the other hand, any kind of pain). Affections thus have a cognitive dimension which sensations lack - they presuppose some kind of belief or apprehension of a present or future state of affairs. Hutcheson emphasises, however, that the advantage apprehended is not necessarily for the agent herself. In other words, he rejects an egoistic analysis of all affections. According to Hutcheson, it is possible to have affections that aim at the happiness of other agents. We can be happy about a friend's success or commiserate with her about a loss.

Especially in view of Hutcheson's treatment of benevolence, it is important to note that affections can differ in *scope*, which allows for a distinction in degrees of partiality.⁶¹ Benevolent affections can be directed towards one or several agents, to agents with different degrees of proximity in their relation to the agent, or towards mankind in general. Hutcheson claims that there are differences in moral value between, say, calm partial or particular benevolence towards one's own child, calm benevolence towards an unknown person in need, and calm universal benevolence towards mankind in general.⁶²

The modifications of the mind called *passions* (sometimes also called "passionate desires") are affections with "more violent *confused Sensations*"⁶³, or

[...] a *confused Sensation* either of Pleasure or Pain, occasioned or attended by some violent bodily Motions, which keeps the mind much employed upon the present Affair, to the exclusion of every thing else, and prolongs and strengthens the Affection sometimes to such a degree, as to prevent all *deliberate Reasoning* about our Conduct.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 76. Benevolence, in its partial form, can be a cause of morally problematic phenomena such as nepotism. Hutcheson aims at solving this problem by postulating that there is a moral hierarchy between the different forms of benevolence, impartial benevolence being the morally best. We will take a closer look at this in section 3.1.

⁶² Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 231f.; Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 33.

⁶³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 50.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 31.

Passions are composite states of the mind, involving affections and some kind of sensation, that stands in a causal (or at least temporal) relation with violent bodily motions. Affections are calm, whereas passions are violent. Unlike affections, passions have a strong tendency to prevent reflection or reasoning on both the consequences of one's actions and the features of external objects and states of affairs, for example their value. Thus, passions are not susceptible to be controlled by correcting one's opinions, whereas affections allow at least for indirect control.⁶⁵ Violent passions can oppose calm affections, become stronger than them and cause actions that are in conflict with private or public interest. Yet, we must note right away that *calm partial affections*, too, can oppose *calm impartial affections* and cause actions that are in conflict with the general public and private interest. These aspects are particularly relevant to Hutcheson's *moral* evaluation of selfish and unselfish affections and passions, which is reflected in a slightly more optimistic picture of calm selfish affections and a rather critical treatment of violent benevolent passions, such as pity, from the 3rd edition of the *Inquiry* onwards.

Besides affections and passions, Hutcheson mentions *propensities of instinct* as possible motives for actions.⁶⁶ Propensities do not presuppose any beliefs about the object's worth, but they often accompany affections or passions, as in the case of the passion of anger that involves "in the passionate Person a Propensity to occasion *Misery* to the Offender, a Determination to *Violence*, even where there is no *Intention* of any Good to be obtained, or Evil avoided by this Violence."⁶⁷

In Hutcheson, the distinction between affections and passions is a distinction of kind.⁶⁸ The calm affections are the two "proper

⁶⁵ This aspect will be discussed more extensively in the section on self-cultivation (3.2.2).

⁶⁶ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 51.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁶⁸ Cf. Henning Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in Francis Hutcheson's Ethical Theory* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 25 and Fieser, "Hume's Classification of the Passions and its Precursors", p. 6. For the following discussion cf. also Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in*

Affections”⁶⁹ of *desire* and *aversion*, which “directly incline the Mind to *Action* or *Volition of Motion*”⁷⁰ upon the apprehension of a good or evil, and the two affections of *joy* and *sorrow*, which arise from the “Reflection upon the Presence or certain Futurity”⁷¹ of a good or evil. The diverse violent passions, such as anger and pity, are often linked with propensities of instinct.⁷²

2.2.2. Hutcheson’s theory of the emotions and Stoic moral psychology

It is widely acknowledged that Hutcheson relies on Stoic elements in his early writings, and not only in the later *System* and the *Introduction*.⁷³ Indeed, his theory of the emotions has many characteristics of Stoic moral psychology. Yet, there are some fundamental and interesting differences, only some of which Hutcheson draws attention to. In the present section, we shall take a look at some features that are relevant for an understanding of Hutcheson’s account of self-love.

Let us first highlight some elements that demonstrate Hutcheson’s proximity to the Stoic moral psychology⁷⁴, which is particularly visible in his *Essay*. At the beginning of section III, Hutcheson gives a short account of Cicero’s treatment of the *perturbationes* or passions in the *Disputationes Tusculanæ*:

Cicero, in the Fourth Book of *Tusculan Questions*, gives from the Stoicks, this general Division of the *Passions*: First, into *Love and Hatred*, according as the Object is good or evil; and then subdivides each, according as the Object is *present* or *expected*. About Good we have these two, *Libido* &

Francis Hutcheson’s Ethical Theory, pp. 10 – 13. Elizabeth S. Radcliffe, "Love and Benevolence in Hutcheson's and Hume's Theories of the Passions" *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 4, no. 12 (2004), p. 633f. furthermore discusses joy and sorrow as “calm or reflective passion”. This is, however, not in accordance with Hutcheson’s theory of the emotions, since, for Hutcheson, there seems to be no such thing as a calm passion – joy and sorrow are counted as affections.

⁶⁹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 50.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁷³ Cf. e.g. Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy", Fieser, "Hume's Classification of the Passions and its Precursors".

⁷⁴ Cf. chapter II, section 3.3. of the present study.

Lætitia, Desire and Joy. About Evil we have likewise these two, *Metus & Ægritudo, Fear and Sorrow*.⁷⁵

Thus, we obtain the following classification of the passions, with Cicero's Latin terminology (as known from Shaftesbury's treatment of the passions in the *Pathologia*, cf. Chapter II, section 3.3.) and Hutcheson's English terminology:

<i>passions (perturbationes)</i>	<i>object is present</i>	<i>object is expected/future</i>
<i>object is good</i>	laetitia <i>Hutcheson: joy</i>	libido <i>Hutcheson: desire</i>
<i>object is evil</i>	ægritudo <i>Hutcheson: sorrow</i>	metus <i>Hutcheson: fear</i>

Hutcheson then suggests his own classification of the pure affections:

Perhaps it may be more easy to conceive our *Affections* and Passions in this manner. The Apprehension of Good, either to our selves or others, as attainable, raises *Desire*: The like Apprehension of Evil, or of the Loss of Good, raises *Aversion*, or Desire of removing or preventing it. These two are the proper *Affections*, distinct from all *Sensation*: We may call both *Desires* if we please. The Reflection upon the Presence or certain Futurity of any Good, raises the Sensation of Joy, which is distinct from those immediate Sensations which arise from the Object itself. A like Sensation is raised, when we reflect upon the Removal or Prevention of Evil which once threatened our selves or others. The *Reflection* upon the Presence of Evil, or the certain Prospect of it, or the Loss of Good, is the Occasion of the Sensation of *Sorrow*, distinct from those *immediate Sensations* arising from the Objects or Events themselves.⁷⁶

This results in the following table:

<i>pure affections</i>	<i>object present or certain raises sensations</i>	<i>object attainable/ avoidable raises proper affections or desires</i>
<i>object apprehended as good (raises desire)</i>	joy (which is a sensation)	desire
<i>object apprehended as evil (raises aversion)</i>	sorrow (which is a sensation)	aversion (which is a desire)

There is a series of obvious similarities between the two tables, and a striking difference that Hutcheson does not mention. Firstly, as to the similarities: In the tradition not only of the Stoics, but of basically all

⁷⁵ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 49.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 50f.

theories of the emotions in the 17th and early 18th centuries, Hutcheson adopts the distinction of the emotions into positive or pleasing and negative or unpleasing emotions,⁷⁷ and relates them to the apprehension of good or evil, present or future. Like Cicero and the Stoics, Hutcheson suggests a distinction between calm emotions (which are called “constantiae” by the Stoics and “affections” by Hutcheson) and violent emotions (which are called “perturbationes” by the Stoics and “passions” by Hutcheson).⁷⁸

To avoid confusion with the use of the terms “love” and “hatred”, Hutcheson suggests naming the two proper affections “desire” and “aversion”. The terms “love” and “hatred”, he suggests, should be reserved for

[...] our Sentiments towards Moral Agents; *Love* denoting ‘*Desire* of the Happiness of another, generally attended with some *Approbation* of him as innocent at least, or of being of a mixed Character, where Good is generally prevalent:’ And *Hatred* ‘denoting Disapprobation by our *Sense*, with the Absence of Desire of their Happiness.’ *Benevolence* may denote only ‘the Desire of another’s Happiness;’ and *Malice*, ‘the Desire of their Misery,’ abstractly from any Approbation or Condemnation by our *Moral Sense*.⁷⁹

In Hutcheson’s view, desires and aversions are modifications of the mind that aim at any object or state of affairs; love and hatred, however, only have moral agents and their properties as their objects. According to the *Inquiry*, love can furthermore be distinguished into love of esteem (or moral approbation) and love of benevolence (or the desire of the happiness of other agents), and hatred into hatred of displicence (or moral disapprobation) and malice.⁸⁰

Besides the fact that love and hatred are more complex states of mind than desire and aversion, two points should be noted here. Firstly, Hutcheson argues at length in the *Inquiry* that both forms of love and

⁷⁷ Fieser, “Hume’s Classification of the Passions and its Precursors” , p. 2.

⁷⁸ Cf. chapter II, section 3.3.

⁷⁹ Hutcheson, *Essay* , p. 52f. Hutcheson immediately adds that malice is not found in our nature, unless we are overwhelmed by violent passions.

⁸⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry* , pp. 102f.

hatred are disinterested in the sense that they do not ultimately aim at any private advantage. Thus, they cannot be influenced by considerations of self-interest. Secondly, love of esteem or moral approbation in general has a tendency to cause love of benevolence, and thus incorporates a behavioural tendency to promote the well-being of the agent observed. The moral approval of an agent causes a desire for her happiness in the observer.

There is a striking difference to the traditional Stoic account of the emotions, which Hutcheson does not discuss at all, and which has not been taken up by commentators.⁸¹ The vocabulary Hutcheson uses for his table of the calm emotions or, in his terms, *pure affections* (which are the systematic equivalent of the Stoic *constantiaē*) stems from Cicero's description of the violent emotions or the *perturbationes*. Interestingly, Hutcheson does not refer to Cicero's treatment of the calm emotions, or the *constantiaē*, which immediately follows his treatment of the violent emotions or *perturbationes* in the *Disputationes Tusculanæ*. Cicero (and Shaftesbury in the *Pathologia*), as we have already seen in chapter II, section 3.3.2., suggests the following table of *constantiaē*:

<i>object of calm emotion is:</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>absent</i>
<i>object of calm emotion is:</i>		
<i>true good (bonum verum)</i>	joy or contentment (gaudium vel satisfactio)	will (voluntas)
<i>true evil (malum verum)</i>	∅	aversion (cautio) ⁸²

It has been mentioned above that according to the Stoics, there is no *calm* emotion with respect to present true (i.e. internal) evil, since the Stoic *Sage* is never exposed to it.⁸³ *Ægritudo* or *sorrow* is a violent

⁸¹ We are going to discuss its implications for Hutcheson's moral philosophy in section 3.2.5. of the present chapter.

⁸² The English terminology in this table is suggested by Jaffro / Petit / Maurer.

⁸³ Chapter II, Section 3.3.2. Cf. Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanæ*, pp. 340 – 344.

emotion, which is based on the erroneous representation of an indifferent state of affairs as a true evil and figures in the table of the *perturbationes*.

In spite of his rather heavy reliance on the Stoics, Hutcheson does not mention this point at all. Rather, he adjusts his table of the calm emotions (or pure affections) to Cicero's table of the *perturbationes*, which are the systematic equivalent of the Hutchesonian passions. Thus, the Ciceronian passion of sorrow appears in the Hutchesonian table of calm affections. This has a strong systematic reason, which will only be transparent after an analysis of the self-love – benevolence axis. We shall look at this point in greater detail in section 3.2.5. But it should be mentioned right away that one of the fundamental points in Hutcheson's moral philosophy is to argue that men have a natural concern for the happiness of other agents, which is irreducible to self-love. "We naturally *desire* the absent Happiness of others; *rejoice* in it when it is obtained, and *sorrow* for it when lost."⁸⁴ The feeling of sorrow about the misery of others, in Hutcheson, proves the naturalness of benevolent affections, which are calm emotions. On this point, he deviates from the traditional Stoic moral psychology.

2.2.3. The distinction between interested self-love and disinterested benevolence

Hutcheson indicates another major difference between his moral psychology and others'. After having treated the fundamental emotions in the *Essay*, he emphasises that the distinction between private and public has been neglected by other philosophers:

The confused Use of the Names, *Love*, *Hatred*, *Joy*, *Sorrow*, *Delight*, has made some of the most important Distinctions of our Affections and Passions, to be overlooked. No Modifications of Mind can be more different from each other than a *private Desire* and a publick; yet both are called *Love*. The *Love of Money*, for Instance, and the *Love of a generous*

⁸⁴ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 56.

*Character, or a Friend: the Love of a fine Seat, and the Love of a Child. In like manner, what can be more different than the Sorrow for a Loss befallen ourselves, and Sorrow for the Death of a Friend? Of this Men must convince themselves by Reflection.*⁸⁵

What makes these two classes of states of mind fundamentally different is that private desires ultimately aim at promoting the good of the agent, whereas public desires ultimately aim at promoting the good of others. In the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson refers to the former as self-love, and to the latter as benevolence. His moral psychology in the public writings is deeply marked by the distinction between self-love and benevolence, which he sometimes puts forward as a genuine *opposition* between two conflicting principles of action. One of Hutcheson's central goals in his moral psychology is to show the *falsity* of the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question by attacking the claim that self-love is the only motive for human agents. Yet Hutcheson does not only reject the claim, he also regularly marks the doctrine as dangerous, since it keeps its adherents from cultivating unselfish benevolent affections, which are natural to mankind: "[M]any have been discourag'd from all Attempts of cultivating *kind generous Affections* in themselves, by a previous Notion that there are no such Affections in Nature [...]"⁸⁶.

a) Self-love and interest

Hutcheson has a *hedonistic concept of self-love*. At the beginning of the *Inquiry*, he characterises self-love as the motivational power in human nature that aims at natural good or pleasure for the agent herself:

The Pleasure in our sensible Perceptions of any kind, gives us our first Idea of natural Good, or Happiness; and then all Objects which are apt to excite this Pleasure are call'd immediately Good. Those Objects which may procure others immediately pleasant, are call'd Advantageous: and we pursue both Kinds from a View of Interest, or from Self-Love.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 53 .

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 3f. Cf. also Hutcheson, *Inquiry* , p. 142, p. 178.

⁸⁷ Hutcheson, *Inquiry* , p. 86.

An action is motivated by self-love if its goal is to provide the agent with pleasure of *any* kind.⁸⁸ In the *Essay*, Hutcheson claims that “Selfish *Desires* [or self-love, in the terminology of the *Inquiry*] pursue ultimately only the private Good of the Agent.”⁸⁹ It is possible that self-love motivates an agent to a *beneficent* action that involves the promotion of the happiness of another agent, yet *ultimately* aims at the happiness of the agent herself.⁹⁰ In actions motivated by self-love, a possible concern for the happiness of another agent is ultimately instrumental to the agent’s own happiness.

In accordance with his hedonistic concept of self-love, Hutcheson puts forward a hedonistic concept of interest. An action is said to be “in the interest of the agent” if it is represented as providing the agent some kind of pleasure. Self-love is thus called the interested principle of actions. It is possible that an agent acts against her own interests in the sense that her selfishly motivated actions only *apparently* promote her interests. This is the case if the agent acts while being overwhelmed by selfish passions, such as greed or jealousy, or if an affection is based on a mistaken representation of something as good.⁹¹

b) Benevolence and disinterestedness

Love of benevolence, the other fundamental source of motives, involves an *ultimate* desire for the happiness or the good of others.⁹² This definition excludes ultimately selfish desires to promote the happiness of

⁸⁸ Cf. section 2.1.1. on the different kinds of pleasure.

⁸⁹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 37. It should be noted that the adjective “selfish” in Hutcheson is not associated with morally problematic excessiveness, as sometimes the case in Shaftesbury. “Selfish” desires or affections do simply aim at promoting the good of the agent, whereas “kind” desires aim at promoting the good of other agents. Yet, the noun “selfishness” refers to an excessive and morally problematic degree of self-love.

⁹⁰ Cf. section 2.2.3.c)

⁹¹ Hutcheson discusses cases of selfish *passionate* actions that are pernicious to the agent herself. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 136f. True self-love and an agent’s true interest are bound to self-love as a calm affection, whereas selfish passions often do not promote the agent’s interest.

⁹² Hutcheson highlights this point in the *Essay* and from the third edition of the *Inquiry* onwards. This precision is best understood as a reaction to John Clarke of Hull’s attacks against the *Inquiry*. Cf. also Luigi Turco, “Sympathy and Moral Sense: 1725-1740” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 1, no. 7 (1999), pp. 82-89.

other agents for instrumental reasons - even if this may involve *beneficence*. In the *Essay*, Hutcheson writes that “*Benevolent or publick Desires* pursue the Good of others, according to the several *Systems* to which we extend our Attention, but with different Degrees of Strength.”⁹³ In opposition to self-love, and in accordance with the distinction between private and public good, Hutcheson calls benevolence the *disinterested principle of action*.⁹⁴ An action is not called disinterested because it does not aim at *any good at all*, but because it aims at promoting the *good of others*. Even if virtue is said to be “in the interest” of a rational agent due to the moral pleasures that can be gained from it, a virtuous action is always directly motivated by the disinterested principle of actions, i.e. benevolence.⁹⁵

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Hutcheson points out that “Love of Esteem and Complacence is always join’d with Benevolence, where there is no strong Opposition of Interest”⁹⁶. Complacence, as he specifies in the 3rd and 4th editions of the *Inquiry*, “denotes Approbation of any Person by our Moral Sense; and is rather a Perception than an Affection”⁹⁷. Thus, morally approving of another agent causes the observer’s benevolence towards that agent unless there is a strong opposition of interest.

c) Benevolence is irreducible to self-love and natural to mankind: benevolence vs. beneficence

On the basis of the distinction between the aims of self-love and benevolence (*private good or pleasure for the agent herself – public good*

⁹³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 37.

⁹⁴ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 102.

⁹⁵ Hutcheson reflects this in Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 5: “It may perhaps seem strange, that while in this *Treatise* Virtue is suppos’d *disinterested*; yet so much Pains is taken, by a *Comparison* of our several *Pleasures*, to prove the *Pleasures* of *Virtue* to be the greatest we are capable of, and that consequently it is our truest *Interest* to be *virtuous*.”

⁹⁶ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 105.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

or pleasure for other agents), Hutcheson claims that benevolence cannot be analysed in terms of self-love:

As to the Love of Benevolence, the very Name excludes Self-Interest. We never call that Man benevolent, who is in fact useful to others, but at the same time only intends his own Interest, without any ultimate desire of the Good of others. If there be any Benevolence at all, it must be disinterested.⁹⁸

The concept of benevolence cannot be reduced to the concept of self-love, since there is an essential difference between being *beneficent* or useful to others for ultimately selfish reasons, and being *benevolent* or acting on an ultimate desire for the good of others. Obviously, this point is not yet a refutation of psychological egoism. The psychological egoist, too, has to distinguish conceptually between selfish and benevolent motives in order to make his empirical claim and in order to avoid slipping into a tautological version of egoism. Then, the egoist must argue that as a matter of fact, no unselfish motives occur.⁹⁹

In both the *Inquiry* and the *Essay*, Hutcheson argues at length that in reality, human agents do indeed act on naturally benevolent, i.e. unselfish motives, which are disinterested in the sense that they ultimately aim at the good of other agents. Many of his arguments are based on his theory of moral judgments and resemble the following argument: (1) We do not morally approve of selfish actions. Yet, (2) we morally approve of some actions, and there is no *prima facie* reason to doubt that these cases of moral approval are all erroneous. (3) Thus, there must be some other motive than self-love.¹⁰⁰ (4) As a matter of fact, moral approval is caused by benevolence. (5) Thus, benevolence does really motivate rational

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 103 and 219. I quote the text from the 3rd edition, which adds the term “ultimate” and makes his point more transparent. Cf. also Hutcheson on the same point in Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 24 – 29.

⁹⁹ Cf. chapter I, section 4.2.

¹⁰⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 108 and 228.

agents, and the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question must be false.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, Hutcheson rejects the psychological claim that agents *voluntarily* bring benevolence upon themselves in order to gain the moral pleasures that are caused by it in reflection, or in order to be rewarded by God, i.e. for ultimately *selfish* reasons. Firstly, affections cannot be directly raised by volition – they are outside the agent’s immediate control. Thus, an agent cannot directly raise benevolence for the advantages she gets from being benevolent.¹⁰² Secondly, not all occurrences of benevolence are accompanied by pleasure. Pity, for example, is characterised by painful aspects for the observer.¹⁰³

Hutcheson then argues against the assumption that “we desire the Happiness of others, as conceiving it necessary to procure some pleasant Sensations which we expect to feel upon seeing others happy.”¹⁰⁴ The claim is not that the agent can voluntarily bring benevolence upon herself, but that there is a selfish psychological mechanism that causes her desire for the well-being of others. Observing the well-being of others, according to this claim, is a condition for the observer’s own well-being. Thus, she desires the well-being of others for ultimately selfish reasons. Hutcheson objects firstly that an ultimately selfish desire for the well-being of others is not approved as virtuous. Secondly, introspection shows us that “we all often feel Delight upon seeing others happy, but during our Pursuit of their Happiness we have no Intention of obtaining this delight.”¹⁰⁵ Often, the pleasure we derive from having acted benevolently and seeing someone happy is based on the fact that we successfully realised our ultimate intention to promote her happiness, without intending to feel the

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 103f.

¹⁰² Hutcheson will argue, however, that this does not exclude the possibility to indirectly cultivate certain dispositions. Cf. section 3.2.

¹⁰³ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 221. Cf. section 2.2.6.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 223. The passage was added in the 3rd edition, supposedly as a reaction against the criticisms of John Clarke of Hull.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 223.

resulting pleasure.¹⁰⁶ Next, that there is a genuinely disinterested concern in the well-being of others is proven by the disinterested concern we have in the well-being of others after our death.¹⁰⁷ Even if we think that “after our Decease we know nothing of what befalls those who survive us [...] we do not lose, at the Approach of Death, all Concern for Families, Friends, or Country”¹⁰⁸.

Let us summarise that, concerning the Motivation Question, Hutcheson rejects the egoistic answer and asserts a non-egoistic answer in claiming that genuine disinterested benevolence is natural to mankind, and that benevolence is irreducible to self-love. Benevolence involves an ultimate desire to promote the well-being of others for their own sake, and not for one’s own sake as in the case of mere beneficence. Disinterested benevolence can be opposed and even overwhelmed by selfish passions, yet its original existence does not depend on external factors such as education, rewards and punishment. Every rational human being is naturally endowed with benevolence as one of the fundamental sources of motives. Furthermore, benevolence can be cultivated in order to make it stronger.¹⁰⁹

d) Benevolence and self-love jointly exciting to actions

On the basis of his distinction between self-love and benevolence, Hutcheson claims that, though they are different, “these two Principles may jointly excite a Man to the same Action.”¹¹⁰ It is possible that both motivate the agent to the same action, and that she acts with the intentions of furthering her own interests *and* the interests of others. On the other hand, the two principles can oppose each other and be in

¹⁰⁶ Cf. also our remarks on the *Paradox of Moral Motivation* in section 3.2.3.

¹⁰⁷ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 223f.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 224

¹⁰⁹ Cf. our discussion in section 3.2.

¹¹⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 104.

conflict. These cases will be discussed in more detail in the context of Hutcheson's moral mathematics, where he discusses the value of actions with mixed motives.¹¹¹

e) Malicious disinterested hatred

A note on disinterested malice is appropriate. Hutcheson asserts that calm reflected affections that aim at the misery of other agents without any self-interest (the equivalent to Shaftesbury's unnatural affections, as discussed in chapter II, section 2.3.1.c) are extremely rare. Such affections are malice, or "malicious disinterested Hatred".¹¹² They are disinterested since they ultimately aim at the misery of others, and not at promoting the private good of the agent on the detriment of the happiness of others. Malice is also different from selfish passions that overwhelm the agent, represent other agents as absolutely evil and motivate actions that cause their misery. Hutcheson claims that, in fact, most actions that have negative consequences for other agents are motivated by selfish passions or by passions that involve a misrepresentation of the good of other agents, and not by a reflected and disinterested intention to harm others.¹¹³ From the point of view of the Human Nature Question, this must be counted as a positive analysis of harmful actions. Human agents rarely want the misery of others. Rather, they are overwhelmed by their own selfish passions or suffer from "the *overgrowth* of a just natural Affection, upon false Opinions, or confused Ideas"¹¹⁴. There is indeed a difference in emphasis with respect to Shaftesbury, who calls the unnatural affections the "reigning passion of many tyrants and barbarous nations"¹¹⁵. On this point, Shaftesbury

¹¹¹ Cf. Section 3.1.1.

¹¹² Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 105 and p. 106 on "sedate Malice".

¹¹³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 136 - 139.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹¹⁵ Shaftesbury, "Inquiry", p. 226.

emphasises the possibility of corruption in civilisation, whereas Hutcheson emphasises the natural goodness of human nature.

2.2.4. Two other forms of self-love: love of praise and self-esteem

a) Love of praise

Two forms of self-love deserve our attention in view of Hutcheson's distinction between the different kinds of pleasure. Firstly, *love of praise*¹¹⁶ in Hutcheson can be conceived as a kind of hedonistic self-love with the specific aim of the pleasures of the sense of honour. The sense of honour makes others' approbation, or the "*good Opinion and Love of others*"¹¹⁷ a source of pleasure for the agent who is the object of praise. Not *any* kind of praise or approbation, however, is apt to excite these pleasures. Unlike Mandeville, who discredits self-love as love of praise as a form of vanity caused by excessive pride, Hutcheson imposes a condition of appropriateness for praise. Praise or honour for an agent is only appropriate if it is given for a morally virtuous action or disposition: "Honour then is the Opinion of others concerning our morally good Actions, or Abilitys presum'd to be apply'd that way."¹¹⁸

The desire for honour is selfish,¹¹⁹ since it aims at a kind of natural good for the agent. Yet, the sense of honour presupposes a *moral* sense, since only actions that are excellent "in a publick Spirit"¹²⁰ deserve genuine honour or approbation, as Hutcheson argues in the *Inquiry*. Given the psychological fact that the sense of honour rests on the moral sense, an agent can only gain the pleasures of true honour (as opposed to vainglory) if she gets others' approbation for moral reasons. This is a fundamental difference with regard to Mandeville's concept of love of praise, where no such condition is presupposed. Hutcheson highlights that

¹¹⁶ Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.2.

¹¹⁷ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 150.

¹¹⁸ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 151. By this, Hutcheson seems to exclude that one can merit genuine honour for non-moral qualities, which seems a debatably narrow conception of honour.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

self-love as love of praise can be an indirect incentive to the cultivation of benevolent dispositions, since it provides additional motives of a higher order to cultivate benevolent first-order affections.¹²¹

b) Self-esteem and pride

Hutcheson furthermore puts forward a concept of self-love as self-esteem.¹²² The concept of self-esteem or self-approbation is present in Hutcheson's idea that an agent, in virtue of her moral sense, feels the pleasures of self-approbation upon the awareness of having acted out of benevolence. Having esteem for oneself means experiencing the moral pleasures of self-approbation. Self-approbation in the sense of self-esteem is distinguished from pride in a negative sense. In a passage obviously directed against Mandeville, Hutcheson states: "Pride, in the bad meaning of that Word, is the spurious Brood of Ignorance by our moral Sense, and Flattery only an Engine, which the Cunning may use to turn this moral Sense in others, to the Purposes of Self-love in the Flatterer".¹²³ The agent who is proud of herself in the bad meaning of the term approves of herself on the basis of features that do not justify self-esteem. Hutcheson writes that in general, pride "is taken in a bad Sense, when one claims that to which he has no Right."¹²⁴ Pride is *undeserved* self-approbation, because it is not based on the moral sense. Again, such a distinction is missing in Mandeville's Augustinian moral psychology. Due to the corruption of mankind after the Fall, there is only self-love as excessive pride, but no moderate and justified self-esteem.

¹²¹ We will take a closer look at this point in section 3.2.

¹²² Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.3.

¹²³ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 154.

¹²⁴ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 56.

2.2.5. Kind and selfish affections and passions

Both, self-love and benevolence can take the form of affections and passions. As shown in the table below, Hutcheson distinguishes between *calm* (selfish or kind) *affections*, and *violent* (selfish or kind) *passions*.

<i>emotions (affections and passions)</i>	<i>private (self-love)</i>	<i>public (benevolence)</i>
<i>calm affections</i>	• calm self-love	• calm universal benevolence • calm partial / particular benevolence
<i>violent passions</i>	• selfish passions	• benevolent passions

Self-love as a *calm affection* consists most generally in a (reflected) concern for one's own happiness. Calm selfish desires allow for reflection upon one's true interests - for example in terms of calculating the consequences of one's actions, determining the value of the different kinds of pleasures to be expected, weighing short-term and long-term interests, reflecting upon the characteristics of external objects and states of affairs etc. For Hutcheson, calm self-love ultimately supports virtuous behaviour and the cultivation of virtuous dispositions. An agent who is guided by calm selfish affections recognises that virtue is in her interest. On the other hand, *selfish passions*, such as "*Ambition, Covetousness, Hunger, Lust, Revenge, Anger*"¹²⁵, which always arise on particular occasions, will often motivate actions with consequences that are not in the agent's egoistic long-term interest. They are often accompanied by propensities that do not presuppose the apprehension of something as a real good for the agent herself. A person in anger, for example, has "a Propensity to occasion *Misery* to the Offender, a Determination to *Violence*, even where there is no *Intention* of any Good to be obtained, or Evil avoided by this Violence."¹²⁶ The moral evaluation

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 52.

of the different forms of self-love will differ substantially, as we shall see below.

As to *benevolence*, the fourth edition of the *Inquiry* adds a clarifying paragraph in which Hutcheson discusses its different forms. The term benevolence sometimes

[...] denotes a calm, extensive Affection, or Good-will toward all Beings capable of Happiness or Misery: Sometimes, 2. A calm deliberate Affection of the Soul toward the Happiness of certain smaller Systems or Individuals; such as Patriotism, or Love of a Country, Friendship, Parental Affection, as it is in Persons of Wisdom and Self-Government: Or, 3. The several kind particular Passions of Love, Pity, Sympathy, Congratulation. This Distinction between the calm Motions of the Will, Affections, Dispositions, or Instincts of the Soul, and the several turbulent Passions, is elsewhere more fully considered.¹²⁷

Hutcheson distinguishes three forms of benevolence: Firstly, *calm impartial* or *universal benevolence* towards the good of mankind in general; secondly, *calm partial benevolence* towards the good of particular groups or individuals with different degrees of proximity to or intimacy with the agent; and thirdly, *passionate partial benevolence* arising in particular occasions. It appears that there are two overlapping criteria to distinguish the different forms of benevolence - on the one hand the distinction between affections and passions, and on the other hand different degrees of partiality. The second point can be seen in analogy with self-love, where Hutcheson distinguishes between calm selfish affections that focus on a particular interest of the agent, and calm selfish affections that focus on her general interest.

2.2.6. *Pity as a disinterested passion*

Hutcheson's treatment of pity¹²⁸ reflects both the self-love – benevolence axis and the affections – passions axis, and develops over the different

¹²⁷ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 231.

¹²⁸ Hutcheson does not systematically distinguish between pity and compassion. In the following discussion, the terms are used interchangeably.

editions of the *Inquiry* and the *Essay*. Against the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, Hutcheson puts forward an analysis of pity as an example of benevolence, thus attempting to prove that we are not motivated merely by hedonistic self-love. Also, he treats pity as a passion, and not as an affection. This has consequences for its moral evaluation.

a) Pity is disinterested

In the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson strongly emphasises the fact that pity is an emotion that involves a genuine concern for the well-being of others: “Let us next consider another Determination of our Mind, which strongly proves Benevolence to be natural to us, and that is Compassion; by which we are dispos’d to study the Interest of others, without any Views of private Advantage.”¹²⁹ In the *Inquiry*, especially in the first and the second editions, Hutcheson repeatedly emphasises the other-directedness of pity, and its irreducibility to self-love. Pity is ultimately disinterested. This is in line with Shaftesbury, who also treats pity as a paradigmatic example for natural affections. In the *Essay*, Hutcheson emphasises the psychological link between pity and the public sense. “We have *Aversion* to any impending Misery; we are *sorrowful* when it befalls any Person, and *rejoice* when it is removed. This Aversion and Sorrow we often call Pity or Compassion [...]”¹³⁰ Pity is an emotion that is caused by the apprehension of *natural* evil befalling someone else, and that involves, under the appropriate circumstances, tendencies to diminish the other’s sufferance. The apprehension of *moral* evil in someone else, however, does not cause pity, but moral disapproval or displicence.¹³¹

In a passage that is directed against Hobbes and Mandeville, Hutcheson admits that seeing others in misery makes the observer feel uneasy herself. Actions motivated by pity, which aim at the relief of the

¹²⁹ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 159.

¹³⁰ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 56.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 66 and Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 103.

sufferer's misery, are however not instrumental to the removal of the observer's pain or uneasiness, as suggested in Mandeville's analysis of pity.¹³² They ultimately aim at the removal of the pain of the other, as Hutcheson argues in a famous passage:

We often feel the Pain of Compassion; but were our sole ultimate Intention or Desire the freeing ourselves from this Pain, would the Deity offer to us either wholly to blot out all Memory of the Person in Distress, to take away this Connection, so that we should be easy during the Misery of our Friend on the one hand, or on the other would relieve him from his Misery, we should be as ready to choose the former way as the latter; since either of them would free us from our Pain, which upon this Scheme is the sole End proposed by the compassionate Person.—Don't we find in ourselves that our Desire does not terminate upon the Removal of our own Pain? Were this our sole Intention, we would run away, shut our Eyes, or divert our Thoughts from the miserable Object, as the readiest way of removing our Pain: This we seldom do, nay, we croud about such Objects, and voluntarily expose ourselves to this Pain, unless calm Reflection upon our Inability to relieve the Miserable, countermand our Inclination, or some selfish Affection, as Fear of Danger, overpower it.¹³³

The desire to help the person in distress does not terminate upon the removal of the uneasiness of observing someone in distress. This fact proves that the ultimate aim of compassion is not to remove the pain of the observer, but to bring relief to the person who is the object of pity. This contradicts Hobbes' egoistic analysis of pity in *Human Nature* and Mandeville's analysis of actions motivated by pity in the *Fable*. From the point of view of the self-love – benevolence axis, Hutcheson's analysis of pity is subservient to his non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

b) Pity as a passion

In the *Essay*, Hutcheson classifies pity among "the *publick Passions* about the *State of others*, as to Happiness or Misery, abstractly from their *Moral Qualities*."¹³⁴ There is a shift in focus from emphasising the

¹³² Cf. chapter III, section 2.2.3.

¹³³ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 223f. This passage appeared in the 3rd edition of the *Inquiry*. Cf. the discussion of this argument in Christine Tappolet, "Compassion et altruisme" *Studia philosophica* 59 (2000), pp. 181f.

¹³⁴ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 56.

disinterestedness of pity towards emphasising that it is a *passion*, i.e. a violent emotion that does not allow for reflection on the consequences of one's actions, or on the true interests of the person in sufferance. This is reflected in a slightly more sceptical treatment of pity in the 3rd and 4th editions of the *Inquiry*. Hutcheson claims in a rather critical tone that in children, when they observe an animal's suffering,

[...] their Compassion often becomes too strong for their Reason; as it generally does in beholding Executions, where as soon as they observe the evidences of Distress, or Pain in the Malefactor, they are apt to condemn this necessary Method of Self-defence in the State.¹³⁵

He highlights that pity, as a passion, is a deficient form of benevolence in the sense that it has a strong tendency to prevent the agent from reasoning. Pity can lead to false judgments or inappropriate actions that produce further harm. This deficiency does not decrease the importance of pity for the case against psychological egoism, since it still is a *public* passion. However, from the moral point of view, pity is less valuable than calm public affections, because it is a passion. To a certain extent, Hutcheson can be said to join Mandeville in his critical view of pity. Both highlight the potentially problematic consequences of the passion. For Hutcheson, however, pity motivates virtuous actions, as we shall see in section 3 of this chapter.

Hutcheson claims that pity is also felt if the sufferer is imagined as morally evil. The representation of the sufferer as morally virtuous will, however, increase the intensity of the emotion.¹³⁶ Thus, pity is sensitive to the moral value of the person in misery. Selfish desires on the side of the observer, or a representation of the sufferer as absolutely evil, produced by “a sudden Passion of Hatred or Anger”¹³⁷, may diminish its

¹³⁵ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 161.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 216, in a passage added to the fourth edition of the *Inquiry*, where Hutcheson explicitly discusses Hobbes' account of pity.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

intensity. Furthermore, other disinterested views such as love to our country can temporarily, but not constantly overpower pity.

3. Self-love and morality

The previous sections suggested an analysis of different aspects of self-love as an emotion in the framework of Hutcheson's moral psychology. It has been shown how Hutcheson, by asserting the reality of benevolence, argues against the claim that all actions are motivated by hedonistic self-love and for a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, thus opposing authors such as Hobbes and Mandeville. Furthermore, we have analysed his distinction between affections and passions. Both aspects are important for the points we are going to examine in the following sections, namely, the moral value of self-love as a motive and its relation to moral motivation. Besides other aspects, this requires taking a look at Hutcheson's moral mathematics; and at his view of the role of self-love in the cultivation of virtue.

The main interests of the present study are questions of motivation and moral motivation rather than moral epistemology. However, some remarks on Hutcheson's theory of the moral sense are required in view of his claim that moral judgments are disinterested.¹³⁸ Whereas Shaftesbury

¹³⁸ Hutcheson's moral sense theory and the question of moral realism have been the subjects of numerous debates that we cannot fully assess in the present study. Important contributions on Hutcheson are e.g. William Frankena, "Hutcheson's Moral Sense Theory" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 16, no. 3 (1955); Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in Francis Hutcheson's Ethical Theory*, David Fate Norton, *David Hume. Common-Sense Moralist, Sceptical Metaphysician* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Kenneth P. Winkler, "Hutcheson's Alleged Realism" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 23, no. 1 (1985); P. J. E. Kail, "Hutcheson's Moral Sense: Skepticism, Realism, and Secondary Qualities" *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (2001). On the moral sense in the Scottish Enlightenment, cf. Luigi Turco, "Moral sense and the foundations of morals" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 145ff. discusses the role of the claim that moral judgments are disinterested in Hutcheson's refutation of Mandeville's egoism.

holds a rationalist account of the moral sense, in which the reflection on the notion of the public good plays a significant role,¹³⁹ Hutcheson has an empiricist account of the moral sense as a passive faculty of reception.¹⁴⁰ A sense, according to Hutcheson, is a “Determination of the Mind, to receive any Idea from the Presence of an Object which occurs to us, independently on our Will.”¹⁴¹ Hutcheson emphasises in the *Inquiry* that the moral sense functions in analogy to the sense of beauty, in that both are disinterested. Hutcheson’s claim that moral approbation is disinterested aims at refuting egoistic analyses of moral judgments, according to which our moral distinctions are self-interested. On such a theory, we approve of actions as virtuous only on the basis of the benefits we derive from them.¹⁴² According to Hutcheson, the approbation of benevolence as morally virtuous depends neither on the advantages an observer derives from a benevolent action, nor on the fact that observing a morally virtuous action causes some pleasure in the observer:

Approbation of another’s Virtue is not conceived as making the Approver happy, or virtuous, or worthy, tho’ ‘tis attended with some small Pleasure. Virtue is then called Amiable or Lovely, from its raising Good-will or Love in Spectators toward the Agent; and not from the Agent’s perceiving the virtuous Temper to be advantageous to him, or desiring to obtain it under that View.¹⁴³

The moral sense, which operates naturally and independently of the agent’s will, cannot be “over-balanc’d by Interest.”¹⁴⁴ We morally approve of some actions even if they are against our own interest, and we morally

¹³⁹ Cf. chapter II, section 2.2.3.

¹⁴⁰ Darwall, *British Moralists*, pp. 187 and 207; Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in Francis Hutcheson’s Ethical Theory*, pp. 39ff. Many commentators have shown that the influence of Locke on Hutcheson’s epistemology is considerable.

¹⁴¹ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 90.

¹⁴² An egoistic analysis of moral judgments is suggested by Campbell. Cf. chapter VI, section 3.3. The claim is also frequently attributed to Mandeville.

¹⁴³ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 218. Hutcheson’s claim that moral approbation is disinterested will be attacked by Campbell. Cf. chapter VI, section 3.3.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 97 and 217.

disapprove of others even if they provide us advantages.¹⁴⁵ Thus, moral approbation cannot be reduced to self-interest.

The moral sense approves of benevolent motives as virtuous in a disinterested manner. But if benevolence is approved, what about self-love, which is the other fundamental source of motives? We shall now turn to this question.

3.1. The moral evaluation of self-love

3.1.1. A critical view of self-love: the self-love – benevolence axis

In the *Inquiry*, self-love is frequently depicted as an emotion that is opposed to benevolence. Since benevolence constitutes moral goodness, self-love seems to be a morally problematic source of motives in Hutcheson. However, to ascribe to him a purely critical view of self-love would be an oversimplification. A more detailed picture emerges with the distinction between affections and passions. We shall now begin by examining some passages that underline the morally problematic aspects of self-love. They are mainly from the *Inquiry*, where the potential opposition between self-love and benevolence on the motivational level is particularly emphasised. Section 3.1.2. will focus on Hutcheson's restrictions of this negative view of self-love's moral value. This mainly concerns passages from the *Essay* and from the 3rd and 4th editions of the *Inquiry*, where Hutcheson discusses calm self-love as opposed to passionate self-love. Section 3.2. will treat Hutcheson's discussion of self-love as a source of higher-order desires supporting benevolent motives and self-cultivation.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 90ff.

a) Preliminary remarks on the moral value of different forms of benevolence

Before discussing the moral evaluation of self-love, let us take a brief look at Hutcheson's account of the moral value of the different forms of benevolence, as distinguished in section 2.2.5: i) Calm universal benevolence, ii) calm partial benevolence, and iii) passionate benevolence. According to Hutcheson's general view, benevolence constitutes the moral good. The moral value of the three forms of benevolence is determined as follows:

Now tho' all these different Dispositions come under the general Character of benevolent, yet as they are in Nature different, so they have different Degrees of Moral Beauty. The first Sort is above all amiable and excellent: 'Tis perhaps the sole Moral Perfection of some superior Natures; and the more this prevails and rules in any human Mind, the more amiable the Person appears, even when it not only checks and limits our lower Appetites, but when it controuls our kind particular Passions, or counteracts them. The second Sort of Benevolence is more amiable than the third, when it is sufficiently strong to influence our Conduct: And the third Sort, tho' of a lesser Moral Dignity, is also beautiful, when it is no way opposite to these more noble Principles. And when it is opposite, tho' it does not justify such Actions as are really detrimental to greater Systems, yet it is strong extenuating Circumstance, and much alleviates the Moral Deformity. We are all sensible of this, when any Person, from Friendship, Parental-Affection, or Pity, has done something hurtful to larger Societys.¹⁴⁶

i) Calm universal benevolence, which is directed towards the good of mankind in general, and not only towards the good of particular groups, is the morally best form of benevolence. It is more valuable than ii) calm partial benevolence, which is directed towards the good of particular groups. This is yet more valuable than iii) passionate benevolence. On the one hand, Hutcheson justifies this moral hierarchy by reference to the moral sense that makes calm universal benevolence appear the morally best form of benevolence, calm partial benevolence the second-best and passionate benevolence the third-best. On the other hand, Hutcheson

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 231f. This passage was added to the 4th edition of the *Inquiry*.

invokes several criteria, some of which are also relevant to the discussion of the moral value of different forms of self-love.

Firstly, the moral value of benevolence is a function of its *scope* (or of its degree of universality). Hutcheson claims that universal calm benevolence is morally better than partial calm benevolence because it is universal and does not depend on the personal relationship between the agent and other persons or groups. In other words, a given quantity of natural good produced by universal benevolence appears more amiable than the same quantity of natural good produced by partial benevolence. This is because partial calm benevolence can be in conflict with the interests of larger systems (as in the case of nepotism), or with the interests of humanity in general.¹⁴⁷ The same holds for passionate benevolence, which only arises in particular occasions, for example upon the observation of someone in distress.

Secondly, calm benevolence is morally better than passionate benevolence, because the latter excludes reflection. Actions motivated by calm reflected benevolence are, in general, more likely to promote the true happiness of others than actions motivated by passionate benevolence. Calm benevolence involves a consideration of the relevant circumstances of the action. Furthermore, calm forms of benevolence are under considerable control of the agent. They can be corrected in case the evaluation of an object or a state of affairs changes,¹⁴⁸ and they are less likely to engender a conflict with the interests of other agents and groups. Benevolent or kind passions, on the other hand, are problematic because they cannot be controlled and often involve harmful consequences for the agent herself and for other persons. Hutcheson's rather sceptical (moral) view of the kind passion of pity, for example, is grounded in this fact. Pity, because it is a passion, neither allows a "calm

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 126f.

¹⁴⁸ This point is important for Hutcheson's concept of self-cultivation, as discussed in section 3.2.2.

examination”¹⁴⁹ of the circumstances in which an action takes place, nor of the others’ true interests.

Thirdly, Hutcheson points out that there is a difference in the *constancy* of benevolent affections and passions, which influences their moral value. Thus, an action that is motivated by a character with calm and constant benevolent dispositions appears more virtuous than an action that is provoked by an accidental benevolent passion. Benevolent character traits are acquired by reflection and habituation, and can be cultivated and controlled, whereas benevolent passions seem rather a matter of accident.¹⁵⁰

b) The negative influence of self-love on an action’s moral value

Benevolence is constitutive of different degrees of moral goodness. What then is the moral value of self-love, given its relation to benevolence? An approach that clearly illustrates Hutcheson’s *critical* view of the moral value of self-love can be found in his discussion of mixed motives, and in his moral mathematics. In section 2 of the *Inquiry* (entitled “*Concerning the immediate Motive to virtuous Actions*”), Hutcheson discusses the moral value of different actions that are motivated by self-love and benevolence:

But it must be here observ’d, That as all Men have Self-Love, as well as Benevolence, these two Principles may jointly excite a Man to the same Action; and then they are to be consider’d as two Forces impelling the same Body to Motion; sometimes they conspire, sometimes are indifferent to each other, and sometimes are in some degree opposite. Thus, if a Man have such strong Benevolence, as would have produc’d an Action without any Views of Self-Interest; that such a Man has also in View private Advantage, along with publick Good, as the Effect of his Action, does no way diminish the Benevolence of the Action. When he would not have produc’d so much publick Good, had it not been for Prospect of Self-Interest, then the Effect of Self-Love is to be deducted, and his Benevolence is proportion’d to the remainder of Good, which pure Benevolence would have produc’d. When a Man’s Benevolence is hurtful to himself, then Self-Love is opposite to Benevolence, and the Benevolence is

¹⁴⁹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 110.

¹⁵⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 132.

proportion'd to the Sum of the Good produc'd, added to the Resistance of Self-Love surmounted by it. In most Cases it is impossible for Men to know how far their Fellows are influenc'd by the one or other of these Principles; but yet the general Truth is sufficiently certain, That this is the way in which the Benevolence of Actions is to be computed.¹⁵¹

The three cases discussed by Hutcheson indicate that the presence of self-love has a negative influence on the moral value of an action with mixed motives, i.e. selfish and benevolent ones. This holds even if self-love does not seem to have a negative moral value *per se*.¹⁵² Firstly, if an agent's benevolence is strong enough to motivate an action by itself, then the fact that the action is also intended because of its positive effects for the agent herself (for example, because it provides her moral pleasures) does not diminish the moral value of the action. Secondly, if additional considerations of private advantage or self-interest are necessary to motivate the action because benevolence is not strong enough to motivate the action on its own, then the moral value of the action is diminished. Thirdly, if the action is motivated by benevolence against self-love, then the action's moral value increases. We can sum up that self-love has a negative impact on the action's moral value. This view is confirmed by Hutcheson's treatment of self-love in his moral mathematics.

c) The negative evaluation of self-love in the moral mathematics

The title of the first edition of the *Inquiry* (1725) announced that it includes "an Attempt to introduce a Mathematical Calculation in Subjects of Morality."¹⁵³ In the two subsequent editions (1726 and 1729), the phrase disappeared, yet the mathematical method to "compute the

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 104. We must note that in this passage, as well as in the moral mathematics, Hutcheson does not refer to several relevant aspects he mentions elsewhere in the *Inquiry*, such as the hierarchy between affections and passions, the scope of benevolence, and the importance of character traits. Hutcheson's moral mathematics would become much more complex if he integrated all of these. On the other hand, the relation between the *good intended* and the agent's *abilities or power* is only discussed in the moral mathematics.

¹⁵² As Shaftesbury, Hutcheson thinks of self-love as necessary for self-preservation.

¹⁵³ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 199.

Morality of any Actions, with all their Circumstances”¹⁵⁴ was still included. The fourth edition (1738) replaced it by a less technical approach and left aside the mathematical formulas.

Hutcheson begins by defining a series of factors that are relevant for determining the moral value of actions. These factors are 1. the moment or quantity of public good (M) or 2. public evil (μ) produced¹⁵⁵ by the agent for other agents; 3. her virtue, i.e. benevolence (B) or 4. hatred (H); 5. her abilities (A), and 6. the moment of private good or interest (I) produced by the agent for herself. These factors are used to define a series of propositions, or axioms. Most importantly for our purpose, the moment of public good is defined as a compound ratio of an agent’s benevolence and her abilities or power ($M=B \cdot A$).¹⁵⁶ An agent’s benevolence or virtue is the moment of good produced divided by her abilities ($B=M/A$).¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 128. For the following discussions, pp. 128 – 132 are essential.

¹⁵⁵ Hutcheson highlights that only those consequences of actions are relevant for the moral evaluation of an action, which were *intended* by the agent: Ibid., p. 131f. This is a necessary condition for an action to count as morally virtuous or vicious. - Again, we need to note that Hutcheson does not clearly specify in the *Inquiry* whether the public good consists merely in the promotion of *natural* good, or whether it includes the promotion of *moral* good for other agents.

¹⁵⁶ In other words, the more power an agent has, the more public good she can produce with her benevolence.

¹⁵⁷ In other words, the less power an agent has, the more benevolent she is per quantity of public good produced.

Hutcheson’s moral mathematics have been interpreted as an attempt to develop a system to compute the morality of actions in numeric or absolute quantitative terms. Let us call this the *numeric interpretation*. One might argue that since Hutcheson announces it as a method to compute morality, he wants it to be a method to compute absolute numbers. In this case, Hutcheson would need to assume that it is possible to determine the precise values (in absolute numbers) of the different factors involved in the computing scheme.

The numeric interpretation is not, however, required by Hutcheson’s model. A weaker interpretation of his moral mathematics relies on the model’s capacity to give an comparative account of the different factors involved in the action, without requiring any numeric result of the action’s value. Let us call this the *comparative interpretation*. We have to acknowledge that Hutcheson (unlike Campbell) does not discuss a single example with absolute numbers. The formula ($M=B \cdot A$), for example, can simply be interpreted as a framework to compare the moment of public good (M) produced by several agents with the same benevolence and different abilities. The intuitive claim is that, given a certain motivational strength of the benevolent affection, the bigger the agent’s abilities, the greater the public good she can produce. A king, given the reach of his power, can produce more public good than a farmer. Or, given the same abilities, we see that the stronger an agent’s benevolence, the greater the public good she produces. Two agents, given the same abilities, can produce a different amount of moral good depending on the degree of strength of their benevolence.

Another argument against the *numeric interpretation* is that Hutcheson does not even attempt to give an account of how to determine the different factors in play numerically. Ultimately, the comparative interpretation of his moral mathematics seems more plausible than the numeric interpretation.

Hutcheson draws attention to the fact that an action's natural consequences can be various:¹⁵⁸ Actions promoting or diminishing *private* good can at the same time promote or diminish *public* good. Accordingly, an action can be motivated by a combination of selfish and benevolent desires, which sometimes motivate jointly and sometimes oppose each other. If an action is recommended by benevolence and opposed by self-love or interest, the action's moral value increases, since the action is more demanding: $B=(M+I)/A$. If benevolence and self-love prompt the same action because it produces good for the public as well as for the agent herself, the action's moral value decreases since it is less demanding: $B=(M-I)/A$. When an action is not only performed in view of the public interest, but also in view of the agent's private interest, it is less virtuous than an action which is performed *in spite* of the agent's interest. This interpretation is also supported by a subsequent passage where Hutcheson explains the relation between selfish motives and benevolence in more detail. He insists that in case the virtuous action brings about advantages for the agent herself, "the Interest must be deducted to find the true Effect of the Benevolence, or Virtue."¹⁵⁹ In case the virtuous action brings disadvantages for the agent, "this Interest must be added to the Moment, to increase the Virtue of the Action, or the Strength of the Benevolence."¹⁶⁰

Self-love and benevolence are not necessarily in conflict with each other, since they can motivate the same action. Yet, in Hutcheson's moral mathematics self-love is treated as a motivational factor with a negative impact on the moral value of an action. Two remarks are to be made, however. Firstly, Hutcheson's account of mixed motives still allows for an action to count as virtuous (to a lesser degree, however) if it is partly

¹⁵⁸ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 128.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

aimed at gaining moral pleasure for the agent and includes an intention to promote the public good. This is of great importance for Hutcheson's account of self-cultivation, and it opposes the rigoristic view of morality as requiring self-denial in the strong sense, which is put forward by Mandeville.

Secondly, as we will see in the next subsection and in the sections on Hutcheson's theory of self-cultivation, there are several passages that prove that Hutcheson has a less negative and more complex understanding of the relation between self-love and morality. Hutcheson claims that in case there are no negative effects for the good of the public, self-love is not to be considered as a morally vicious motive, but as necessary for the good of the whole.¹⁶¹ Here, he joins Shaftesbury's view of the self-affections as necessary for natural goodness and virtue, even if he emphasises the morally problematic sides of self-love in the context of the self-love – benevolence axis.¹⁶² Also, the moral evaluation of self-love depends considerably on the distinction between affections and passions, as we shall see in the section on self-cultivation – calm self-love is preferable to passionate self-love. The mathematical model does not take account of this distinction in its treatment of the different forms of self-love.

3.1.2. A less critical view of calm self-love

In spite of his critical view of hedonistic self-love, Hutcheson highlights that within certain boundaries, self-love as a motive is indispensable from

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁶² It is possible that Hutcheson's elaboration of a more positive view of calm self-love in the context of the passions – affections axis and in his theory of self-cultivation is inspired by Butler's *Sermons*. These seem to have had some influence on Hutcheson not only in virtue of their treatment of conscience as the principle with the supreme moral authority in human nature, but also in that they present a very positive view of self-love. Cf. Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment. A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660-1780. Volume II: Shaftesbury to Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 164: "[Hutcheson's] modifications of his account of self-love and benevolence in the *Essay* and his introduction of the ruling power of conscience into his teaching at Glasgow, beginning with his inaugural lecture, all suggest that Hutcheson saw Butler's powerful analysis of these key concepts as a way of refining his own hitherto rather unbalanced borrowing from and interpretation of Shaftesbury."

the moral point of view. This is in accordance with Shaftesbury's claim that having one's self-affections too low is vicious.¹⁶³ Hutcheson also attributes to self-love an important role in the cultivation of virtue, since it is a possible support for benevolence.¹⁶⁴ Yet, the positive view is restricted to calm selfish affections, or calm reflected self-love, which aims at promoting the true interests of the agent.¹⁶⁵

It has been mentioned above that, for Hutcheson, self-love and benevolence are not necessarily in conflict with each other. Self-love and benevolence are two distinct principles of actions, yet they can jointly motivate the agent to the same action, if it is represented as promoting both public and private interest.¹⁶⁶ The moral value of such an action, however, is treated as diminished by the presence of a selfish motive. Another case discussed by Hutcheson concerns actions that are motivated by self-love only. In case such actions do not indicate that a character is deprived of benevolence, and if they do not have a negative impact on the good of others, their moral value is treated as *morally indifferent*:

The Actions which flow solely from Self-Love, and yet evidence no Want of Benevolence, having no hurtful Effects upon others, seem perfectly indifferent in a moral Sense, and neither raise the Love or Hatred of the Observer.¹⁶⁷

Thus, self-interested actions are not necessarily problematic from the moral point of view. The passage continues with even more positive views of self-love:

Our Reason can indeed discover certain Bounds, within which we may not only act from Self-Love, consistently with the Good of the Whole, but every Mortal's acting thus within these Bounds for his own Good, is absolutely necessary for the Good of the Whole; and the Want of such Self-Love would be universally pernicious. Hence, he who pursues his own private

¹⁶³ Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.2. a).

¹⁶⁴ Cf. section 3.2.

¹⁶⁵ Darwall, *British Moralists*, pp. 236f. emphasises the importance of the distinction between calm and passionate self-love in view of Hutcheson's claim that calm benevolence and calm self-love are ultimately coordinated.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. section 2.2.3.d).

¹⁶⁷ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 122.

Good, with an Intention also to concur with that Constitution which tends to the Good of the Whole; and much more he who promotes his own Good, with a direct View of making himself more capable of serving God, or doing good to Mankind; acts not only innocently, but also honourably, and virtuously: for in both these Cases, Benevolence concurs with Self-Love to excite him to the Action. And thus a Neglect of our own Good, may be morally evil, and argue a Want of Benevolence toward the Whole.¹⁶⁸

Hutcheson points out the *necessity* of self-interested actions that are not in conflict with the public good. They are needed in order to promote the good of the whole.¹⁶⁹ He also puts forward a similar idea about the relation between self-love and self-preservation as Shaftesbury. Without a minimal degree of self-love, human agents neglect themselves, which is “universally pernicious”, because they deprive the whole system of their power to promote the public good, and deprive themselves of the possibility of performing virtuous actions. This claim is particularly interesting in view of the complementary observation that benevolence can be morally problematic if it is harmful to the agent because it is passionate – for example in the case of actions motivated by excessive pity.¹⁷⁰

In the last part of the quoted passage, Hutcheson goes even a step further and claims that, under certain conditions, pursuing one’s own good is *morally virtuous*. The conditions are a) that the pursuit of the agent’s private good neither counteracts her benevolence nor harms others, and b) that the promotion of one’s own interest is done in view of “serving God, or doing good to Mankind”. These two conditions require that self-love is calm and reflected, and that the agent recognises that she is a part of a larger system. Calm self-love can thus be instrumental to an ultimately benevolent goal, which is the promotion of the good of

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, p. 65. In his discussion of Hutcheson, Hirschman highlights that self-love in Hutcheson can take the form of a calm desire for wealth, which under the mentioned conditions is *morally* acceptable. Let us note, however, that Hutcheson’s focus in this passage is on natural good in general (most importantly the moral pleasures), and not only on material wealth as suggested by Hirschman.

¹⁷⁰ Again, we discussed the same point in Shaftesbury. Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.2.a).

the whole. In this respect, the lack of calm self-love can be morally vicious and show a want of benevolent dispositions in the agent's character. We must note that this is one of the very few passages in the *Inquiry* where Hutcheson maintains explicitly that self-love as a calm motive for actions can be not only morally unproblematic, but also virtuous. It suggests that being virtuous, as in Shaftesbury, requires not only acting on benevolent motives and cultivating benevolent dispositions of character, but also being instrumentally selfish in view of one's capacity to be benevolent. This again reminds us of Shaftesbury's discussion of the importance of a natural degree of self-affections in a morally virtuous creature.¹⁷¹ For Hutcheson, this point suggests that confining the concept of virtue purely to benevolence is an oversimplification. A minimal degree of self-love is a moral requirement, in as much as it is instrumental to maintaining one's capacity for being benevolent.

Ultimately, this boils down to a moral rehabilitation of self-love. Hutcheson's treatment of self-love in his moral mathematics leaves the impression that he is very sceptical with respect to its moral value. The passages just quoted, however, suggest a different picture. Here, he uses the Stoic idea found in Shaftesbury that a natural degree of self-affections is necessary for virtue. The contrast to the Augustinian condemnation of self-love (both in the sense of hedonistic self-love and in the sense of self-love as excessive pride) is obvious. Hutcheson not only gives a positive answer to the Human Nature Question by putting forward a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and by linking morality with benevolence, but also by attributing a positive moral value to self-love: A minimal degree of self-love is a requirement for virtue, and under certain circumstances, it can be morally virtuous.

¹⁷¹ Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.2.c).

In the *Illustrations*, there is another passage that suggests that self-love is required from a moral point of view. Hutcheson says about the virtuous life:

This [i.e. the virtuous life] we know consists in sacrificing all *positive Interests*, and bearing all *private Evils* for the publick Good: And in submitting also the Interests of all *smaller Systems* to the Interests of the whole: Without any other *Exception* or *Reserve* than this, that every Man may look upon himself as a Part of this System, and consequently not sacrifice an *important private Interest* to a *less important Interest* of others.¹⁷²

The passage suggests that there are situations in which an important private interest ought to be considered as outweighing a less important public interest. This is supposedly the case if the system as a whole is harmed by the agent's attempt to promote others' interests in place of her own - for example, if she neglects herself or puts herself in unnecessary danger. Again, an appropriate degree of self-love seems to be morally required in view of the promotion of the good of the whole. This is, however, restricted to calm reflected self-love, which involves the agent understanding herself as part of the whole and requires reflection on the importance of the different interests.

The idea that self-love is morally required in view of the agent's capacity to benevolence has an interesting complement. Every rational agent is part of larger systems to which she should extend her benevolence. Calm universal benevolence, which aims at promoting the good of the whole, includes a concern for one's own happiness. In other words, intending to promote the well-being of humanity also involves promoting one's own well-being – provided the latter is not in conflict with the former. By being universally benevolent, one is also benevolent towards oneself. Thus self-interest is interwoven with benevolence in two important positive respects in Hutcheson's moral theory. Firstly, calm

¹⁷² Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 194. Cf. the discussion about the concept of importance in terms of *urgency* of interests and personal preferences in James N. Loughran, "Francis Hutcheson: Benevolence as Moral Motivation" *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 3, no. 3 (1986).

universal benevolence, which is the highest form of virtue, extends to a certain degree to the agent's private interests. Secondly, paying minimal attention to one's private interests is a precondition of being able to exercise benevolence on a regular basis.

To a certain degree, the points discussed in this section question the contrast Smith draws between Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. The former, according to Smith, places virtue "in maintaining a proper balance of the affections, and in allowing no passion to go beyond its proper sphere."¹⁷³ This concerns both natural affections and self-affections. The latter places it only in benevolence and is "so far from allowing self-love to be in any case a motive of virtuous actions, that even a regard to the pleasure of self-approbation, to the comfortable applause of our own consciences, according to him, diminished the merit of a benevolent action."¹⁷⁴ The contrast between Hutcheson and Shaftesbury may be correctly captured if we only take into account Hutcheson's view of the moral value of self-love in his moral mathematics. However, the examples discussed in this and the following sections suggest that Hutcheson has a less critical and more complex view of self-love's moral value than proposed by Smith.

3.2. Self-love as a motive for virtue and self-cultivation

In the previous section, we have drawn attention to both Hutcheson's critical view of self-love in general and his moderately positive view of calm self-love. Another positive aspect of self-love is that it can assist the cultivation of virtuous character traits, dispositions and motives. Hutcheson's theory of self-cultivation has attracted relatively little

¹⁷³ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 346: VII, II, I, 48.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 358: VII, II, III, 13.

attention, but it reflects important aspects of his moral philosophy.¹⁷⁵ In the following subsections, we will examine it and discuss the role of calm self-love, which supports benevolence and virtue.

3.2.1. *Some remarks on the concept of self-cultivation in the Pufendorfian tradition of natural law*

Hutcheson's account of self-cultivation develops a well-known theme in modern natural law theories of authors such as Samuel von Pufendorf, Jean Barbeyrac, and Gershom Carmichael. In Book II of *De jure naturæ et gentium libri octo* (1672), Pufendorf discusses three classes of duties according to natural law: Duties to God, duties to oneself, and duties to others.¹⁷⁶ In Chapter IV of Book II, he concentrates on the duties to oneself and distinguishes them into the subclasses of duties to one's mind, one's body and one's life. He points out that to take care of one's mind is the most important part, since the mind is "la source & le principe des Actions propres à une Créature Raisonnable."¹⁷⁷ A rational creature has to take care of herself in a nobler way than animals, because "il a reçu du Ciel un plus grand nombre de tâlens, & de talens qui peuvent être cultivez avec plus de fruit."¹⁷⁸ Hutcheson, in his account of self-cultivation, specifies that benevolence is the most important faculty that has to be cultivated.

¹⁷⁵ The most important recent contribution is Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy".

¹⁷⁶ Haakonssen explains that the "overwhelming emphasis on duty in modern natural law" as opposed to rights is rooted in the protestant assumption of a "complete discontinuity between God and man, a discontinuity which made it impossible to give a rational account of human morality by reference to God and his eternal law." Knud Haakonssen, *Natural Law and Moral Philosophy. From Grotius to the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 25f. Hutcheson, with his theory of natural benevolence and the moral sense, undermines this negative picture of postlapsarian man. It is not duties, but the natural benevolent inclinations and the moral sense that are the relevant starting point for thinking about human nature and morality. This is especially visible in his reduction of the concept of obligation to the moral sense. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 176ff.

¹⁷⁷ Samuel von Pufendorf, *Le droit de la nature et des gens, ou système général des principes les plus importants de la morale, de la jurisprudence, et de la politique. Traduit du Latin de feu Mr. Le Baron de Pufendorf, par Jean Barbeyrac.* (Amsterdam: 1706), p. 200. Since I will refer to Barbeyrac's notes on Pufendorf, I quote Pufendorf in Barbeyrac's translation.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 200.

Barbeyrac's commentary on this passage in Pufendorf is most illuminating. Barbeyrac writes in his translation of 1706:

Dans la première période, nôtre Auteur [i.e. Pufendorf] met le soin de se conserver [self-preservation], avant de celui de se perfectionner [self-perfection]. C'est en effet l'ordre naturel; car, outre que l'idée de la conservation emporte quelque chose de plus simple que celle de la perfection, l'*être* précède sans contredit le *bien être*, & en vain penseroit-on à se perfectionner, si l'on n'avoit auparavant pris de bonnes précautions pour se conserver. Mais si l'auteur s'exprime avec justesse dans cette première période, on peut dire que c'est par un pur hazard, puis qu'il ne s'en est plus souvenu un moment après, & qu'il suit un ordre opposé dans ce Chapitre. Car tout ce qu'il dit, & dans ce paragraphe, & dans les treize suivans, regarde uniquement le soin de se perfectionner; il ne commence qu'au quinzième, à traiter du soin que l'on doit prendre de sa vie & de sa conservation. Au reste faut-il encore remarquer, suivant les principes que nous avons établi ci-dessus pour rectifier les idées de nôtre Auteur, [...] que les Devoirs de l'Homme par rapport à lui-même découlent directement & immédiatement de l'Amour propre éclairé, qui l'oblige, & à se conserver, & à se mettre dans le meilleur état qu'il lui est possible.¹⁷⁹

Barbeyrac puts forward a distinction between self-preservation and self-perfection. Self-preservation ("se conserver") aims at preserving the being or mere physical existence of the creature. Self-perfection ("se perfectionner") aims at the well-being of the creature.¹⁸⁰ Barbeyrac points out that most of Pufendorf's explanations in the chapter on duties to oneself actually concern self-perfection, not self-preservation. In the context of the duties to oneself, self-perfection seems to be much more important for Pufendorf than mere self-preservation.

Barbeyrac claims that the duties to oneself have their origin in what he calls "Amour propre éclairé" or enlightened self-love¹⁸¹, and refers at the same time to another note where he challenges Pufendorf's view of self-love as the ultimate source of obligation for all three kinds of duties. According to Barbeyrac, there are not one but three sources of obligation, which cannot be reduced to each other: religion (for the duties

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Barbeyrac's footnote (2) in *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹⁸⁰ Hutcheson speaks of "self-cultivation" in this context, which is closer to the French term "cultiver" used by Barbeyrac in his translation of Pufendorf.

¹⁸¹ In these passages, Barbeyrac does not give a more precise account of what enlightened self-love is. I suppose it is best interpreted as a reflected pursuit of one's true interests as opposed to merely gratifying one's most powerful desires.

to God), reflected self-love (for the duties to oneself) and sociability (for the duties to others).¹⁸² We can note already that Hutcheson goes one step further. He claims that we have self-interested motives to care for ourselves and to cultivate ourselves, but he challenges the view that the obligation to self-cultivation has its source solely in self-love.¹⁸³

For an analysis of the concept of self-cultivation in Hutcheson, the Pufendorfian approach to the duties towards one's own mind and its reception at the beginning of the Scottish Enlightenment are particularly interesting. Carmichael, commentator on Pufendorf and predecessor of Hutcheson in the chair of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow, states the following in his commentary of 1724 on Pufendorf's *De officio hominis et civis juxta legem naturalem* (1673), an abbreviated version of Pufendorf's *De jure naturæ et gentium* aiming at educational use in universities:

Pufendorf passes too lightly over the *cultivation of the mind*, a subject which has an important place among the duties which natural law prescribes. This seems to be virtually the only thing which some recent writers understand by *ethics* when they opt to distinguish ethics from natural jurisprudence.¹⁸⁴

Carmichael then adds a section, *On the duties of a man towards his own mind*, in which he translates, summarises and discusses Pufendorf's remarks on the matter, adds some reflections of his own and explains the concept of cultivation of one's mind according to Pufendorf:

The cultivation of the mind consists particularly in these things: *to fill it with sound opinions in matters relating to duties; to learn how to judge rightly of the objects which commonly stimulate human desire; to be accustomed to command the passions by the norm of reason; and to be duly instructed in some honest skill appropriate to one's conditions and manner of life.*¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Moore and Silverthorne point out that Carmichael suggested a tripartition of irreducible duties already in his Philosophical Theses in 1699. Moore and Silverthorne, "Natural Sociability and Natural rights in the Moral Philosophy of Gershom Carmichael", p. 3.

¹⁸³ Cf. section 3.2.4.

¹⁸⁴ Gershom Carmichael, "Supplements and Observations upon Samuel Pufendorf's On the Duty of Man and Citizen according to the Law of Nature, composed for the Use of Students in the Universities" in *Natural Rights on the Threshold of the Scottish Enlightenment: the Writings of Gershom Carmichael* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002 [1724]), p. 59.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 59f. (This is a translation of Pufendorf).

The agent must have correct opinions concerning her duties, and make correct judgements concerning the value of the objects that cause her desires. If the value of external objects is misrepresented, the desires are not at their appropriate strength. The central goal of self-cultivation in this Pufendorfian tradition is to indirectly control one's emotions by reason, i.e. to exert control over the conative dimensions of the mind by the cognitive dimension.

Hutcheson's account of self-cultivation is partly based on this account. Both the theme of the correction of our opinions and judgments as well as the control of the emotions, or of the "mouvemens de nôtre Ame", as Barbeyrac translates, figure in Hutcheson's account. However, it must be noted that Hutcheson, in his early writings, does not mention the importance of correct opinions with respect to duties at all. It is only in his later writings (i.e. the *Introduction* and the *System*) that this theme appears. Compared to the prominent role of the moral sense and of natural benevolence in his public philosophy, duties are negligible.

In the section about duties to oneself, and mainly in accordance with the aforementioned authors, Carmichael lists several methods to exert control over one's passions. The individual needs to moderate or restrict her passions: Love and hatred, the springs of all the passions, have to be directed "to appropriate objects" and have to be appropriate in "their intensity to the value and importance of their objects."¹⁸⁶ Since the strength of desires depends on the degree to which their objects are represented as good or evil, "it is also relevant to the right cultivation of the mind that each man should accustom himself to judge rightly of those things which commonly stimulate men's desires."¹⁸⁷ The influence of Stoic moral psychology and moral ontology is more than obvious. When discussing which objects are appropriate to one's desires, both Pufendorf

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 61.

and Carmichael rely on the distinction between external and internal goods.¹⁸⁸ The distinction is again found in Hutcheson's *Essay*.

3.2.2. Self-cultivation in Hutcheson

a) The goal of self-cultivation in Hutcheson

Mandeville, in his account of the civilising process, describes how the passions of human agents are modified by skilful politicians. The cultivation of the passions is based on the control of some passions by others. Thus, natural anger is controlled by fear of punishment, and the expressive tendencies of self-liking are stopped by fear of shame. Yet, the modification of the passions is mainly depicted as a matter of external manipulation by others, and not as a matter of self-cultivation and moral improvement. This is fundamentally different in Hutcheson. From the point of view of his moral philosophy, self-cultivation aims at making oneself more virtuous by strengthening one's natural benevolence.¹⁸⁹ In accordance with this, he claims that the most important goal of moral philosophy is not to generate "Knowledge of Human Nature, and its various Powers and Dispositions"¹⁹⁰ simply in order to have a correct account of human nature. Rather, this knowledge shall be provided and used for improvement: "*True Opinions* however, about both [i.e. the powers and dispositions as well as the moral actions and affections], may enable us to *improve* our natural Powers, and to *rectify* accidental Disorders incident unto them."¹⁹¹

The ultimate goal of self-cultivation in Hutcheson's moral theory, is to make oneself more virtuous by means of strengthening calm universal benevolence, since

¹⁸⁸ Pufendorf, *Le droit de la nature et des gens*, for example p. 212 and p. 216; Carmichael, "Supplements", for example p. 62.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 178: "But Virtue it self, or good Dispositions of Mind, are not directly taught, or produc'd by Instruction; they must be originally implanted in our Nature, by its great Author; and afterwards strengthen'd and confirm'd by our own Cultivation."

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁹¹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 4.

[...] the Perfection of Virtue consists in ‘having the *universal calm Benevolence*, the prevalent Affection of the Mind, so as to limit and counteract not only the *selfish Passions*, but even the *particular kind Affections*.’¹⁹²

The agent ought to make calm universal benevolent affections and dispositions “superior” to other desires. This involves not only the restriction of selfish passions and affections, but also of kind passions and partial calm benevolent affections, since they can be in conflict with calm universal benevolent affections.

b) How and to what extent can self-cultivation be exerted?

Hutcheson’s treatment of self-cultivation depends strongly on his moral psychology and reflects the importance of both axes, the self-love – benevolence axis and the affections – passions axis. In the *Essay*, Hutcheson speaks in general of the “*Management of our Desires*”¹⁹³ and asserts that we have “some considerable *Power* over our Desires”¹⁹⁴. Obviously, it is impossible to directly influence one’s emotions, or simply to choose to have a virtuous character. Hutcheson argues at length that desires, affections, and passions cannot simply be raised or suppressed by choice or volition.¹⁹⁵ Yet, over the course of his early writing he gives, rather loosely, some recommendations as to how to indirectly control one’s emotions. The following subsections present an attempt to reconstruct Hutcheson’s remarks on the subject in a somewhat systematic manner. The first two recommendations can be found in earlier conceptions of self-cultivation in natural law and strongly rely on the theme of correcting opinions, but the latter are proper to Hutcheson’s own moral psychology.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁹⁵ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 220ff.

1. The first recommendation rests entirely on the affections – passions axis and can be found in the other authors mentioned, who all share Hutcheson's critical view of the passions: In order to cultivate virtuous dispositions, the agent must first of all *avoid passionate actions and passions in general by suspension of action and frequent, habitual reflection* upon the value of the object of her desire and the consequences of her actions. The management of our desires, as discussed by Hutcheson in the *Essay*, requires

[...] that we should, as much as possible, in all Affairs of Importance to our selves or others, prevent the *Violence* of [the desires'] *confused Sensation*, and stop their *Propensities* from breaking out into Action, till we have fully examined the real *Moment* of the Object, either of our Desires or Aversions.

Hutcheson recommends the suspension of actions in view of the need for a calm reflection on the situation. He then continues to sketch out how this control can be exerted:

The only way to affect this is, 'a constant *Attention* of Mind, an habitual *Discipline* over our selves, and a fixed *Resolution* to stop all Action before a calm *Examination* of every Circumstance attending it; more particularly, the real *Values* of external Objects, and the *moral Qualities* or *Tempers* of rational Agents, about whom our Affections may be employed.' This Power we may obtain over our selves by a frequent Consideration of the great *Calamities*, and pernicious Actions, to which even the *best of our Passions* may lead us, when we are rashly hurried into Action by their Violence, and by the *confused Sensations*, and *fantastick Associations* of Ideas which attend them: Thus we may raise a *habitual Suspicion* and *Dread* of every *violent Passion*, which, recurring along with them continually, may in some measure counter-balance their Propensities and *confused Sensations*.¹⁹⁶

Elsewhere he claims that

We obtain *Command* over the *particular Passions*, principally by strengthening the *general Desires* thro frequent Reflection, and making them *habitual*, so as to obtain Strength superior to the *particular Passions*.¹⁹⁷

The agent must acquire the habit of suspending actions until the objects of her desires and their value have been thoroughly examined. In this way

¹⁹⁶ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 110f. He adds that this discipline aims at making calm universal benevolence superior to the other desires. (Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 89)

¹⁹⁷ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 32.

passionate actions that are harmful to the public or to the agent can be prevented. If the agent frequently imagines the potentially negative consequences of passionate actions (both selfish and benevolent), she will support the habit of suspending actions when subject to passions. The idea of control through imagination of negative consequences is also present in the *Inquiry*, where Hutcheson invites the reader to imagine the misery of excessive selfishness in order to prevent selfish passions from motivating one's actions.¹⁹⁸ In general, the agent should strengthen calm desires and affections with a general or universal scope and make them stronger than the particular passions. It must also be highlighted that Hutcheson does not only want the selfish passions to be prevented, but also the kind or benevolent passions, such as pity.

2. The second recommendation, as the first one, remains within the tradition of Pufendorfian accounts of self-cultivation but focuses on affections rather than on passions. In order to cultivate benevolent or virtuous dispositions, the agent must *direct her affections to the right object and give them the appropriate strength by correct representations of an object's value*.¹⁹⁹ Affections (more than passions) depend on opinions and associations of ideas.²⁰⁰ The strength of desires in particular depends on the representation of the hedonic value of an object.²⁰¹ Affections, in order to be appropriate, must be based on correct representations of their objects.

¹⁹⁸ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 178.

¹⁹⁹ We will see below that Hutcheson, already in the *Essay*, relies on the Stoic distinction between internal and external goods when he discusses some particular problems that arise with his conception of virtue in terms of benevolence, i.e. the desire for the happiness of others (which is an external good, since it is not fully in the agent's power).

²⁰⁰ Alexander Broadie, "Hutcheson on Connoisseurship and the Role of Reflection" *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* (forthcoming), highlights the need for reflection in Hutcheson to correct our harmful propensity to associate ideas: "As regards possible causes of error it is error through association of ideas that holds Hutcheson's attention throughout the *Inquiry* and the *Essay*." Reflection in the sense of a "discursive cognitive act" allows breaking such associations and gaining command over the affections.

²⁰¹ Hutcheson, *Essay*, pp. 66-68.

Let us take a look at the example of the management of the affections arising from our public sense, or “our Determination to be pleased with the *Happiness* of others, and to be uneasy at their *Misery*.”²⁰² It is important to have knowledge about other agents’ *opinions* about happiness and misery, in order to judge the *degree* of their happiness or misery, and in order to have the appropriate affections when observing them. Hutcheson warns against the common mistake of “apprehending every Person to be miserable in those Circumstances, which we imagine would make our selves miserable.”²⁰³ In the present case, the appropriateness of the public affection of an observer depends on the correctness of her opinions about the circumstances and on the correctness of her opinions about the observed agent’s opinions.

3. The following recommendations depend on the self-love – benevolence axis and cannot be found in the natural law theorists preceding Hutcheson. They depend on a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. The agent has to *strengthen benevolent affections in particular* (as opposed to selfish affections). Hutcheson indicates two different ways of achieving this. Firstly, aiming directly at strengthening benevolence, *by focusing attention on the right features of a situation and of other agents’ motives*. In order to strengthen *benevolent affections*, the observer has to direct her attention to those qualities in objects, which are “naturally constituted the necessary Causes or Occasions of the advantageous Affection”.²⁰⁴ Qualities that cause the observer’s benevolent affections are, for example, benevolent motivations in other agents. By representing these, the observer’s “Passions which seem *opposite* to the *Happiness* of others, such as *Anger, Jealousy, Envy*,

²⁰² Ibid., p. 17.

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 120. Cf. Bishop, “Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson’s Philosophy”, p. 286.

²⁰⁴ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 220. Hutcheson claims in the third edition of the *Inquiry*: “To raise Benevolence, no more is required than calmly to consider any sensitive Nature not pernicious to others.” Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 219.

*Hatred*²⁰⁵ will be opposed and overruled by responsive benevolence to the agent, which is a natural reaction to the apprehension of benevolence in others.

It has been mentioned that Hutcheson thinks that the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question given by Epicureans and Augustinians is not only false, but also dangerous. Here is the reason why it is dangerous: Since it denies the reality of benevolent motives, it prevents us from focusing on features that provoke responsive benevolence²⁰⁶, and thus from cultivating benevolence. Therefore:

If any Opinions deserve Opposition, they are such as raise Scruples in our Minds about the Goodness of Providence, or represent our Fellow-Creatures as base and selfish, by instilling into us some ill-natur'd, cunning, shreud Insinuations, 'that our most generous Actions proceed wholly from selfish Views.' This wise Philosophy of some Moderns, after Epicurus, must be fruitful of nothing but Discontent, Suspicion, and Jealousy; a State infinitely worse than any little transitory Injurys to which we might be expos'd by a good-natur'd Credulity.²⁰⁷

In addition, remembering that "no man acts from *pure Malice*"²⁰⁸ will prevent the observer from imagining motives in the observed agent that provoke hatred in the observer.²⁰⁹

The second way of strengthening benevolent affections concerns self-love as far as it is opposed to benevolence, and consists in *restricting or removing selfish desires that oppose benevolent desires*. The knowledge about the tendency of universal benevolence to promote the

²⁰⁵ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 124.

²⁰⁶ Cf. Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy", p. 287. Bishop points out that in the *Inquiry*, Hutcheson highlights the importance of evoking responsive benevolence in the process of self-cultivation, whereas in the *Essay*, he emphasises the importance of the correction of our beliefs. In both writings, he claims that the motive for self-cultivation is self-interest. According to Bishop, this changes in the *System*, where Hutcheson defends a different conception of the moral sense. There it is thought not only to approve of self-cultivation, but also to directly motivate self-cultivation. In the *Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, he then puts forward the Stoic idea of living according to nature.

²⁰⁷ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 142.

²⁰⁸ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 124. Cf. Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy", p. 287 and section 2.2.3.e).

²⁰⁹ Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy", p. 293.

happiness of the benevolent agent herself,²¹⁰ and the knowledge about the negative consequences of selfish passions help to restrict selfish affections and passions that oppose benevolence.²¹¹ Resulting calm and reflected selfish affections will oppose other selfish affections and selfish passions, and the natural tendency to benevolence will be strong enough to motivate virtuous actions:

Let the Obstacles from Self-love be only remov'd, and Nature it self will incline us to Benevolence. Let the Misery of excessive Selfishness, and all its Passions, be but once explain'd, that so Self-love may cease to counteract our natural Propensity to Benevolence, and when this noble Disposition gets loose from these Bonds of Ignorance, and false Views of Interest, it shall be assisted even by Self-love, and grow strong enough to make a noble virtuous Character. ²¹²

This passage leads to a very interesting aspect of self-cultivation: The agent can *cultivate benevolence with the support of self-love*. Hutcheson is rather critical with respect to self-love as a motive for actions, yet he regularly emphasises that selfish considerations can support the agent in cultivating benevolence and in performing virtuous actions. Thus, self-love can “assist” benevolence. The following sections deal with this aspect.

3.2.3. *Self-love as a support for virtue and self-cultivation*

Calm reflected self-love, given the agent's knowledge about the psychological link between benevolence and the moral pleasures, provides her with selfish reasons to strengthen benevolent desires and character traits, and to suppress selfish desires that oppose benevolent ones. This is a reflection of the egoistic argument for the Interest Claim. Hutcheson's claim that calm self-love can support benevolence is put forward in all the writings of his public philosophy. In the *Inquiry*, for example, he says that

²¹⁰ Hutcheson mentions the following points: “Now the principal Business of the moral Philosopher is to shew, from solid Reasons, ‘That universal Benevolence tends to the Happiness of the Benevolent, either from the Pleasures of Reflection, Honour, natural Tendency to engage the good Offices of Men, upon whose Aid we must depend for our Happiness in this World; or from the Sanctions of divine Laws discover'd to us by the Constitution of the Universe’”. Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 178.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

“Self-Interest may be our Motive in studying to raise these kind Affections”.²¹³ Self-love can assist benevolence, if it does not counteract our “natural Propensity to Benevolence”²¹⁴. It supports benevolence, especially when calm and reflected self-love is directed by additional motives, such as honour or advantage.²¹⁵ At the end of the *Inaugural Lecture*, he asserts that virtue will provide us the “highest pleasures of life”.²¹⁶ We have self-interested reasons to be virtuous and to cultivate virtue.

Hutcheson is fully aware of the possible tension between his critical view of self-love in matters of morality and the fact that he emphasises its importance for self-cultivation. At the beginning of the *Essay*, he writes:

It may perhaps seem strange, that when in this *Treatise* Virtue is suppos'd *disinterested*; yet so much Pains is taken, by a *Comparison* of our several *Pleasures*, to prove the *Pleasures* of *Virtue* to be the greatest we are capable of, and that consequently it is our truest *Interest* to be *virtuous*. But let it be remember'd here, that tho there can be no *Motives* or *Arguments* suggested which can directly raise any *ultimate Desire*, such as that of our *own Happiness*, or *publick Affections* (as we attempt to prove in *Treatise* IV;) yet if both are *natural Dispositions* of our Minds, and nothing can stop the Operation of *publick Affections* but some *selfish Interest*, the only way to give publick Affections their full Force, and to make them prevalent in our Lives, must be to remove these *Opinions of opposite Interests*, and to shew a superior Interest on their side. If these

²¹³ Ibid., pp. 134 and 237. I quote the text from the 3rd and 4th edition. (Leidhold does not mention the change in the 3rd edition.)

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 178.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 186.

²¹⁶ Hutcheson, "Inaugural Lecture" , p. 216. It must be noted that the *Inaugural Lecture* more strongly relies on teleological arguments for the naturalness of a social and virtuous life (cf. Mautner in the *Introduction* to his translation of the *Oratio Inauguralis* in Francis Hutcheson, "On the Social Nature of Man" in *On Human Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1730]), p. 46f.). Social life is not only natural in a secondary sense, i.e. sought for private happiness, as claimed by Pufendorf, but also - as demonstrated by Cumberland and Shaftesbury - in a primary sense, i.e. because human nature is "kind, unselfish, and sociable without regard to its advantage or pleasure." Hutcheson, "Inaugural Lecture" , p. 205. This is supported by the fact that "God gave us a sense of the fitting and the beautiful; associated with this sense, as a moderator of all the grosser pleasures, is shame; he also gave us the keen spur of praise. The effect of all these is to make life social and kindly, and to make all the duties which are honorable and beneficial to others most advantageous and at the same time most pleasant for the agent himself, and to make even the innate self-love of our nature in no way contrary to our common and benevolent affections." Hutcheson, "Inaugural Lecture" , p. 210.

Considerations be just and sufficiently attended to, a *natural Disposition* can scarce fail to exert it self to the full.²¹⁷

The agent's knowledge about the psychological link between benevolence and the moral pleasures shows her that she has non-moral selfish reasons, or a "superior interest" to cultivate benevolence. Virtue is in her interest because of the advantages involved.²¹⁸ This knowledge will help her to resolve possible conflicts between selfish and benevolent desires in favour of benevolence, yet on the basis of selfish considerations. Thus, benevolence can be supported by calm self-love in that the agent removes selfish desires by endorsing the true belief that there are self-interested reasons to be benevolent.

However, there is a problem with self-love supporting benevolence:

And if we must bring in Self-Love to make Virtue Rational, a little Reflection will discover, as shall appear hereafter, that this Benevolence is our greatest Happiness; and thence we may resolve to cultivate, as much as possible, this sweet Disposition, and to despise every opposite Interest. Not that we can be truly Virtuous, if we intend only to obtain the Pleasure which arises from Beneficence, without the Love of others: Nay, this very Pleasure is founded on our being conscious of disinterested Love to others, as the Spring of our Actions. But Self-Interest may be our Motive in studying to raise these kind Affections, and to continue in this agreeable State; tho it cannot be the sole, or principal Motive of any Action, which to our moral Sense appears Virtuous.²¹⁹

In the first place, this passage draws attention to a *psychological* point that is known as the *paradox of moral motivation*.²²⁰ For Hutcheson, it is a

²¹⁷ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 5. Cf. also Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 178.

²¹⁸ Cf. chapter II, section 2.4. The psychological point that virtue is in the agent's interest because of the moral pleasures shall not be mistaken as an egoistic reduction of the obligation to morality as found in authors such as Pufendorf and Carmichael. The obligation to morality lies in the moral sense's approbation of benevolence. Cf. section 3.2.4.

²¹⁹ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 134 and 237. I quote the text from the 3rd and 4th edition.

²²⁰ Bishop, "Moral Motivation and the Development of Francis Hutcheson's Philosophy", p. 285. "Any action done because it is a morally good action (that is, because the moral sense would approve) is not motivated by benevolence, and hence would not get the approval which is its goal." This is explained by Hutcheson's view that moral approbation is a source of pleasure, i.e. of a natural good: "Since moral approval is a source of pleasure, then we will have a desire for that pleasure; hence we seek the approval of our own moral sense." Yet, acting for the sake of moral approbation is acting for the sake of a natural good, which is not a virtuous motive, and does not produce the moral pleasures of self-approbation.

psychological fact that the pleasures of self-approbation depend upon the agent's consciousness of having acted on benevolent motives. Since benevolence constitutes the agent's greatest happiness, she has self-interested reasons to be benevolent. However, if she attempts to be benevolent for ultimately self-interested reasons, she will fail and will only be *beneficent*. As a consequence, the agent will not gain the desired pleasures, since they depend on *benevolence*. Secondly, the passage draws attention to a related *moral* point. Hutcheson highlights that an agent is not truly virtuous if she acts merely (or predominantly) in order to gain the pleasures of self-approbation. A virtuous action is motivated by benevolence, and not by the ultimately selfish desire for the pleasure that arises from having acted on a benevolent motive.

There are two ways of tackling these problems. On the one hand, Hutcheson encourages the interpretation that we may conceive of some of the actions discussed above as cases of actions with mixed motives, i.e. actions that are partly motivated by genuine benevolence and partly by a selfish desire to gain the moral pleasures.²²¹ Such actions can still count as virtuous – albeit to a lesser degree than an action that is motivated purely by benevolence. This interpretation is supported by Hutcheson's approach to the calculation of the value of actions in his moral mathematics. Thus, from the *moral* point of view, an action that is motivated by a combination of genuine benevolence and selfish desires for the moral pleasures that are a consequence of the action may still count as virtuous. As a consequence, from the *psychological* point of view, the agent can still derive moral pleasures – albeit to a lesser degree than if the action is motivated by benevolence alone. The paradox of

²²¹ Hutcheson encourages this reading when he qualifies in the quoted passage that we cannot be truly virtuous, "if we intend *only* to obtain the Pleasure [My emphasis]", and when he says that the selfish desire for the moral pleasures "cannot be the *sole*, or *principal Motive* of any Action, which to our *moral Sense* appears *Virtuous*."

moral motivation does not rule out Hutcheson's account of self-love as being a support for benevolence in cases of mixed motives.

However, there is another case that cannot be subsumed within this category.²²² Consider the agent who wants to have a benevolent or virtuous character for *purely* self-interested reasons, i.e. only for the advantages she recognises in having a virtuous character. For reasons specified above, the agent must fail in her attempts to become virtuous for purely self-interested reasons, as well as in her attempts to perform virtuous actions for purely self-interested reasons. Genuine virtue is disinterested and ultimately aims at promoting the well-being of others. But then again, selfish motives “may make us desire to have benevolent Affections, and consequently turn our Attention to those Qualities in Objects which excite them; they may overbalance all apparent contrary Motives, and all Temptations to Vice.”²²³ The agent who wants to become virtuous for purely selfish reasons must fail. A psychological consequence of her attempts is, however, that her attention remains focused on the benevolence of others. The moral sense's natural and disinterested approval of these motives then causes genuine benevolent affections, which are independent of the agent's former self-interested motives. Thus, the formerly purely selfish agent may develop genuine benevolent - i.e. virtuous - dispositions that have their origin in psychological mechanisms that are independent of her former selfish intentions. In the end, even an entirely self-interested agent may successfully develop disinterested virtuous dispositions.

3.2.4. *The obligation to virtue and self-cultivation*

Why should we be morally virtuous and cultivate ourselves in order to become more virtuous? What has been said in the previous subsections

²²² This case is not directly analysed by Hutcheson, but it is compatible with his moral philosophy.

²²³ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 225. The quoted passage was inserted in the 3rd edition.

about the link between self-love and virtue should not be mistaken as an egoistic reduction of the obligation to virtue and self-cultivation. Rather, Hutcheson suggests that the ultimate obligation for virtue lies in the moral sense:

If any one ask, Can we have any Sense of Obligation, abstracting from the Laws of a Superior? We must answer according to the various Senses of the word Obligation. If by Obligation we understand a Determination, without regard to our own Interest, to approve Actions, and to perform them; which Determination shall also make us displeas'd with our selves, and uneasy upon having acted contrary to it; in this meaning of the word Obligation, there is naturally an Obligation upon all Men to Benevolence [...]²²⁴

Hutcheson rejects egoistic accounts of the obligation to virtue and to the cultivation of virtue as found in Pufendorf, Barbeyrac and Carmichael. These theorists claimed that the obligation to self-cultivation, a part of the duties to oneself, is rooted in self-interest. Undeniably, Hutcheson claims that there are self-interested reasons for self-cultivation and for living a moral life. On this point, he relies on the egoistic argument for the Interest Claim. Yet, the obligation to virtue and its cultivation does not lie in self-interested reasons but in the moral sense, which approves of benevolent motives and disapproves of excessive selfishness. Here, we contradict Gill, who suggests in his discussion of Hutcheson's analysis of the relation between morality and self-interest that, for Hutcheson, the two "are on a normative par".²²⁵ Considerations from self-interest indeed show us egoistic reasons to be virtuous, which are grounded in facts about human psychology, and they can be helpful in cultivating virtue, yet the proper obligation to morality is not rooted in self-love.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 176. On this point, cf. also Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 221; Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, pp. 150f.

²²⁵ Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 185: "Rather than claim that the moral sense trumps, or is in some sense superior to or more authoritative than self-interest, Hutcheson tried to show that even though morality and self-interest are on a normative par, morality still will not be threatened."

3.2.5. Hutcheson on benevolence and the lower Stoicks

In the context of his conception of moral virtue in terms of benevolence or “*Desire of publick Good*”²²⁶, Hutcheson addresses a particular problem that arises from his relying on a Stoic framework. The Stoic conception of virtue as an internal good emphasises the importance of an internal harmonious state of the soul. In this framework, self-cultivation is *moderatio*, and aims at temperance, i.e. at avoiding the *perturbationes* or passions and strengthening the *constantiae* or affections. It has been mentioned that for the Stoics, the *constantiae* only aim at *internal goods*, which are fully in the agent’s power, i.e. the virtuous dispositions of the agent’s soul. Hutcheson, on the other hand, emphasises the agent’s relation to other agents. To be virtuous is to act with the intention of promoting the happiness of others. This conception of virtue, which he attributes to at least some of the Stoics, clearly does not satisfy him:

This may show the Vanity of some of the lower rate of Philosophers of the *Stoick Sect*, in boasting of an undisturbed Happiness and Serenity, independently even of the Deity, as well as of their Fellow-Creatures, wholly inconsistent with the *Order of Nature*, as well as with the Principles of some of their great Leaders: for which, Men of Wit in their own Age did not fail to ridicule them.

That must be a very fantastic Scheme of Virtue, which represents it as a *private sublimely selfish Discipline*, to preserve our selves wholly unconcerned, not only in the Changes of Fortune as to our *Wealth* or *Poverty*, *Liberty* or *Slavery*, *Ease* or *Pain*, but even in all *external Events* whatsoever, in the Fortunes of our dearest *Friends* or *Country*, solacing ourselves that we are easy and undisturbed. If there be any thing amiable in human Nature, the reflection upon which can give us pleasure, it must be kind *disinterested Affections* towards our Fellows, or towards the *whole*, and its Author and Cause. These Affections, when reflected upon, must be one constant Source of Pleasure in *Self-Approbation*. But some of these very Affections, being toward an uncertain Object, must occasion Pain, and directly produce one sort of Misery to the virtuous in this Life.²²⁷

Hutcheson’s conception of virtue as benevolence, which is one of the pillars of the *Inquiry*, seems to be hardly compatible with a Stoic conception of virtue as an internal good. The arising problem is as follows:

²²⁶ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 82.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

Being virtuous in Hutcheson's sense of being benevolent makes one's own happiness dependent on the successful gratification of the desire of the promotion of the happiness of others. According to a conception of virtue that makes it a "private sublimely selfish discipline", this desire is a desire for an external good that can be frustrated and therefore needs to be suppressed.

Hutcheson highlights that the desire to be virtuous (as opposed to the desire to promote others' happiness) is a desire that has an object that is in the agent's power and that can be cultivated by means of cultivation of natural benevolent affections.²²⁸ Yet, the aim of the virtuous affections themselves (i.e. the promotion of others' happiness) is – in Stoic terms – an external good and not in the agent's power. Since for Hutcheson, virtue essentially aims at promoting the happiness of others, it cannot be a "private sublimely selfish discipline". Rather, it is essentially concerned with external states of affairs, more precisely with the happiness of other agents. Therefore, being virtuous involves making oneself vulnerable to the well-being of others, since the desire to promote their well-being can be frustrated. The cultivation of virtue does not make the agent less vulnerable, but more vulnerable with respect to something that is not fully in her power. As a consequence, Hutcheson notices, virtue "may also be the Occasion of no inconsiderable Pains in this Life"²²⁹. In the Stoic framework, which emphasises the importance of restricting one's desires to internal goods, the following question arises: Should we really cultivate virtuous dispositions in Hutcheson's sense?

One possible answer to this problem is not spelled out by Hutcheson but at least encouraged in view of his theory. Hutcheson is in a position to refer to the hierarchy of the pleasures. He argues at length that the moral pleasures of self-approbation, which arise upon the agent's

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 84.

²²⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

apprehension of her own benevolence, are the most valuable pleasures she can get. In the case of the problem mentioned, the pleasures gained from having a virtuous character will in general compensate²³⁰ the agent for the potential painful experiences that her virtuous concern for the well-being of others may bring upon her. In particular, we might think of the pains of the social sense, which arise upon the disappointment of natural public desires for the happiness of others.²³¹ Another argument for the cultivation of benevolence, in spite of it being the “occasion of no inconsiderable pains in this life”, is that the lack of benevolence will cause “*Self-condemnation and Abhorrence*”²³² in the agent. Ultimately, having virtuous dispositions brings about a higher quantity and quality of pleasing states and a lower quantity and quality of displeasing states than not being virtuous, even if being virtuous makes room for the pains of the social sense, which one might try to avoid by suppressing benevolent dispositions.

Hutcheson’s emphasis on benevolence also explains the differences between his treatment of the calm affection of sorrow and the Stoics’ treatment. Sorrow (the Stoic *ægritudo*, which is a *perturbatio*) figures within Hutcheson’s pure affections, which are the systematic equivalent to the Stoic *constantia*. The Stoics claim that “the wise man [...] is not subject to the influence of present evil”²³³, in the sense of true, i.e. internal evil, which are vicious dispositions. Thus, there are only three *constantia*. Hutcheson, in view of his conception of human nature and virtue, could not possibly ban something like a public affection of sorrow

²³⁰ The idea that pleasure and pain compensate each other is introduced in the *Essay*. There, he defines the notion of *absolute good* as “that which, considered with all its Concomitants and Consequences, contains more Good than what compensates all its Evils.” Ibid., p. 35.

²³¹ In this context, James Harris, “Religion in Hutcheson’s Moral Philosophy” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46, no. 2 (2008), pp. 213f. highlights the importance of the religious standpoint for the stability of virtue in view of the painful experiences the public sense engenders: “Religion gives stability to the happiness consequent upon self-approval, where otherwise that happiness might be threatened by consideration of how little one is able to do to mend the fortunes of the distressed multitude. The public sense forces us out of ourselves, so to speak; and at the same time forces us towards the religious standpoint.” Harris, “Religion in Hutcheson’s Moral Philosophy”, p. 215.

²³² Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 83.

²³³ Cicero, *Disputationes Tusculanæ*, p. 341.

arising upon the apprehension of misery in others from his table of the calm affections. Hutcheson argues that the public sense is a “Determination to be pleased with the *Happiness* of others, and to be uneasy at their *Misery*”²³⁴ and that we “naturally *desire* the absent Happiness of others; *rejoice* in it when it is obtained, and *sorrow* for it when lost.”²³⁵ This responsiveness to the happiness or grief of other agents shows that kind and benevolent affections are natural to mankind. In self-cultivation they should not be weakened but strengthened, since self-cultivation aims at strengthening virtue.

Conclusion

Hutcheson’s criticism of the treatment of “kind *disinterested Affections* towards our Fellows, or towards the *whole*”²³⁶ by some of the Stoics, which has just been discussed, also appears to affect Shaftesbury’s account of virtue as developed in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*. We have argued above that, regarding the role of the public good in the affections, Shaftesbury’s account in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* is in conflict with his account in the *Inquiry*. However fond Hutcheson was of Shaftesbury’s moral philosophy, his defence of benevolence as the core of virtue must involve a rejection of the claim that one should not have desires for external goods - benevolence consists essentially in a desire for the happiness of other agents. Even if Hutcheson turns out to be rather critical with respect to passionate forms of benevolence, such as pity, he is far from extending this view to all forms of other-directed emotions, or even to deny pity its place among the virtuous emotions. If

²³⁴ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 17.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

pity is to be avoided, it is because it is a passion, not because it involves a desire for the happiness of others.

We have argued that Hutcheson's moral philosophy is deeply marked by the self-love – benevolence axis as well as by the passions – affections axis. This has consequences for his treatment of self-love, which he conceives of in terms of the hedonistic concept of self-love. In his moral mathematics, where the self-love – benevolence axis is dominant, his view of self-love is rather critical. Many commentators focus on this aspect of Hutcheson's treatment of self-love. We have mentioned that Smith contrasts Shaftesbury and Hutcheson on the basis of this point, and claims that according to Hutcheson, "[s]elf-love was a principle which could never be virtuous in any degree or in any direction."²³⁷ Force relies on the same point when reading Hutcheson through Smith's lenses.²³⁸ We have argued, however, that there are reasons to doubt that this picture of Hutcheson's view of self-love is correct. Hutcheson's treatment of self-love in the context of the passions – affections axis and in his theory of self-cultivation changes considerably compared to his treatment of self-love in the context of the self-love – benevolence axis. Not only is self-love as a violent passion treated very differently from self-love as a calm affection, but it has also been shown that there are some remarks in Hutcheson which undermine Smith's claim that self-love, according to Hutcheson, could never motivate any virtuous action. In spite of all the evidence in favour of the attribution of a critical view of self-love to Hutcheson, he occasionally claims, alongside Shaftesbury, that self-love is necessary for virtue, and he even seems to contend that self-love, under certain conditions, can motivate virtuous actions. To sum up, Hutcheson's positive answer to the Human Nature Question is not only based on the view that self-love's motivational power is restricted by

²³⁷ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 358; VII, II, III, 12.

²³⁸ Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 198ff.

benevolence, which is another natural source of motives, but also on a partial rehabilitation of the moral value of self-love.

In the next two chapters, we are going to analyse two even more positive views of self-love, which are, however, based on very different accounts of moral psychology. Firstly, there is Butler's view of self-love as self-respect, which is part of a moral psychology that rejects the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, and secondly, there is Campbell's view of self-love as love of praise, which is part of an egoistic conception of human nature.

Chapter V: Butler - Self-Love as “Respect of Self”

1. Introduction

Joseph Butler (1692-1752) was a moral philosopher, a theologian and, from 1750 – 1752, the Anglican Bishop of Durham. As a philosopher, he is mainly known as the author of the *Fifteen Sermons Preached at Rolls Chapel*¹ (first edition in 1726) and of the *Analogy of Religion*, which includes the *Dissertation of the Nature of Virtue*² (first edition 1736). The *Sermons* are Butler’s main contribution to the philosophical debates on self-love, exerting some influence on Hutcheson, who mentions Butler in the *Preface to the Essay*.³

¹ The following edition will be used: Joseph Butler, "Fifteen Sermons Preached at Rolls Chapel" in *Butler's Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel and A Dissertation of the Nature of Virtue* (London: S.P.C.K., 1970 [1726]). We will henceforth refer to the text as the *Sermons*. The edition is based on the 2nd edition with the *Preface* from 1729, but indicates all the differences to the 1st edition from 1726.

² The following edition of the *Analogy* will be used: Joseph Butler, *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature* (London: 1802 [1736]). We will refer to the *Dissertation* in Roberts' edition: Joseph Butler, "A Dissertation of the Nature of Virtue" in *Butler's Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel and A Dissertation of the Nature of Virtue* (London: S.P.C.K., 1970 [1736]), pp. 147-154.

³ Hutcheson writes in a favourable tone about Butler: "I hope it is a good Omen of something still better on this Subject to be expected in the learned World, that Mr. *Butler*, in his *Sermons* at the *Rolls Chapel*, has done so much Justice to the wise and good Order of our Nature; that the Gentlemen, who have oppos'd some other Sentiments of the Author of the *Inquiry*, seem convinc'd of a *moral Sense*." Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 9. Butler's discussion of the emotions and his very optimistic view of self-love may indeed have influenced Hutcheson's treatment of self-love. Above, we have emphasised Hutcheson's shift in attention from the self-love – benevolence axis to the affections – passions axis in the *Essay* (1728) and in the third edition of the *Inquiry* (1729). At this stage, Hutcheson puts forward more positive features of calm self-love than before. This may indeed be linked with his reading of the *Sermons*, where self-love is treated very differently. We will take a closer look at a series of aspects of the relation between these two philosophers in section 3.

In moral psychology and moral epistemology, Butler is often less thorough than Hutcheson. Furthermore, the *Sermons* were written over a period of eight years⁴, which might have contributed to some of the inconsistencies that can be found in Butler's moral psychology.⁵ Yet, his writings attracted a considerable amount of attention during the 20th century, especially in the context of philosophical discussions of egoism. C. D. Broad, for example, went as far as to claim that Butler "killed the theory [i.e. psychological egoism] so thoroughly that he sometimes seems to the modern reader to be flogging dead horses."⁶ Indeed, Butler's treatment of egoism, and especially his approach to self-love, are extremely interesting for the purpose of the present study.

Butler stands alongside Shaftesbury and Hutcheson in attacking the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. We have seen that Hutcheson does so by arguing that self-love is not the only motive for human actions, and that there is a natural tendency to benevolence. In Hutcheson's writings, which are directed against Mandeville, the concept of self-love is a hedonistic one. Hutcheson also argues that benevolence and self-love are not necessarily in conflict, in the sense that self-love can indirectly support benevolent motives in view of the pleasures of self-approbation and honour. The main point that is put forward in this chapter is that Butler's concept of self-love is fundamentally different from both Hutcheson's and Mandeville's. Butler also rejects many of Mandeville's claims and joins Hutcheson in giving a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. Yet, whereas Hutcheson recommends restricting self-love in favour of benevolence, and points out that the former is often an obstacle to the latter, Butler claims that there is no "reason to wish

⁴ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 16, § 45.

⁵ The ambiguous psychological status of benevolence, for example, has been the subject of many discussions amongst commentators of Butler, as we shall see in section 2.1.3. The same holds for its moral status. Similarly, some remarks on self-love can hardly be made compatible with what seems to be the core concept of self-love for Butler. Cf. section 2.3.1.c).

⁶ C. D. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 55. (The first edition dates from 1930.)

self-love were weaker in the generality of the world than it is. [...] Upon the whole, if the generality of mankind were to cultivate within themselves the principle of self-love [...] it would manifestly prevent numberless follies and vices.”⁷

Some of Butler’s theses, including this thesis, seem strikingly peculiar and require consideration of the fundamental differences between his concept of self-love and those of the other authors investigated. Otherwise, many of his arguments seem to be at odds with the general direction of his thought. In the subsequent analysis, it will be suggested that Butler puts forward a concept of self-love as self-respect.⁸ The function of self-love, which is a reflected affection of a higher order, is to control the gratification of particular principles of actions in view of the agent’s happiness and of the realisation of her real self. In some respects, Butler comes close to Aristotle’s conception of *philautia* in the praiseworthy sense, which aims at the gratification of the rational parts of the soul, and thus at realising virtues rather than being an obstacle to them.⁹

As a consequence, many of Butler’s theses on self-love that look very similar to Hutcheson’s due to their shared terminology, are actually very different in content. Examples are their attacks on the claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions, or their rejection of the claim that there is a conflict between self-love and benevolence, or interest and virtue. Moreover, Butler does not attack the theses of psychological egoism and psychological hedonism in his theory of self-love, but in his account of the particular principles of actions, as we shall see. His arguments against the claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions must thus not be mistaken for a refutation of psychological egoism or hedonism (which it would be with the widespread

⁷ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Preface, pp. 14f, §§ 40f.

⁸ Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.5.

⁹ Cf. chapter I, section 2.3.

egoistic or hedonistic concepts of self-love, but not with Butler's concept of self-love as self-respect). Furthermore, Butler's rejection of Hutcheson's claim that virtue is disinterested, does not, as it might seem, contradict Hutcheson's thesis. Finally, Butler's unusual conception of self-love leads him to make some claims concerning the moral value of self-love that are surprising given the dominant background of Hutcheson's and Mandeville's concepts of self-love.

1.1. *The relation between human nature and virtue*

1.1.1. *The purpose of investigating human nature*

Butler's treatment of self-love is part of a wider discussion of human nature.¹⁰ Butler regularly emphasises the importance of the study of human nature for morals, and says about the *Sermons* that they "were intended to explain what is meant by the nature of man, when it is said that virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating from it; and by explaining to shew that the assertion is true."¹¹ One of Butler's central goals is to argue that virtue and virtuous behaviour are in some sense in accordance with human nature and in the agent's interest, whereas vice and vicious behaviour are in some sense in conflict with it. With this claim, Butler joins the Neo-Stoic background of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson in opposing Mandeville, who asserts in an Augustinian vein that virtue requires the denial of one's very nature.¹²

¹⁰ Besides self-love, which is the focus of the present study, many commentators have discussed the role of conscience as one of the most important features of Butler's moral philosophy. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 78, Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, p. 69ff., Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 246f. Nicholas L. Sturgeon, "Nature and Conscience in Butler's Ethics" *The Philosophical Review* 85, no. 3 (1976), on the other hand, argues that the doctrine of the supremacy of conscience is superfluous, since "conscience never *favors* or *opposes* any action, except on grounds which include its naturalness or unnaturalness." Sturgeon, "Nature and Conscience in Butler's Ethics", p. 328.

¹¹ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 4, § 13.

¹² Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 81f. suggests that Butler joins a Neo-Stoic scheme against the "interest theorists".

Butler's *Sermons* 1, 2 and 3 explain that human nature is such that man is "a law to himself".¹³ He emphasises that his method of investigating morality by means of investigating human nature is not based on an inquiry "into the abstract nature of things"¹⁴, i.e. on an *a priori* method, but on an empirical method of inquiry into "a matter of fact, namely, what the particular nature of man is, its several parts, their economy or constitution; from whence it proceeds to determine what course of life it is, which is correspondent to this whole nature."¹⁵ Butler's enquiries in moral psychology are to a great extent subservient to the goals of recommending virtue and showing the obligations we have to morality by means of analysing in what sense "virtue consists in following, and vice in deviating" from human nature.¹⁶ This has to be kept in mind for the analysis of Butler's concept of self-love.

1.1.2. Theistic teleology

When Butler claims that virtue consists in following human nature, and vice in deviating from it, he invokes a theistic teleological concept of human nature. Man's "real proper nature"¹⁷, or what will also be termed the agent's "real self", is the nature that has been given to man by God in the sense that God designed him for a certain way of life. For Butler,

¹³ For Butler's methodology and the suggested connection between human nature and morality, cf. also Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 28f., Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, p. 41 ff., Millar, "Following Nature", Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 261 ff.

¹⁴ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 4, § 12.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Preface, p. 4, § 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Preface, p. 4, § 13.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Sermon 2, p. 27, § 1. Roberts suggests, contrary to Broad, that what Butler calls "man's real proper nature" has to be distinguished from "some notion of ideal human nature", if the latter implies perfection. This is because "true to his Christian theological beliefs, Butler frequently stresses the frailty and imperfection of the human frame and constitution." Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 33. It is important to note that the real self is not the ideal or perfect self in the sense of the self of man before the Fall, but the self that one ought to live after and to realise through self-cultivation, given the design of one's nature. Even if he highlights the imperfection of the human frame, Butler still asserts a clearly positive answer to the Human Nature Question, as we shall see throughout this chapter.

man's real nature is "plainly adapted"¹⁸ to virtue, or the virtuous life – which is an assertion of a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. Yet, having a nature that is adapted to the virtuous life means only that one is equipped by design with the dispositions and faculties that allow one to live the virtuous life if they are properly used. It does not, however, imply that the life one actually lives is really virtuous, since one can deviate from one's real nature.¹⁹ The fact that "real nature" is adapted to the virtuous life, and the fact that "the inward frame of man is considered as [a] guide in morals"²⁰ does not mean that human beings always act virtuously. An agent's actual behaviour can violate her real nature and be at odds with the realisation of her real self. The human agent – being designed for virtue – still has to live up to her real nature during the course of her life. She has to strive to make her real self her actual self. According to Butler, living a virtuous life by acting virtuously and by cultivating virtuous dispositions is living according to one's real nature; living a vicious life is deviating from it.

For Butler, living a virtuous life is what God designed human beings for. There are observable features in human agents, namely tendencies to respect the self as well as tendencies to respect society, which coincide perfectly according to Butler.²¹ This indicates that God designed them for the virtuous life.

If the real nature of any creature leads him and is adapted to such and such purposes only, or more than to any other; this is a reason to believe the Author of that nature intended it for those purposes. There is no doubt the eye was intended for us to see with. And the more complex any constitution is, and the greater variety of parts there are which thus tend to some one end, the stronger is the proof that such end was designed.²²

¹⁸ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon, p. 18, § 18. Alan Millar, "Butler on God and Human Nature" in *Joseph Butler's Moral and Religious Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 294f. highlights that Butler's concept of adaptation relies on a notion of divine design.

¹⁹ On this point, cf. Millar, "Following Nature", p. 168.

²⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 2, p. 27, § 1.

²¹ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 18, § 4.

²² Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 27, § 1. Cf. also Millar, "Following Nature", p. 169.

For an appropriate understanding of the role of Butler's concept of self-love in his theory of human nature, it is essential to keep in mind that the "self" that is the object of self-love is the *real* self that corresponds to Butler's theistic teleological concept of human nature, and not the *actual* or empirical self, which can deviate from virtue and the agent's real nature.

1.1.3. Human nature as a system of parts and relations

Let us now turn to a more detailed description of what Butler puts forward as man's real nature, which as a whole is adapted to virtue. In the *Preface* to the *Sermons*, Butler describes human nature as a system composed of different parts:

Whoever thinks it worth while to consider this matter thoroughly, should begin with stating to himself exactly the idea of a system, economy, or constitution of any particular nature, or particular anything: and he will, I suppose, find, that it is an one or a whole, made up of several parts; but yet, that the several parts even considered as a whole does not complete the idea, unless in the notion of a whole you include the relations and respects which those parts have to each other. Every work both of nature and of art is a system: and as every particular thing, both natural and artificial, is for some use or purpose out of and beyond itself, one may add, to what has been already brought into the idea of a system, its conduciveness to this one or more ends.²³

Giving a complete and accurate description of human nature is comparable to describing a watch. A watch is only described completely and accurately if, besides a description of its different parts, one also gives an account of the relations between the different parts of the system, their function, and the purpose of the whole system.²⁴ For the present study, this approach has the status of a methodological principle: in order to fully understand the role of self-love in Butler's theory of human nature and in his moral theory, the other elements in the system

²³ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Preface, p. 5, § 13.

²⁴ Ibid., Preface, p. 5, § 14.

of human nature and their relations to self-love must be taken into account.

Butler's theistic teleological approach to human nature suggests that there are several "principles" in a hierarchical relation, "the chief of which is the authority of reflection or conscience."²⁵ We may note already that the expression "principles", in Butler, encompasses a rather broad class of states of mind and dispositions with motivational and evaluative aspects. Examples are particular principles, such as the diverse appetites, passions, and affections, as well as the general principles of self-love and conscience. In contrast to a watch, which is "inanimate and passive"²⁶, human beings are rational agents. "Our constitution is put in our own power. We are charged with it; and therefore are accountable for any disorder or violation of it."²⁷ To be virtuous, the human agent has to use this power over her own constitution in order to "follow nature".²⁸ Unlike Hutcheson, Butler gives no further recommendations as to how to cultivate oneself.²⁹ Yet, he asserts the possibility and highlights its importance for the moral life.

The idea of human nature as a system puts us in a position to indicate more clearly what is meant by the expression "to follow one's nature". In *Sermon 2*, Butler discusses the claim that virtue consists in following nature, vice in violating it,³⁰ and analyses the sense in which human agents can be said to be a law to themselves. Aware of the

²⁵ Ibid., Preface, p. 6, § 14. A more precise account of this claim will be given at the beginning of Section 2.

²⁶ Ibid., Preface, p. 6, § 14.

²⁷ Ibid., Preface, p. 6, § 14.

²⁸ Ibid., Preface, p. 7, § 16.

²⁹ In chapter V of Butler, *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, however, which is entitled *Of a State of Probation, as intended for moral Discipline and Improvement*, Butler draws on the importance of habituation (pp. 101ff.) and claims that "habits of virtue, thus acquired by discipline, are improvement in virtue: and improvement in virtue, must be advancement in happiness, if the government of the universe be moral." (p. 111.)

³⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 2, p. 29f., § 4. Cf. also Millar, "Following Nature", pp. 167ff., Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, pp. 30ff.

ambiguity of the expression, he distinguishes three senses of what it is “to follow one’s nature” and rejects two of them.

If by following nature were meant only acting as we please, it would indeed be ridiculous to speak of nature as any guide in morals: nay the very mention of following it, when spoken of by way of distinction, would absolutely have no meaning.³¹

The expression “following nature”, firstly, cannot mean to act on just any principle or desire that an agent is aware of, or just to act however she pleases. Not all principles prompt the agent to “follow nature” - some make her deviate from it. If every occurring principle were to be considered equally natural, then the agent would “by the same action both follow and contradict his nature in this sense of the word”³² whenever there was a conflict between different principles. Secondly, “following nature” cannot mean just to act on the strongest principle. In that case, many vicious actions would have to be classified as being “according to nature”³³ – which would contradict Butler’s theistic teleological conception of human nature.

Rather, we have to determine what it is to follow nature in consideration of human nature as a system, i.e. as a whole composed of different parts. Butler claims that there is

[...] a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as external actions: which passes judgement upon himself and them; pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust: which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him the doer of them accordingly: and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always of course goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence, which shall hereafter second and affirm its own. [...] It is by this faculty, natural to man, that he is a moral agent, that he is a law to himself: by this faculty, I say, not to be considered merely as a principle in his heart, which is to have some influence as well as others; but considered as a faculty in kind and nature supreme over all others, and which bears its own authority of being so.³⁴

³¹ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 2, p. 29, § 4.

³² Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 30, § 4.

³³ Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 30, § 4.

³⁴ Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 31, § 8.

In this passage, Butler points out what will be discussed in greater detail in sections 2.2. and 2.3. Conscience is the principle in human nature that morally approves and disapproves of the agent and her actions. To a certain degree, there is an analogy with Hutcheson's moral sense. Butler furthermore distinguishes between the *power* or strength of a principle and its *authority*. An action can be motivated by a powerful principle such as a passion that completely lacks moral authority. It is a fact of human psychology that conscience is not always the most powerful principle, yet even in such cases it remains the principle with the moral authority. Following a powerful principle, for example a passion, against the hierarchy of authority, is to contradict one's nature.

Any action that is said to accord with the nature of the agent has to be in accordance with conscience and self-love, since "Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way."³⁵ What should be emphasised at this stage is the importance of the concept of self-love and its relation with the concept of conscience.

Section 2 treats Butler's theory of the emotions, with a special focus on his concept of self-love and its relation to other principles of human nature. We will develop an analysis of his concept of self-love in terms of a reflective affection of a second order that aims at the agent's happiness by means of the realisation of her true self. Section 3 compares a series of claims concerning self-love made by Butler and Hutcheson and discusses some consequences of Butler's concept of self-love.

³⁵ Ibid., Sermon 3, p. 39, § 9.

2. Butler's account of the "inward frame of man"

As the essential part of his theory of human nature, Butler puts forward an account in moral psychology of the "inward frame of man"³⁶ and all its principles. It has been mentioned above that Butler conceives human nature as a system, i.e. as a whole composed of interrelated parts with different functions. Self-love occupies a very peculiar position in Butler's moral psychology, and the central goal of the present analysis is to provide an account of this.

Butler speaks of "*all the variety of internal principles*"³⁷ that are part of human nature. Due to his interest in questions of agency, Butler focuses on motivational aspects of these "internal principles", among which he counts "particular principles", such as appetites, passions, and affections, as well as what he terms "general reflective principles", such as self-love and conscience.³⁸ The distinction between particular and general principles plays a significant role in Butler's moral psychology and his treatment of self-love and egoism. Thus, it is appropriate to begin by taking a closer look at it. Several of Butler's arguments are closely tied to that distinction, for example the argument that there is no contradiction between self-love and benevolence, his rejection of psychological hedonism, and his attack on the different claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions.

³⁶ Ibid., Preface, p. 6, § 14.

³⁷ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 18, § 4.

³⁸ Millar, "Following Nature", p. 167. Millar appropriately points out that Butler's "broad category" of the appetites, passions and affections encompasses "what we would more naturally refer to as desires, emotions, likes and dislikes."

2.1. Particular principles

2.1.1. The distinction between particular and general principles

Butler suggests a distinction between *particular* and *general principles*. Particular principles are the “several particular passions, appetites, and affections”³⁹. General principles are the “general affection or principle of self-love”⁴⁰ and the general principle of reflection, which is another name for conscience. Benevolence in Butler has an ambiguous status. Sometimes he seems to count it among the particular principles, and sometimes among the general.⁴¹

In *Sermon 11*, Butler suggests the following distinction between the *general desire of happiness* and the *particular principles*:

Every man hath a general desire of his own happiness; and likewise a variety of particular affections, passions, and appetites to particular external objects. The former proceeds from, or is self-love; and seems inseparable from all sensible creatures, who can reflect upon themselves and their own interest or happiness, as to have that interest an object to their minds: what is to be said of the latter is, that they proceed from, or together make up that particular nature, according to which man is made. The object the former pursues is somewhat internal, our own happiness, enjoyment, satisfaction; whether we have, or have not, a distinct particular perception what it is, or wherein it consists: the objects of the latter are this or that particular external thing, which the affections tend towards, and of which it hath always a particular idea or perception. The principle we call self-love never seeks anything external for the sake of the thing, but only as a means of happiness or good: particular affections rest in the external things themselves. One belongs to man as a reasonable creature reflecting upon his own interest or happiness. The other, though quite distinct from reason, are as much part of human nature.⁴²

Butler is unclear about the relation between an agent’s self-love and her “general desire of her own happiness”. In the above passage, he seems both to causally relate them and to identify them. We will discuss this point in greater detail in section 2.3. and now move on to focus on the

³⁹ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 1, p. 20, fn.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 20, fn. Cf. furthermore Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 11, p. 100, §§ 5f. and Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Preface, p. 13, § 36. Cf. Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy* , pp. 59f.

⁴¹ Cf. section 2.1.3. and Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love" , p. 33.

⁴² Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 11, p. 100, § 5.

distinction between general and particular principles. Note that self-love, independent of its relation with the general desire for happiness, is always counted as a general principle. Another general principle, for Butler, is conscience.

On the basis of the passage quoted above and other similar passages, the following differences between general and particular principles can be highlighted:

- The general desire for one's happiness has an object, happiness, that is in some sense *internal* and seeks external objects (or states of affairs) only as a means for happiness. Particular principles have *external objects*, which they seek as ends in themselves.⁴³ We shall come back to the distinction between internal and external objects shortly. This point is only discussed in the context of the general desire for one's happiness. The following features, however, are shared by all general principles:
- General principles are *reflective*, whereas particular principles are *non-reflective*.⁴⁴ Note that only human beings as rational beings are endowed with the reflective general principles of self-love and conscience.⁴⁵ Reflective general principles evaluate non-reflective particular principles in view of the agent's true happiness or interest (in the case of self-love) and in view of morality (in the case of conscience).
- From the point of view of the hierarchy of authority between the different principles in human nature, general principles have a *governing* function, whereas particular principles have to be *governed* by the general principles.
- In the section on self-love, it will be argued in more detail that the general principles are best understood as *second-order* principles, i.e. as principles that have first-order principles as their objects, which they

⁴³ Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 33, § 13: "Passion or appetite [i.e. particular principles] implies a direct simple tendency towards such and such objects, without a distinction of the means by which they are obtained."

⁴⁴ Millar, "Following Nature", p. 167; Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 34

⁴⁵ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 8, §§ 22f. and Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 2, p. 28ff., §§ 3ff.

endorse or oppose in view of the agent's happiness and in view of morality. Particular principles are *first-order* principles, i.e. principles that aim at certain objects or states of affairs.⁴⁶ Following Harry Frankfurt's use of the distinction, we can state that Butler's particular principles are closely linked with desires or motives for actions (i.e. his "external objects").⁴⁷ General principles, on the other hand, are second-order desires or concerns (i.e. more stable volitional structures) concerning first-order desires or motives.

The distinction between internal and external objects, which contrasts the general desire for one's happiness with the particular principles, is notoriously vague and has given rise to numerous debates among commentators.⁴⁸ Austin Duncan-Jones claims that Butler's "language suggests that an object of someone's passion is internal if, and only if, it consists of or includes a state of feeling on the part of that person; and that otherwise it is external."⁴⁹ This interpretation of Butler seems incorrect. The desire to be angry or not to feel sad about something would be a desire with an internal object according to Duncan-Jones' definition, but it seems not so for Butler. The standpoint that Butler has a merely stipulative view of what an internal object is seems much more plausible. On this view, he does not suggest a systematic distinction between internal and external objects, as claimed by Duncan-Jones.⁵⁰ Rather, he suggests that there is one and only one internal object, namely the happiness of the agent. For Butler, it is appropriate to contrast the internal object to the objects of particular principles because his discussion of self-love rests on the idea that there is a second-order

⁴⁶ Phillips, "Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest", pp. 424f.; Penelhum, *Butler*, p. 30.

⁴⁷ Harry Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person" in *The Importance of What We Care About* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 13ff.

⁴⁸ E.g. Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, p. 49, Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love", p. 33.

⁴⁹ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, p. 49.

⁵⁰ Cf. also Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love", p. 33.

principle that controls the gratification of first-order principles in view of the agent's happiness. This is different from Duncan-Jones' understanding of a principle that "consists of or includes a state of feeling on the part of that person".⁵¹

Furthermore, Duncan-Jones does not take into consideration that Butler writes in a period during which the distinction between "internal" and "external" reminds us of the Stoic distinction between "internal" and "external" goods of the soul. "Internal goods" of the soul, according to the Stoics, are virtuous dispositions, which are the basis for true happiness, and which are fully in the agent's power. "External goods" are all things or states of affairs that are represented as good (including pleasurable experiences for the agent) and which are not fully in the agent's power.⁵² Admittedly, Butler departs from the Stoic distinction between internal and external goods. Firstly, Butler's "internal object" is happiness, and not the Stoic virtuous dispositions. Note, however, that the concepts are linked: for the Stoics, the cultivation of virtuous dispositions is the basis for true happiness, and for Butler, happiness is reached by means of following nature, which is to live a virtuous life and to cultivate virtuous dispositions. Secondly, Butler argues that pleasure for the agent cannot be the object of particular principles - a claim that has been extensively debated as a refutation of psychological hedonism.⁵³ Pleasure can only be the consequence of the gratification of a particular principle on the basis of some "prior suitableness"⁵⁴ between the particular principle and its external, particular object. Yet, pleasure or pleasurable experience for the agent is a possible external good in Stoic terms and can be the object of desires. Even if Butler diverges from the Stoic distinction on this point, it must be highlighted that he generally

⁵¹ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, p. 49.

⁵² Cf. chapter II, Section 3.2.

⁵³ Penelhum, *Butler*, pp. 50ff.; Elliott Sober, "Hedonism and Butler's Stone" *Ethics* 103, no. 1 (1992).

⁵⁴ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 11, p. 100, § 6. This passage is also known as "Butler's Stone".

remains very close to it. After all, Butler claims to defend the Stoic claim that virtue is to follow one's nature.

Butler's core idea that must be kept in mind is that the general desire for one's happiness cannot be directly satisfied, but can only be satisfied by means of the satisfaction of particular principles. We can take it that happiness is called "internal" in order to highlight this difference between the general desire of happiness and the particular principles, which can be satisfied directly.

2.1.2. Particular principles: appetites, passions, and affections

Butler frequently uses terms such as "appetites", "passions" and "affections" to refer to different states of mind and dispositions. Yet it seems doubtful that he uses them in a way that is strict enough to allow for a clear distinction between appetites, passions and affections.⁵⁵ Unlike Hutcheson, Butler does not provide a psychological theory to distinguish between them. Often, he speaks of "appetites and passions", "passions and affections" or "passions" in a general sense to refer to all different kinds of particular states of mind and dispositions. Still, there are some general outlines that we shall examine because they help to illuminate the hierarchy between the different principles.

Particular appetites, passions, and affections are all "principles of actions", i.e. they have a conative aspect and involve desires or motives for actions. Butler emphasises on several occasions that "our appetites, passions [and, I take it, affections], senses, no way imply disease: nor indeed do they imply deficiency or imperfection of any sort; but only this, that the constitution of nature, according to which God has made us, is such as to require them."⁵⁶ They all are, in other words, part of human

⁵⁵ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, p. 45, Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love", p. 33.

⁵⁶ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 5, p. 52, § 3. Cf. Penelhum, *Butler*, p. 27.

nature. Since human nature is adapted to virtue by divine design, these particular principles are not vicious unless they are excessive and make the satisfaction of other principles impossible. As long as the hierarchy between the different principles is respected, they do not “imply deficiency or imperfection”. Particular principles ought not, however, be gratified in opposition to the general principles of conscience or self-love. Butler assumes for all particular principles a “prior suitableness”⁵⁷ with an external object or state of affairs. Divine design determines the objects or states of affairs that allow the satisfaction of a particular principle, as has been emphasised above.

Roberts suggests a rather systematic distinction between appetites, passions, and affections in Butler.⁵⁸ Yet some points of his reconstruction are unsupported by any textual evidence in Butler and sometimes even contradicted by the text. Still, it is apposite to invoke several points at the present stage in order to illuminate some important characteristics of Butler’s discussion of the particular principles, and to draw some comparisons with Hutcheson.

a) Roberts suggests that according to Butler *appetites* such as hunger, thirst, and the desire for sexual gratification are all characterised by “some relation of dependence between certain physiological states of the body and those states of mind which are to be described as ‘appetitive desires’ or appetites.” They “are necessarily related to states of the self” and “they are connected, directly or indirectly, with our physical survival.”⁵⁹ In other words, Roberts claims that, for Butler, all appetites are self-directed in that they aim at the self-preservation of the agent. Some passages in Butler seem to contradict the claim that all

⁵⁷ Butler, “Fifteen Sermons” , Sermon 11, p. 100, § 6.

⁵⁸ Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence* , pp. 34 – 47.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36f.

appetites are self-directed.⁶⁰ However, the claim that self-directed appetites aim at self-preservation is not in conflict with what Butler claims, even if he does not directly support it. For Roberts, there is a close connection between the appetites and the moral obligations that fall “within the category of duties to the self”.⁶¹

Butler’s “appetites” can best be compared to Hutcheson’s “propensities of instinct”, in that they seem not to require a prior representation of states of affairs as good or evil. Hutcheson, however, puts forward a more critical view of the propensities of instinct than Butler does of the appetites. Hutcheson emphasises that since the propensities of instinct do not presuppose a representation of states of affairs, they are hardly correctible and controllable. Within Butler’s theistic teleological account, this seems to be less of a problem: appetites do not “imply deficiency or imperfection of any sort”.⁶²

b) In accordance with the widespread use of the period, the term “*passions*” in Butler is sometimes used in a generic sense to refer to appetites, passions and affections, and sometimes in a more narrow sense to refer to a more specific kind of states of mind. Passions, in Butler’s narrow sense, incorporate states of mind such as anger, fear, resentment or the desire of esteem.⁶³ Unlike appetites, passions presuppose beliefs or

⁶⁰ There are passages that encourage a less narrow reading. In Sermon 1, he states: “The sum is, men have various appetites, passions, and particular affections, quite distinct both from self-love and from benevolence: all of these have a tendency to promote both public and private good, and may be considered as respecting others and ourselves equally and in common.” Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 1, p. 21, § 7. This passage could be taken as indication that there are, in Butler, *other-directed appetites*. Cf. furthermore Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 1, p. 20, §7, where Butler speaks of the “several passions or appetites distinct from benevolence, whose primary use and intention is the security and good of society.”

⁶¹ Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 38. It is interesting to recall Barbeyrac’s distinction between *self-preservation*, which is part of the duties to one’s own body, and *self-perfection*, which is part of the duties to one’s own mind. (Cf. chapter IV, Section 3.2.1.) The gratification of the particular appetites indeed does have a close connection with the duty to self-preservation in this sense. As we will see below, self-love in Butler has a global function and incorporates both self-preservation and self-perfection, since it governs the gratification of all particular principles.

⁶² Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 5, p. 52, § 3.

⁶³ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 21, fn.

representations of states of affairs. They thus have a cognitive dimension that appetites lack, and which they share with the affections.

Roberts suggests that for Butler passions (like affections, but unlike appetites) can be distinguished according to whether “their ‘primary use and intent’ is the good of society” or “the good of the self”.⁶⁴ In other words, they can be distinguished into *self-directed* and *other-directed*. Passions of both kinds are morally unproblematic if in their natural degree and governed by reason.

Both Butler and Hutcheson share the assumption that the passions have a cognitive dimension, and can be distinguished into self- and other-directed. Hutcheson, however, has a far more critical view of the passions’ moral value. In his account of self-cultivation, he recommends avoiding them.⁶⁵ For Butler, however, the passions serve an important function within God’s design of human nature. Butler highlights that the passions, both private and public, are like the other principles “placed within as a guard and further security”⁶⁶ so that human agents take better care of their private interest and the public interest. Reason alone would not be a motive strong enough to guarantee their promotion. However, Butler shares Hutcheson’s critical view when it comes to *ungoverned passions*, i.e. passions without guidance by self-love and conscience.⁶⁷ He highlights that ungoverned passions can turn out to be against both public and private interest. His overall view, however, appears to be more optimistic than Hutcheson’s.

c) *Affections* share a series of features with the passions and the appetites. Just as the passions, the affections presuppose a representation of something as good or evil. There are affections that

⁶⁴ Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 41.

⁶⁵ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.2.b)

⁶⁶ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 5, p. 54, § 10.

⁶⁷ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 23f, § 12; Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 43.

tend to the private good, and affections that tend to the public good – and both are equally natural. Affections, however, have a dominant cognitive aspect and can be influenced by reflection.⁶⁸ By emphasising this feature, Butler comes close to Hutcheson's treatment of the affections. Affections, too, can rise above their due or natural degree and become morally problematic.

Roberts highlights that "Butler's list of affections are of sentiments we normally approve of, such as the affection of parents to their children, the affection of love of mankind, reverence, gratitude, trust, tenderness and dependence. On the other hand his examples of passions are of emotions we disapprove of, namely envy, malice, hatred, and pride (in the sense of the 'sin of pride')." ⁶⁹ This view of Butler's treatment of the passions and the affections seems too simple, and it conflicts with Butler's claim that passions and affections are both part of human nature and in general morally unproblematic. If Butler has a slight tendency to list problematic emotions as passions, however, then this may be taken to reflect the critical view of the passions that dominated the early 18th century.

It has been mentioned that Butler distinguishes between *particular* affections, which aim at particular external objects or states of affairs, and the *general* affection of self-love. Particular affections do not presuppose a faculty of reflection, and thus do not distinguish human agents from non-rational beings. The general affection of self-love, however, is a distinctive feature of all "sensible creatures, who can reflect upon themselves and their own interest or happiness".⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, p. 45.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

⁷⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 11, p. 100, § 5.

2.1.3. *The affection of benevolence*

The concept of benevolence occupies a central role in Butler's moral philosophy, as it did in Hutcheson's. In the *Sermons*, Butler puts it at the very centre of his conception of virtue by saying that "to love our neighbour as ourselves includes in it all virtues."⁷¹ Yet, he specifies that this is only the case if benevolence is not a "blind propensity" but "a principle in reasonable creatures, and so to be directed by their reason: for reason and reflection comes into our notion of a moral agent."⁷² As in Hutcheson, the relation between benevolence and self-love is essential to an appropriate understanding of the concept of self-love, especially in view of its moral evaluation.

In the context of a discussion of the precept "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself", Butler writes:

The love of our neighbour is the same with charity, benevolence, or good-will: it is an affection to the good and happiness of our fellow creatures. This implies in it a disposition to produce happiness: and this is the simple notion of goodness, which appears so amiable wherever we meet with it. From hence it is easy to see, that the perfection of goodness consists in love to the whole universe.⁷³

This passage sheds light on a series of similarities between Butler's and Hutcheson's views of benevolence. Both conceive benevolence as an affection that aim at promoting the happiness of other agents.⁷⁴ It has a conative aspect in that it involves a disposition to act for the happiness of other agents. Benevolence is "amiable", i.e. it is morally approved by other agents and by the agent herself: "Endeavouring to do good considered as a virtuous pursuit, is gratified by its own consciousness, i.e.

⁷¹ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 118, § 25. This is different in the *Dissertation*, where he tends to highlight the importance of conscience and reflection, and contradicts his own view: "it may be proper to observe, that benevolence, and the want of it, singly considered, are in no sort the whole of virtue and vice." Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", *Dissertation*, p. 151, § 8. Rather, there are other virtues, such as justice, veracity and prudence, that are morally approved by conscience. Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", *Dissertation*, p. 150ff., § 6ff.

⁷² Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 12, p. 119, § 27.

⁷³ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 111, § 2.

⁷⁴ Cf. furthermore Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 105, § 13. Note that Butler does not explicitly put forward a hedonistic account of happiness.

is in a degree its own reward.”⁷⁵ Benevolence brings about some kind of sympathetic identification with the interests of other agents in that it gives us “the notion of a common interest in a stricter sense: for in the degree we love another, his interest, his joys and sorrows, are our own.”⁷⁶

Benevolence can have different scopes, and Butler claims with Hutcheson that universal benevolence, or the “love of the whole universe”⁷⁷, is the perfection of moral goodness. Butler is, however, much more sceptical than Hutcheson about the psychological possibility of extending the scope of benevolence, given that “man is so much limited in his capacity”.⁷⁸ A human agent cannot possibly love the whole universe, or all mankind – benevolence should thus focus on “that part of the universe, that part of mankind, that part of our country, which comes under our immediate notice, acquaintance, and influence, and with which we have to do.”⁷⁹ If Butler recommends that “we should cultivate the affection of good-will to our neighbour”⁸⁰, he means less that we should extend its scope, but rather that we should attempt to increase our sympathetic sensibility for the well-being of the persons who are in the rather limited scope of benevolence. To love our neighbours like ourselves means to have the same kind of regard to their interest as we have to our own.⁸¹

Benevolence is a natural part of human nature. This is indirectly proven by the reality of other affections and passions:

And if there be in mankind any disposition to friendship; if there be any such thing as compassion, for compassion is momentary love; if there be any such thing as the paternal or filial affections; if there be any affection in human nature, the object and end of which is the good of another; this is itself benevolence, or the love of another.⁸²

⁷⁵ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 105, § 13. According to Butler, it is not the *moral sense*, but the agent’s *conscience* that morally approves of benevolence.

⁷⁶ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 113, § 7.

⁷⁷ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 111, § 2.

⁷⁸ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 111, § 3.

⁷⁹ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 112, § 3.

⁸⁰ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 112, § 7.

⁸¹ Ibid., Sermon 12, p. 112f, § 7.

⁸² Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 20, § 6.

Butler counts benevolence among the affections. Yet, it is unclear whether he treats it as a general or as a particular affection, and there has been a series of debates among commentators on this point.⁸³ Both interpretations are clearly encouraged by Butler in different passages, and he indeed calls benevolence more or less explicitly sometimes a general, sometimes a particular affection.⁸⁴

On the one hand, the interpretation of benevolence as a *general* affection is encouraged by the fact that, in the first *Sermon*, Butler places the principle of benevolence on the same level as the general principle of self-love. Butler compares benevolence with self-love when saying that “there is a natural principle of *benevolence* in man; which is in some degree to *society*, what *self-love* is to the *individual*.”⁸⁵ Since self-love is a *general* affection to our own happiness, this suggests that benevolence is treated as a *general* affection to the happiness of others.⁸⁶ Butler argues, as does Hutcheson, that particular principles such as the disposition to friendship, compassion, and paternal or filial affection are a proof of the reality of benevolence. In that case, benevolence is the general form of different particular other-directed affections, incorporating pity as well as calm universal goodwill to mankind. Furthermore, Butler contrasts benevolence *and* self-love jointly with other, particular principles: “This will further appear, from observing that the *several passions and affections*, which are distinct both from benevolence and self-love, do in general contribute and lead us to *public* good as really as to *private*.”⁸⁷

⁸³ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, pp. 45 and 57ff.; Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, pp. 46ff.; Penelhum, *Butler*, p. 31, Henson, “Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love”, p. 33.

⁸⁴ For example Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 12, p. 115, § 11 as opposed to Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 11, p. 104, § 12.

⁸⁵ Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 1, p. 19f., § 6.

⁸⁶ Cf., however, R. G. Frey, “Butler on Self-Love and Benevolence” in *Joseph Butler's Moral and Religious Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 250, who argues that the qualification “in some degree” indicates that “benevolence is not a general desire for the happiness of mankind generally, but particular desires for the interest or happiness of certain other individuals.”

⁸⁷ Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 1, p. 20, § 7.

On the other hand, Butler's argument in *Sermon 11* against the assumption that there is a conflict between benevolence and self-love depends on the conception of benevolence as a *particular* affection that, for this reason, cannot be in conflict with the *general* affection of self-love, as we shall see in section 3.1.: "Thus it appears that there is no peculiar contrariety between self-love and benevolence; no greater competition between these, than between any other particular affections and self-love."⁸⁸ The same holds for his discussion of the concept of disinterestedness and his rejection of the claim that virtue is disinterested, as we shall see in section 3.2.

Thus, there appears to be an inconsistency in Butler's treatment of benevolence, which is particularly obvious when contrasting *Sermon 1* (where Butler argues that there are natural benevolent affections, and not only selfish ones) and *Sermon 11* (where Butler argues that there can be no conflict between benevolence and self-love). However, the inconsistency is not a substantial problem for the present investigation. Whatever the status of benevolence, self-love has a comparatively superior place in the hierarchy of the principles of human nature, which is a hierarchy of authority. This means that benevolence is against the agent's nature if it is opposed to self-love.

2.1.4. The reality of other-directed principles, psychological egoism and psychological hedonism

Butler repeatedly insists that there are particular public principles (i.e. particular appetites⁸⁹, passions and affections, as well as benevolence, the status of which is ambiguous), and not only particular private principles. The latter aim at the promotion of the private good, the former at the promotion of the public good. Butler writes:

⁸⁸ Ibid., *Sermon 11*, p. 104, § 12. The same argument is summarised in Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 14, § 38.

⁸⁹ Concerning the appetites, cf. my discussion of Robert's claim in section 2.1.2.

Every man is to be considered in two capacities, the private and public; as designed to pursue his own interest, and likewise to contribute to the good of others.⁹⁰

A series of passages suggests that Butler distinguishes between private and public principles on the basis of their objects or goals.⁹¹ Public principles are in general not termed so because they have the unintended consequence of promoting the good of others, but also because this has been intended. Butler's treatment of benevolence is a clear example of this. Human agents are naturally good-willed, and they naturally intend to promote the well-being and happiness of others.⁹²

Yet, Butler sometimes encourages an understanding of the distinction between private and public principles that is based on his teleological conception of the design of human nature:

[That we are made to promote private good as well as public good] will further appear, from observing that the *several passions and affections*, which are distinct from benevolence and self-love, do in general contribute and lead us to *public* good as really as to *private*.⁹³

In this and other passages, Butler seems to ground the distinction between private and public principles on their designed causal tendencies and not on their objects or goals.⁹⁴ He often speaks of the "tendencies" of principles or parts of the nature of man to promote the good of others or of the agent herself.⁹⁵ This leads to an interesting difference with Hutcheson when it comes to the classification of the *desire of esteem*. In a footnote explaining the passage quoted above, Butler classifies the desire for esteem, which has a private good as its object, among the *public* passions, "because the end for which it was given us is to regulate

⁹⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 5, p. 49, § 1.

⁹¹ For example Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 18, § 4, p. 19 fn and p. 20, § 6; Sermon 5, p. 49, § 1; Sermon 12, p. 111, § 2.

⁹² Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 19, fn; Sermon 12, p. 111, § 2 and pp. 112f., § 7.

⁹³ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 20, § 7.

⁹⁴ Sometimes he seems to propose a mixed conception in distinguishing "the several passions or appetites distinct from benevolence, whose primary use and intention is the security and good of society; and the passions distinct from self-love, whose primary intention and design is the security and good of society." Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 20, § 7.

⁹⁵ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 105, § 13; Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 1, p. 18, § 4.

our behaviour towards society.”⁹⁶ This is in sharp contrast with Hutcheson, who insists that the desire for esteem is selfish because it aims at pleasure of a specific kind for the agent herself – even if it may have the consequence of making us control our behaviour in view of the public opinion. Yet, Butler clearly argues in a series of passages alongside Hutcheson that human agents act with the goal of promoting the well-being of others. They not only perform actions that have the unintended (but designed) consequence of promoting others’ well-being, they naturally want to promote it.

This point is relevant to psychological egoism. The psychological egoist does not deny that there are actions that have the unintended consequence of promoting the public good. Let us remember that Mandeville, for example, highlights that the passion of self-liking, which is a self-directed passion, has beneficial consequences for society. The psychological egoist only denies that actions that have the effect of promoting the well-being of others are motivated by desires with that ultimate goal. He can accept the claim that there are particular principles that have the causal tendency to promote the good of others, since human beings could be designed in such a way that they promote the well-being of others without intending to do so.

In claiming that there are other-directed particular principles that aim at the promotion of the public good, Butler asserts a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and opposes psychological egoism. We have seen that Hutcheson did the same in arguing against Mandeville and others that there are not only motives from hedonistic self-love but also motives from benevolence, with the ultimate goal of promoting the well-being of others. It is essential to note that in Butler’s case, however, self-love is not mentioned at all. The attack against psychological egoism is not based on an argument showing that we are not only motivated by

⁹⁶ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 1, p. 21, fn.

self-love (in his understanding of self-love as self-respect). We shall see below why this is the case.⁹⁷

In the present context, it is appropriate to mention another important aspect of Butler's moral psychology – his rejection of psychological hedonism, i.e. the hedonistic version of psychological egoism. Psychological hedonism consists essentially in the claim that every human action ultimately aims at pleasure for the agent. A refutation of psychological hedonism is not yet a refutation of psychological egoism, since the hedonistic claim that all actions ultimately aim at pleasure for the agent is more specific than the egoistic claim that all actions ultimately aim at some kind of benefit for the agent.

Butler's attack on psychological hedonism in a short passage in *Sermon 11* is famous and has been discussed by a series of commentators.⁹⁸ In the context of his distinction between internal and external objects, Butler argues that particular desires are towards the external objects themselves and not towards the pleasure arising from their gratification:

That all particular appetites and passions are towards *external things themselves*, distinct from the *pleasure arising from them*, is manifested from hence; that there could not be this pleasure, were it not for that prior suitableness between the object and the passion: there could be no enjoyment or delight from one thing more than another, from eating food more than from swallowing a stone, if there were not an affection or appetite to one thing more than another.⁹⁹

Butler's argument against the psychological hedonist's claim that every action ultimately aims at pleasure for the agent boils down to the claim that no particular principle has as its ultimate object the pleasure that

⁹⁷ Cf. section 2.3. and especially 3.

⁹⁸ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, pp. 95ff.; Penelhum, *Butler*, pp. 50ff.; Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love"; Sober, "Hedonism and Butler's Stone".

⁹⁹ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 11, p. 100, § 6.

arises from its gratification.¹⁰⁰ Unless there is a previous desire for a particular external thing (which, in Butler, cannot be pleasure), there is no pleasure to be gained from it. Therefore, the psychological hedonist's claim is false. We shall not assess the strengths and weaknesses of this argument here, but draw attention to the fact that Butler's concept of self-love again plays no role in his attack on psychological hedonism. If Butler had a hedonistic concept of self-love, we would expect it to play a role in his argument. Again, the situation is different in Hutcheson, who attacks psychological hedonism and psychological egoism by arguing that benevolence motivates actions no less than does hedonistic self-love.

2.1.5. Compassion

Butler's treatment of the particular principle of compassion¹⁰¹ deserves attention, since it is again particularly relevant for the Motivation Question. His discussion of compassion is part of a more general attempt to prove that human agents have "two capacities, the private and public; as designed to pursue his own interests, and likewise to contribute to the good of others."¹⁰² In the present context, the capacities invoked are the aforementioned self- and other-directed particular principles. Butler argues from his teleological view of human nature that they are not in conflict, but "perfectly coincide, and mutually carry on each other"¹⁰³. Compassion is part of the public capacity, and its design is to render the agent sensitive to others in distress and to motivate her to "prevent and [...] relieve misery".¹⁰⁴ It is thus a genuinely other-directed principle that is concerned with the well-being of others and that involves action tendencies to promote their well-being. The reality of compassion, and

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Sober, "Hedonism and Butler's Stone", pp. 99f. Sober points out that the universal claim that *no* particular principle has pleasure as its object is not supported by what Butler says.

¹⁰¹ Butler, like the other authors investigated, does not properly distinguish between pity and compassion. The terms will thus be used interchangeably.

¹⁰² Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 5, p. 49, § 1.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Sermon 5, p. 49, § 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, Sermon 5, p. 50, § 2; Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 6, p. 58, § 3.

the impossibility of analysing it in terms of purely self-directed states of mind, is a proof of the falsity of the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

One of the most thorough treatments of compassion in Butler can be found in a long footnote in *Sermon 5*, where he explicitly attacks Hobbes' egoistic analysis of pity in *Human Nature*.¹⁰⁵ Butler's central objection against Hobbes is the following:¹⁰⁶

There are often three distinct perceptions or inward feelings upon sight of persons in distress: real sorrow and concern for the misery of our fellow-creatures; some degree of satisfaction from a consciousness of our freedom from that misery; and as the mind passes on from one thing to another, it is not unnatural from such an occasion to reflect upon our own liableness to the same or other calamities. The two last frequently accompany the first, but it is the first *only* which is properly compassion, of which the distressed are the objects, and which directly carries us with calmness and thought to their assistance. Any of these, from various and complicated reasons, may in particular cases prevail over the other two; and there are, I suppose, instances where the bare *sight* of distress, without our feeling any compassion for it, may be the occasion of either or both of the two latter perceptions.¹⁰⁷

In this passage, Butler argues that the sight of someone in distress often causes three different states of mind: (i) "sorrow and concern for the misery of our fellow-creatures", (ii) "satisfaction from a consciousness of our freedom from that misery" and (iii) reflection "upon our own liableness to the same or other calamities". Only (i), i.e. sorrow for the person in misery, is compassion, which is an emotion that essentially consists in an ultimately other-directed concern for the well-being of the person in distress, and that involves action tendencies to relieve her misery. The satisfaction of not finding oneself in the observed miserable situation (ii) and the reflection on the probability that one could experience the same misery (iii) can accompany one's sorrow, but they are not essential parts of compassion. It is merely a psychological fact

¹⁰⁵ It is noteworthy that Butler does not discuss Hobbes' analysis in the *Leviathan*, which remains untouched by Butler's criticism.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. also Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence*, pp. 62 – 67; Penelhum, *Butler*, pp. 43ff. on other objections.

¹⁰⁷ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", *Sermon 5*, p. 50, § 1 fn.

that these three states are frequently experienced together. Thus, Hobbes' analysis of pity in *Human Nature* is based on a mistake. He takes a possible side-effect of seeing someone in distress, namely fear for ourselves, to be the essence of pity. Against Hobbes, and in accordance with both Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, Butler argues for a non-egoistic analysis of compassion and of actions motivated by compassion. They ultimately aim at bringing relief to the sufferer, and not to oneself (for example, by removing one's uneasiness). The example of compassion proves that the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is false.

Butler's view of the moral value of pity appears considerably less critical than Hutcheson's. He asks the following question: "Nay, is not passion and affection itself a weakness, and what a perfect being must be entirely free from?"¹⁰⁸ Hutcheson, in his Stoic theory of self-cultivation, recommended avoiding all violent passions, including the other-directed passion of pity, in favour of the calm affections. Butler's theory of human nature, however, emphasises the important function of passions such as pity. Reason is often too weak to motivate actions - both actions that promote the interests of others and actions that promote one's own interests. "Reasonable and cool self-love" is thus supported by natural appetites and passions, and the "settled reasonable principle of benevolence to mankind" by compassion.¹⁰⁹ If benevolence is "in a very low degree, kept down by interest and competitions"¹¹⁰, then compassion is a natural support to it. In contrast with Hutcheson, who focuses on the problematic features of the passions, Butler emphasises their important supportive function and concludes: "However, our appetites, passions, senses, no way imply disease: nor indeed do they imply deficiency or imperfection of any sort; but only this, that the constitution of nature,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., Sermon 5, p. 51, § 3.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., Sermon 5, p. 54, § 10.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., Sermon 6, p. 59, § 6.

according to which God has made us, is such as to require them.”¹¹¹ It is also noteworthy that Butler claims that compassion and sorrow for the distress of others are accompanied by self-approbation, or the “consciousness of a right affection and temper of mind”¹¹².

Nonetheless, Butler emphasises with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson that compassion may become too strong and have problematic consequences. On the one hand, excessive compassion leads to negative consequences for the compassionate person herself - namely to “much more uneasiness than belongs to his [i.e. the compassionate agent’s] share”¹¹³. On the other hand, it leads to negative consequences for the person who is the object of compassion. The excessively compassionate person may be in a state that “incapacitates him from assisting the very person who is the object of it.”¹¹⁴

2.2. The general principle of conscience

Butler assumes that besides the particular principles (i.e. self- and other-directed appetites, passions, and affections) and the principle of benevolence (which has an ambiguous status), there are two general principles in human nature, self-love and conscience.¹¹⁵ The latter is characterised as

a principle of reflection in men, by which they distinguish between, approve and disapprove their own actions. We are plainly constituted such sort of creatures as to reflect upon our own nature. The mind can take a view of what passes within itself, its propensions, aversions, passions, affections, as

¹¹¹ Ibid., Sermon 5, p. 52, § 3.

¹¹² Ibid., Sermon 5, p. 53, § 7.

¹¹³ Ibid., Sermon 6, p. 61, § 9.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., Sermon 6, p. 61, § 9.

¹¹⁵ Butler’s conception of conscience, and especially his doctrine of the supremacy of conscience over the other principles, has been discussed in a series of publications, most importantly Sturgeon, “Nature and Conscience in Butler’s Ethics” ; Penelhum, *Butler* , pp. 58 - 85; Wendell O’Brien, “Butler and the Authority of Conscience” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1991); P. F. Brownsey, “Butler’s Argument for the Natural Authority of Conscience” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 3, no. 1 (1995); Darwall, *British Moralists* , pp. 244 – 283; Sahar Akhtar, “Restoring Joseph Butler’s Conscience” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 14, no. 4 (2006).

respecting such objects, and in such degrees; and of the several actions consequent thereupon. In this survey it approves of one, disapproves of another, and towards a third is affected in neither of these ways, but is quite indifferent. This principle in man, by which he approves or disapproves his heart, temper, and actions, is conscience.¹¹⁶

Butler calls conscience a “principle of reflection”. It has the function of governing particular principles, actions, and character traits by morally approving and disapproving of them and, as a consequence, endorsing and supporting or stopping and opposing them. Butler seems to encourage the view that conscience on its own does not directly motivate actions, but that it endorses and stabilises or opposes particular principles.¹¹⁷ Particular principles and the actions they motivate are in accordance with conscience if they are morally approved of, and in conflict with conscience if they are morally disapproved of. Conscience “unavoidably”¹¹⁸ approves or disapproves of actions, principles and characters – Butler seems not to consider the possibility that as a principle of reflection, conscience could be more or less consulted.¹¹⁹ Rather, he claims that in “all common ordinary cases we see intuitively at first view what is our duty, what is the honest part. This is the ground of the observation, that the first thought is often the best.”¹²⁰ Furthermore, in contrast with the other principle of reflection, self-love, conscience is

¹¹⁶ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 1, pp. 21f., § 8.

¹¹⁷ For example in Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 1, p. 22, § 8: "Thus a parent has the affection of love to his children: this leads him to take care of, to educate, to make due provision for them; the natural affection leads to this: but the reflection that it is his proper business, what belongs to him, that it is right and commendable to do so; this added to the affection becomes a much more settled principle, and carries him on through more labour and difficulties for the sake of his children, than he would undergo from that affection alone, if he thought it, and the course of action it led to, either indifferent or criminal."

¹¹⁸ Butler, "A Dissertation of the Nature of Virtue" , p. 147, § 1.

¹¹⁹ Cf. also the following quotation: "There is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions: which passes judgment upon himself and them; pronounces determinately some actions to be in themselves just, right, good; others to be in themselves evil, wrong, unjust: which, without being consulted, without being advised with, magisterially exerts itself, and approves or condemns him the doer of them accordingly: and which, if not forcibly stopped, naturally and always of course goes on to anticipate a higher and more effectual sentence, which shall hereafter second and affirm its own." Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 2, p. 31, § 8.

¹²⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 7, p. 70, § 14.

not characterised as an affection and cannot possibly occur in an immoderate degree.¹²¹

Butler's conscience and Hutcheson's moral sense are similar in that they are said to unavoidably approve or disapprove of actions and characters. Yet, conscience is characterised in Butler as a reflective principle, whereas Hutcheson's moral sense is characterised as a sense, i.e. as a moral faculty that does not depend on reflection. Furthermore, Butler merely emphasises the function of conscience in judging the agent's *own* actions¹²², whereas Hutcheson discusses the moral sense in its twofold function of judging one's own as well as others' actions. Next, Butler argues in the *Dissertation* (to some extent against his view in the *Sermons*¹²³) that it is not only benevolence that conscience approves of. Rather, there are other virtues, such as justice, veracity and prudence that are morally approved by conscience.¹²⁴

Conscience is what makes a human agent a *moral* agent. For Butler,

[...] the very constitution of our nature requires, that we bring our whole conduct before this superior faculty; wait its determination; enforce upon ourselves its authority, and make it the business of our lives, as it is absolutely the whole business of a moral agent, to conform ourselves to it.¹²⁵

Conscience has the highest authority of all principles. Any action that is performed in spite of being disapproved of by conscience must be considered against one's nature. Butler speaks of the "natural supremacy

¹²¹ Butler does not discuss the possibility of scrupulosity, i.e. of an obsessive concern of being morally right.

¹²² Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 280, puts this point as follows: "Butler typically reserves conscience for instances of self-judgment."

¹²³ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 12, p. 118, § 25.

¹²⁴ Ibid., *Dissertation*, p. 150ff., § 6ff. McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price", p. 214 highlights that Butler has been criticised "for failing to give a more detailed account of the criteria which conscience might apply in determining what we ought to do on any specific occasion. [...] His silence stems from his conviction that further guidance is not necessary."

¹²⁵ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 9, § 25. Darwall points out that Butler asserted "the necessity of the *agent's* having moral sense ("reflex approbation") in order to exemplify genuine virtue or merit [...]. Moral agency is impossible without the principle of reflection." Darwall, *British Moralists*, p. 245.

of reflection or conscience".¹²⁶ In the *Preface*, he puts his claim in the following words:

[...] conscience or reflection, compared with the rest as they all stand together in the nature of man, plainly bears upon it marks of authority over all the rest, and claims the absolute direction of them all, to allow or forbid their gratification: a disapprobation of reflection being in itself a principle manifestly superior to a mere propension.¹²⁷

The function of conscience is to govern the moral agent's conduct. It exerts this function effectively unless it is "forcibly stopped"¹²⁸ by lower (i.e. less authoritative) principles that are excessively powerful. Such a state is unnatural and a sign of "wantonness".¹²⁹ Theoretically, if an action is in accordance with an agent's self-love, yet in conflict with her conscience, it is unnatural. Yet, Butler claims that conscience and self-love always recommend the same actions – a claim we are going to take a closer look at in section 3.3. Due to the supreme moral faculty of conscience, man is by his nature a law to himself.¹³⁰ Self-cultivation aims at securing the supreme position of conscience, which means that the agent is only motivated by the first-order principles her conscience endorses. Another important aspect of conscience is that it has a role in the discovery of the design of our nature. Conscience, Butler claims, is "pointing out to us in some degree what we are intended for".¹³¹

¹²⁶ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 3, p. 35, § 1. This point has been discussed by a series of commentators as the doctrine of the supremacy of conscience. Broad summarises the core of the doctrine as follows: "By saying that conscience has supreme authority Butler means that we regard the pronouncements of conscience, not simply as interesting or uninteresting statements of fact, and not simply as reasons to be balanced against others, but as *conclusive* reasons for or against doing the actions which it pronounces." Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 78. - Sturgeon argues that Butler's doctrine that conscience is superior to all other principles is superfluous, as Butler also holds the full naturalistic thesis - i.e. that conscience only approves and disapproves of actions on the ground of their being natural or unnatural. As a consequence, we would have to assume that there is some criterion superior to conscience, which would render the doctrine of the supremacy of conscience superfluous. Sturgeon, "Nature and Conscience in Butler's Ethics", p. 328. - Most commentators argue against Sturgeon. Darwall, for example, defends the point that Butler's doctrine of the supremacy of conscience is not superfluous since even if conscience approves or disapproves of actions on grounds of their being natural or unnatural, the further obligation not to act against one's nature is still rooted in conscience. Darwall, *British Moralists*, pp. 258ff.

¹²⁷ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Preface, p. 8, § 24.

¹²⁸ Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 31, § 8.

¹²⁹ Ibid., Sermon 2, p. 34, § 17.

¹³⁰ Ibid., Preface, p. 10, § 29, as well as *Sermons* 2 and 3.

¹³¹ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 22, § 8.

2.3. *Self-love as respect of self*

Butler's concept of self-love as self-respect differs greatly from other concepts of self-love, as we shall see in the present section. We are going to present a view of Butler's concept of self-love as a second-order affection that reflectively controls the gratification of first-order principles in view of the agent's happiness. Happiness is a consequence of the realisation of her real nature. Butler is the author whose concept of self-love is closest to Aristotle's recommended form of *philautía*, and who, with Campbell, is most emphatic in his rehabilitation of self-love. In the following subsection, a series of characteristic features of Butler's concept of self-love will be discussed. In section 3, we will take a closer look at some specific claims that Butler makes with other authors, such as Hutcheson. While relying on the same terminology, he substantially changes the meaning of these claims due to the peculiarities of his concept of self-love.

2.3.1. *Characteristic features of Butler's concept of self-love*

a) Self-love, happiness, and the true self

Butler characterises self-love as a *general affection*. We have seen in section 2.1.1. that he is not very clear in his description of the relation between self-love and the general desire for one's happiness. His language suggests both that they are identical and that self-love causes the desire for one's happiness. Furthermore, he is ambiguous about his specification of the object of self-love: Butler names happiness, interest, private good or simply "self": "The object of self-love is expressed in the term *self*."¹³² We will suggest that Butler's remarks on these matters are best interpreted as follows: Self-love is a general affection with the agent's

¹³² Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 104, § 11.

true self as its object, the realisation of which it promotes in view of a general desire for the agent's happiness.

Let us first take a look at another passage where Butler opposes the particular affections to self-love by drawing upon the distinction between internal and external objects:

Further, private happiness or good is all which self-love can make us desire, or be concerned about: in having this consists its gratification: it is an affection to ourselves; a regard to our own interest, happiness, and private good: and in the proportion a man hath this, he is interested, or a lover of himself. Let this be kept in mind; because there is commonly, as I shall presently have occasion to observe, another sense put upon these words. On the other hand, particular affections tend towards particular external things: these are their objects; having these is their end: in this consists their gratification: no matter whether it be, or be not, upon the whole, our interest or happiness. An action done from the former of these principles is called an interested action. An action proceeding from any of the latter has its denomination of passionate, ambitious, friendly, revengeful, or any other, from the particular appetite or affection it proceeds. Thus self-love as one part of human nature, and the several particular principles as the other part, are, themselves, their objects and ends, stated and shewn.¹³³

First of all, it is worth noting that, in the passage quoted, Butler shows awareness of the fact that his terminology differs from the common use of the words. We will examine this point when discussing a series of specific claims in section 3. Next, Butler states again that particular principles involve desires for particular external objects or states of affairs, and that although self-love makes us desire "private happiness or good", it does not make us desire any particular external objects or states of affairs. In other words, self-love does not make the agent desire particular objects as ends in themselves, but instead endorses or opposes such particular desires in view of the agent's happiness: "The principle we call self-love never seeks anything external for the sake of the thing, but only as a means of happiness or good: particular affections rest in the external things themselves."¹³⁴ This suggests the following reconstruction: The agent has a particular desire - say, to eat a sandwich.

¹³³ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 101, § 8.

¹³⁴ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 100, § 5.

Self-love endorses or opposes this particular desire in view of the agent's happiness, depending on whether satisfying this particular desire is considered an appropriate means to promote her happiness. Yet self-love is a general principle, and could not make her desire to eat the sandwich merely for the sake of eating the sandwich. Particular principles are satisfied by particular objects or states of affairs, such as the agent's eating a sandwich. Their satisfaction provides the agent with pleasure. However, the gratification of particular principles can be against the true interest of the agent, and thus prevent her from being happy.

Self-love involves a general desire for the agent's happiness. Butler suggests a particular view of the relation between happiness and the general affection of self-love on the one hand and the particular principles on the other hand:

Happiness consists in the gratification of certain affections, appetites, passions, with objects which are by nature adapted to them. Self-love may indeed set us on work to gratify these: but happiness or enjoyment has no immediate connexion with self-love, but arises from such gratification alone.¹³⁵

In this and other passages, Butler encourages the view that the satisfaction of the general desire for happiness depends on the satisfaction of particular principles. Without the gratification of particular principles, neither can self-love be gratified: "Take away these affections [i.e. the particular principles], and you leave self-love absolutely nothing at all to employ itself about."¹³⁶ Self-love does not aim at happiness directly, but only at promoting it indirectly via the gratification of particular principles.

It is important to emphasise, however, that happiness is not reached by the satisfaction of just *any* series of particular principles. Rather, it

¹³⁵ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 107, § 16.

¹³⁶ Ibid., Preface, p. 13, § 37. Just before, he claims that "the very idea of an interested pursuit necessarily presupposes particular passions or appetites; since the very idea of interest or happiness consists in this, that an appetite or affection enjoys its object." This is the basis for Butler's claim that self-love cannot be the only principle or, rather, that if it was the only principle, it could not be gratified, which will be discussed in section 2.3.1.b).

must be a combination of particular principles that accords with the nature of the agent, that respects the hierarchy between the different principles, and in which none of the particular principles rises above its natural degree. In another passage, Butler claims: “Self-love then does not constitute *this* or *that* to be our interest or good; but, our interest or good being constituted by nature and supposed, self-love only puts us upon obtaining and securing it.”¹³⁷ This point brings us back to Butler’s theistic teleological conception of human nature. The agent’s designed nature constitutes what is in her interest, or – to put it differently – which combination of particular principles is such that their gratification procures the agent happiness. Indulging in just one kind of particular principle, and neglecting all others, for example, is against the agent’s nature and opposes her happiness. The same holds for the unreflective gratification of the strongest particular principle. Self-love is the general principle that controls the gratification of the particular principles by endorsing a combination that is appropriate to the agent’s nature, the gratification of which will promote her happiness because it respects her real self. Butler’s language frequently suggests that it is these particular principles which self-love endorses or opposes.¹³⁸ In analogy with the general principle of conscience, however, we might say furthermore that self-love endorses or opposes character traits as well as actions motivated by the particular principles without causing a conflict in Butler’s moral psychology. For example, self-love can be said to endorse the affection of benevolence, a benevolent character trait or a benevolent action in view of the agent’s happiness.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, Sermon 11, p. 102, § 9.

¹³⁸ This view is also shared by a series of commentators that take self-love to be a second-order affection. Phillips, “Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest”, p. 425, for example, claims that for Butler, “self-love selects which of our particular passions we act on.”

Let us now return to the idea of self-love as a *reflective* principle.¹³⁹ For Butler, the general desire for one's happiness "seems inseparable from all sensible creatures, who can reflect upon themselves and their own interest or happiness, so as to have that interest an object of their mind."¹⁴⁰ In other words, self-love controls the satisfaction of particular principles in view of the realisation of human nature, and this control is based on the agent's reflecting on her nature and her interests (which are, as has just been mentioned, constituted by her nature). Butler's frequent characterisation of self-love as a "cool" or "reasonable" principle indicates that self-love controls first-order principles on the basis of reflection on the agent's interests, as opposed to a blind following of one's selfish instincts. Self-love is not to be mistaken for selfish particular principles, the satisfaction of which is not guided by reflection and can turn out to be in conflict with the agent's true interest, and thus – in spite of being gratified and providing the agent pleasure – fail to promote her happiness. Happiness does not just consist in experiencing *any* kind of pleasure, but is based on the pleasures that stem from the gratification of a combination of first-order principles that is in accordance with the agent's nature.

Several commentators have highlighted, correctly in my view, that Butler's self-love, which is a general principle that reflectively controls the gratification of particular principles with external objects, is best conceived as a *second-order* principle.¹⁴¹ One of the core features of Butlerian self-love is captured in the idea that it is a second-order desire or concern to be motivated by a combination of particular principles, the

¹³⁹ Cf. Penelhum, *Butler*, p. 29f. and Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love", p. 34f. Henson suggests treating self-love as a desire for happiness, but not as a rational principle. There is enough textual evidence in the *Sermons*, however, to support the view of self-love as a rational principle that is not reducible to the desire for happiness, since it involves the reflected pursuit of happiness.

¹⁴⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 11, p. 100, § 5.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person", pp. 13ff.; as well as Penelhum, *Butler*, p. 30; Phillips, "Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest", p. 424. The differences that arise from this point with respect to Hutcheson's treatment of self-love have not been sufficiently analysed, however. We will concentrate on this point in section 3 of this chapter.

gratification of which provides the agent with happiness. More precisely, self-love is a concern to be motivated by a combination of first-order principles that is adapted to the agent's nature or her true interest. In other words, self-love as a general second-order principle controls the gratification of particular first-order principles in view of the agent's happiness, which for Butler depends on the realisation of the agent's real nature.

Self-love is a *self-directed* principle in that it controls first-order principles in view of the agent's happiness. In a very important sense, however, it is linked with other-directedness. Benevolence is a natural part of human nature,¹⁴² and unless benevolence is in conflict with the agent's true self (for example because it leads to the agent's self-destruction), self-love necessarily endorses benevolence. This may concern benevolent character traits and benevolent affections, as well as the actions benevolence proposes. Of his contemporaries' tendency to conceive of self-love as bringing about a conflict with other-directed principles, Butler says that "such positive exclusion, or bringing this peculiar disregard to the good of others into the idea of self-love, is in reality adding to the idea, or changing it from what it was before stated to consist in, namely, in an affection to ourselves."¹⁴³ We will take a closer look at this point when discussing Butler's claims about the relation between self-love and benevolence in section 3.1.

Commentators have discussed whether self-love in Butler can be a motive of its own, or whether to be motivating it needs first-order

¹⁴² Again, this must be understood in a theistic teleological sense. A principle is natural if it accords with the divine design of human nature as a whole. Interestingly, Butler goes as far as arguing that indignation, for example, is also natural in the sense that it has its place in human nature as a whole. In his discussion of the punishment of crimes, he says that "[...] indignation against vice and wickedness is, and may be allowed to be, a balance to that weakness of pity, and also to anything else which would prevent the necessary methods of severity." Butler, "Fifteen Sermons", Sermon 8, p. 77, § 13. Indignation becomes problematic, however, if it counteracts other principles of higher authority, i.e. self-love or conscience, or becomes too strong with respect to other first-order principles.

¹⁴³ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 103, § 11. This is certainly directed against Mandeville, but possibly also against Hutcheson's occasional tendency to oppose self-love and benevolence.

principles. To a certain extent, Butler's language seems to encourage both views. Sometimes he speaks of actions as being motivated by self-love. Yet, the quotations and reflections above suggest that self-love cannot directly motivate actions on its own. Rather, an action is said to be motivated by self-love if it is motivated by particular first-order desires, which are in accordance with the general second-order affection of self-love. If Butler says that an action is motivated by self-love, this is best interpreted as an elliptical way of posing the claim that the action has been motivated by a particular principle that is endorsed by self-love.¹⁴⁴

In sum, Butler has a concept of self-love as a second-order affection that reflectively controls the gratification of first-order principles in view of the agent's happiness, which is a consequence of the realisation of her nature. It is a second-order affection in that self-love is conceived of as a desire or concern to be motivated in a specific way, namely by a combination of first-order affections that is adapted to the agent's nature. The gratification of such a combination provides her happiness. Self-love is a reflective principle in that it presupposes that the agent reflects upon her own happiness and nature; it concerns the selection and endorsement of an appropriate combination of first-order principles.

Given these features, self-love in Butler is aptly called *self-respect* – given Butler's own statement that there is a part in human nature "which respects *self*".¹⁴⁵ A Butlerian agent who loves herself has a conception of her real self, or of her true nature. She evaluates this self positively, and respects it, i.e. she has a regard to her own interests¹⁴⁶ in that she accepts her true nature as a guide for endorsing or opposing first-order principles. The Butlerian self-lover is concerned about the realisation of

¹⁴⁴ On this point, our interpretation contradicts Phillips, "Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest" , p. 425.

¹⁴⁵ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 1, p. 24, § 14.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., Preface, p. 14, § 40.

her true self during the course of her life: She respects the hierarchy of authority between the different principles that are part of her nature; she cultivates these principles to have them in their natural degree; and she is concerned about being motivated by a combination of first-order principles that is suitable to her nature. There are some striking similarities with Aristotle's recommendable concept of *philautia*: Both authors conceive the self as a hierarchical structure and recommend self-love inasmuch as it supports the realisation of the agent's true self – which involves the endorsement of the concern for the well-being of others.

b) Degrees of self-love

By analogy with his treatment of particular principles, Butler suggests that the general principle of self-love can take different degrees. Yet in his opinion – and here lies a fundamental difference between Butler and the other authors treated so far – self-love is in general too weak:

Neither does there appear any reason to wish self-love were weaker in the generality of the world than it is. [...] The thing to be lamented, is not that men have so great regard to their own good or interest in the present world, for they have not enough; but that they have so little to the good of others.¹⁴⁷

Elsewhere he claims that

Upon the whole, if the generality of mankind were to cultivate within themselves the principle of self-love [...] it would manifestly prevent numberless follies and vices.¹⁴⁸

Given the dominant contemporary conceptions of self-love as some kind of self-directed first-order desires, such as hedonistic self-love, these passages sound rather strange. Yet, given what has been said about Butler's concept of self-love above, these claims are perfectly compatible with his attempts to refute psychological egoism, and they emphasise his very positive view of self-love as a part of the "inward frame of man".

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., Preface, p. 14, § 40.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., Preface, p. 15, § 41.

What Butler sees as a problem is not that human beings love themselves too much in that they have too much regard for their own nature and the interests that are constituted by it. Rather, self-love is often too weak, and human agents have too little regard for their interest, for example if they do not reflectively control the gratification of their first-order principles in view of what is appropriate to their real nature. For Butler, it is not a paradox to say that having too strong first-order self-directed principles is to have self-love too weak. Our interpretation of Butler's concept of self-love in terms of a second-order affection allows us to understand his remarks in the appropriate way.

At the end of the quoted § 40 in the Preface, Butler refers to a passage in *Sermon 1*:

[...] men in fact as much and as often contradict that *part* of their nature which respects *self*, and which leads them to their *own private* good and happiness; as they contradict that *part* of it which respects *society*, and tends to public good [...]¹⁴⁹

Contradicting the part of nature which respects self means being motivated by first-order principles (or a combination of first-order principles), the gratification of which is ultimately not in the agent's interest, or is against her nature. If an agent is thus motivated, her self-love is too weak, since it did not prevent the excessive first-order principle from motivating action.

Yet, Butler also states that self-love can be *too strong*:

So that if self-love wholly engrosses us, and leaves no room for any other principle, there can be absolutely no such thing at all as happiness, or enjoyment of any kind whatever; since happiness consists in the gratification of particular passions, which supposes the having of them.¹⁵⁰

This passage is best interpreted as follows: Butler is discussing the hypothetical case of an agent who focuses all her attention on reflecting on her interest or happiness and thus wholly neglects the satisfaction of

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 24, § 14.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 102, § 9.

her first-order principles.¹⁵¹ Yet, since happiness can only be gained by means of the controlled gratification of first-order principles, the agent who only reflects on how to promote her happiness and who only intends to satisfy her self-love - and therefore does not gratify any of her first-order principles - cannot gain happiness because her self-love is too strong.¹⁵² For this reason,

Disengagement is absolutely necessary to enjoyment; and a person may have so steady and fixed an eye upon his own interest, whatever he places it in, as may hinder him from *attending* to many gratifications within his reach, which others have their minds free and open to.¹⁵³

Self-love is too strong if it keeps the agent from gratifying particular principles – self-directed and other-directed. On this basis, Butler gives a negative answer to the initial question of “whether private interest is likely to be promoted in proportion to the degree in which self-love engrosses us, and prevails over all other principles.”¹⁵⁴

A comparison of Butler and Hutcheson is interesting on this point. Hutcheson relies on the hedonistic concept of self-love. If hedonistic self-love is said to be too strong, this is because the satisfaction of selfish first-order desires is attributed too high a priority over the satisfaction of benevolent first-order desires. If Butler’s self-love as self-respect is said to be too strong, however, it appears that the gratification of both self-directed and benevolent first-order principles is rendered impossible.

¹⁵¹ That loving oneself in this sense is not the same as being happy is also expressed in the following passage: “Happiness does not consist in self-love. The desire of happiness is no more the thing itself, than the desire of riches is the possession or enjoyment of them. People may love themselves with the most entire and unbounded affection, and yet be extremely miserable.” *Ibid.*, Sermon 11, p. 101, § 9.

¹⁵² Butler wants to argue for the claim that self-love cannot be the only motive. Henson correctly points out that what is shown here is rather that “if self-love *is* one’s only motive it can never be gratified.” Henson, “Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love”, p. 38. Note, furthermore, that refuting the claim that Butlerian self-love is the only motive for actions is not a refutation of psychological egoism.

¹⁵³ Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 11, p. 102, § 9.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Sermon 11, p. 98, § 1.

c) A deviant use of the term “self-love” in Butler? “Self-love” and first-order affections

In the *Preface*, which was added to the second edition in 1729, Butler adds a note on Hobbes that might be read as putting forward a concept of self-love incompatible with what has been said above. Butler claims that

[...] it is not a true representation of mankind to affirm, that they are wholly governed by self-love, the love of power and sensual appetites: since, as on the one hand they are often actuated by these, without any regard to right or wrong; so on the other it is manifest fact, that the same persons, the generality, are frequently influenced by friendship, compassion, gratitude; and even a general abhorrence of what is base, and liking of what is fair and just, takes its turn amongst the other motives of action.¹⁵⁵

In this passage, which is intended to refute the claim that human beings are only motivated by self-directed first-order desires (such as the love of power or pleasure), self-love seems to be counted as some kind of self-directed first-order desire and is put in opposition to friendship, compassion, and gratitude. This passage is a criticism of Hobbes, and is best interpreted as Butler using the term “self-love” in the more widespread sense of a first-order selfish principle, i.e. hedonistic self-love. What he says here about self-love is not compatible with what he defends with great care and ability elsewhere about self-love as self-respect.

3. Specific claims about self-love in Butler and Hutcheson

In the present section, we are going to compare some of Butler’s claims on self-love with Hutcheson’s. In spite of the very interesting relations

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., *Preface*, p. 7f, § 21.

between their views of self-love, they have rarely been compared. In some important monographs on Butler, for example, Hutcheson is not mentioned at all.¹⁵⁶ Commentators of Hutcheson regularly highlight the influence of Butler's concept of conscience and of his view of benevolence on the development of Hutcheson's thought,¹⁵⁷ yet a comparison of their approaches to self-love is frequently missing.¹⁵⁸

3.1. *The relation between self-love and benevolence in Sermon 11*

Butler's claims about the relation between self-love and benevolence have attracted a lot of attention among commentators.¹⁵⁹ In the light of what has been put forward above concerning Butler's concept of self-love, it is particularly interesting to investigate these claims and to compare them with Hutcheson's discussion of the relation between self-love and benevolence.

Right at the beginning of Sermon 11, Butler states:

It is commonly observed, that there is generally thought to be some peculiar kind of contrariety between self-love and the love of our neighbour, between the pursuit of public and of private good; insomuch that when you are recommending one of these, you are supposed to be speaking against the other; and from hence arises a secret prejudice against, and frequently open scorn of all talk of public spirit, and real goodwill to our fellow-creatures [...]¹⁶⁰.

Butler notices that there is a prevailing opinion among his contemporaries, namely that the principles of self-love and benevolence are contrary to

¹⁵⁶ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy* ; Penelhum, *Butler* ; Christopher Cunliffe, ed., *Joseph Butler's Moral and Religious Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

¹⁵⁷ Cf. William Robert Scott, *Francis Hutcheson. His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), pp. 198ff.; Jensen, *Motivation and the Moral Sense in Francis Hutcheson's Ethical Theory* .

¹⁵⁸ However, Schrader, *Ethik und Anthropologie in der englischen Aufklärung. Der Wandel der moral-sense-theorie von Shaftesbury bis Hume* , pp. 114ff. shows awareness of these points. Darwall, *British Moralists* , focuses on questions of obligation but occasionally touches on the questions of self-love.

¹⁵⁹ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy* , pp. 112f.; Roberts, *The Concept of Benevolence* , pp. 59f.; Henson, "Butler on Selfishness and Self-Love" , pp. 41f. and 51f.; McNaughton, "British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price" , pp. 216f.; Penelhum, *Butler* , p. 47f.

¹⁶⁰ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 11, p. 99 § 2.

one another in that they mutually exclude one another's satisfaction and thus cannot be pursued together. We have seen that Hutcheson does not put forward the view that self-love and benevolence cannot be gratified together. Yet his treatment of self-love in his moral mathematics is rather critical. For Mandeville, the selfishness in human nature makes genuine benevolence impossible. According to Butler, the view that there is a contrariety between self-love and benevolence is not only false but also dangerous, since it puts benevolence in an unfavourable light and thus might even negatively affect its cultivation. Therefore, Butler argues against the supposed contrariety between self-love and benevolence. He writes in the *Preface*:

[W]hoever will consider all the possible respects and relations which any particular affection can have to self-love and private interest, will, I think, see demonstrably, that benevolence is not in any respect more at variance with self-love, than any other particular affection whatever, but that it is in every respect, at least, as friendly to it.

If the observation be true, it follows, that self-love and benevolence, virtue and interest, are not opposed, but only to be distinguished from each other; in the same way as virtue and any other particular affection, love of arts, suppose, are to be distinguished.¹⁶¹

Self-love and benevolence are obviously distinct. Yet, this does not imply that they mutually exclude one another's gratification and that the agent would have to choose between following private or public interest. In the two *Sermons* entitled *Upon the Love of Our Neighbour* (Sermons 11 and 12), Butler argues against this claim and states furthermore that "the greatest satisfactions to ourselves depend upon our having benevolence in a due degree".¹⁶² Butler's point in all this is the characterisation of self-love as a second-order affection. If benevolence is a first-order affection (and in Sermon 11 he clearly takes it to be so), then there is no opposition between self-love and benevolence in that they could not be gratified together. Benevolence is a natural first-order affection. In view of

¹⁶¹ Ibid., Preface, p. 14, §§ 38f.

¹⁶² Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 20 § 6.

the realisation of the agent's true self, self-love endorses benevolent character traits, affections and actions. There might be very rare occasions, however, in which self-love has to oppose the gratification of benevolence - for example if it leads to self-destruction. These occasions, however, do not justify the general claim that self-love and benevolence are in conflict.

The question of the relation between self-love and benevolence reflects the differences between Butler's and Hutcheson's moral psychology in an interesting way. Both authors claim that self-love and benevolence are not necessarily in conflict and can be satisfied together, yet their arguments for this point differ. In Hutcheson, self-love and benevolence, which are both treated as first-order principles, are distinguished according to their objects. The object of Hutchesonian hedonistic self-love is the promotion of natural good for the agent herself, and the object of benevolence is to promote the good of other agents. Self-love is called the interested principle and benevolence the disinterested principle.¹⁶³ For Hutcheson, self-love and benevolence can be in conflict, for there are situations in which they cannot be gratified together. Yet, there are other situations in which both direct the agent to the same action. In a different sense, self-love and benevolence can converge in Hutcheson's theory even in cases of conflict between selfish and benevolent first-order desires. This is rooted in the fact that the agent derives the moral pleasures from the consciousness of having acted on benevolent motives. Thus, even in cases where the agent cannot directly gratify her self-love due to her acting benevolently, she can still derive natural good for herself as a consequence of having acted for the well-being of others. In this sense, self-love and benevolence converge

¹⁶³ This claim will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent section.

even in cases where a preliminary non-gratification of one's self-love in favour of benevolence is required.

Butler's view, however, is based on his conception of self-love as self-respect. Self-love is the reflective control of the satisfaction of first-order desires in view of one's happiness, which is gained by means of the realisation of one's nature. Self-love has to assure that both self-directed and other-directed first-order principles (i.e. Hutchesonian self-love and benevolence) are duly gratified. As an affection of a second order, Butlerian self-love is opposed to neither natural first-order selfish principles nor natural first-order benevolent principles (under the condition that they occur in their natural degree). Therefore, self-love as self-respect and benevolence in its natural degree are not in conflict. Rather, they are generally gratified together, since benevolence is a natural affection and, as such, endorsed by self-love.

3.2. Interestedness and disinterestedness

Butler's treatment of self-love has consequences for his understanding of the distinction between interestedness and disinterestedness.¹⁶⁴ First of all, he ties the notion of "interested action" by definition to the concept of self-love: "An action done from the former of these principles [i.e. self-love] is called an interested action."¹⁶⁵ An action is interested if and only if it is motivated by self-love. It has been argued above that this means that the action is motivated by some first-order principle (which can be selfish or benevolent) which in turn is endorsed by the second-order principle of self-love.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. other commentators, such as M. J. Scott-Taggart, "Butler on Disinterested Actions" *The Philosophical Quarterly* 18 (1968); Phillips, "Butler and the Nature of Self-Interest" ; as well as Maurer, "Two Approaches to Self-Love: Hutcheson and Butler" .

¹⁶⁵ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 11, p. 101 § 8.

At first sight, Butler's claim that an action is interested if it is done from self-love seems to be in accordance with Hutcheson. Yet, given Butler's conception of self-love, his claim has a different meaning. In Hutcheson, an action is labelled "interested" if and only if it is motivated by self-love in the sense of a desire that ultimately aims at some kind of pleasure for the agent. An action that is interested in this sense can turn out to be contrary to the true interest of an agent - for example, where it turns out that it renders the gratification of some more important long-term interest impossible, or that it is based on an incorrect representation of the relevant states of affairs and leads to the agent's misery. Nonetheless, the action is said to be interested, since it aims at pleasure for the agent. Interested actions are different from disinterested actions in that the latter ultimately aim at promoting the well-being of other agents. We have discussed several arguments in Hutcheson for the claim that disinterested actions are in the interest of the agent because disinterested actions bring about the highest pleasures of self-approbation. Virtue, which is in itself disinterested according to Hutcheson (since it consists in being ultimately motivated by a concern for the well-being for other agents), can thus be said to be in the interest of the agent in the egoistic sense. The self-approval of an action performed on (first-order) disinterested desires produces natural good for the agent.

Butler, on the other hand, neither holds that all actions motivated by (first-order) self-directed desires are interested (in the sense of being endorsed by self-love as self-respect), nor claims that all actions motivated by (first-order) other-directed desires are disinterested. Compassion and benevolence, for example, can be interested if endorsed by self-love. Furthermore, he argues – only apparently in contradiction to Hutcheson – that it is absurd to speak of virtue as disinterested.¹⁶⁶ For

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 104, § 11. For Hutcheson, cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.3.b).

Butler, there are actions that are motivated by (first-order) self-directed principles, but that cannot be called interested, since they are not endorsed by self-love. Also, actions that are motivated by other-directed first-order principles are not necessarily disinterested, since they can be endorsed by self-love.

This explains Butler's following remark – which can also be interpreted as a critique of Hutcheson's use of the terminology:

Hence arises that surprising confusion and perplexity in the Epicureans of old, Hobbes, the author of *Reflections, Sentences, et Maximes Morales*, and this whole set of writers, the confusion of calling actions interested which are done in contradiction to the most manifest known interest, merely for the gratification of a present passion. Now all this confusion might easily be avoided, by stating to ourselves wherein the idea of self-love in general consists, as distinguished from all particular movements towards particular external objects; the appetites of sense, resentment, compassion, curiosity, ambition, and the rest.¹⁶⁷

Against Hobbes and La Rochefoucauld, Butler holds that an action deserves to be called "interested" if and only if it is endorsed by self-love in the sense of a second-order affection. Actions merely motivated by selfish first-order desires can be in conflict with self-love and with the agent's true interest. Thus, they do not deserve to be called interested.

As to the concept of disinterestedness, Butler remains rather vague,¹⁶⁸ connecting "disinterested" with "not interested". While arguing in *Sermon 11*¹⁶⁹ that there is no "peculiar contrariety" between self-love and benevolence (since the former is a second-order affection and the latter is a first-order affection), he states that

[...] every appetite of sense, and every particular affection of the heart, are equally interested or disinterested, because the objects of them are all equally self or somewhat else. [...] The most intelligible way of speaking of it seems to be this: that self-love and the actions done in consequence of it [...] are interested; that particular affections towards external objects, and the actions done in consequence of those affections, are not so.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., Preface, p. 12, § 35.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. the criticisms in Scott-Taggart, "Butler on Disinterested Actions" .

¹⁶⁹ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Sermon 11, p. 103f, § 11f.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 104, § 11.

Butler seems to suggest that actions are “disinterested” or “not interested” if they are motivated by first-order principles without the endorsement of self-love. Whereas in Hutcheson, the distinction between interestedness and disinterestedness concerns the question of whether first-order principles are self- or other-directed, the distinction is relocated in Butler and concerns the question of whether (self- and other-directed) first-order principles are endorsed by self-love or not.¹⁷¹

Butler’s terminology has consequences for his arguments against the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. In Hutcheson, the claim “self-love is not the only motive of human actions” implies a rejection of psychological egoism. Hutcheson argues for the falsity of the latter position by putting forward the reality of benevolence, or of other-directed motives. When Butler, however, asserts that self-love is not the only motive for human actions, this does not impact upon psychological egoism, due to his conception of self-love as a second-order affection. The psychological egoist could still argue that human agents are only motivated by self-directed first-order desires (which are or are not endorsed by self-love). The situation is similar for Butler’s redefined concepts of interestedness and disinterestedness. When Butler argues that there are not only interested principles of actions, this does not imply an assertion of the reality of other-directed principles. Butler, like Hutcheson, attacks psychological egoism, in that he claims that there are not only first-order particular principles that aim at the private good but also first-order particular principles that aim at the public good (such as benevolence, friendship, parental affections, and pity).

¹⁷¹ We have to note that a consequence of this way of using the terminology is that the gratification of self-directed first-order desires without the endorsement of self-love is called “disinterested”. This is perfectly compatible with his claim that disinterestedness is not “in itself commendable” in *Ibid.*, Preface, p. 14, § 39.

3.3. *The Interest Claim in Butler: The convergence of conscience and self-love*

Butler insists regularly that self-love and conscience, which are both second-order reflective principles, “always lead us the same way.”¹⁷² Given what has been said above about Butler’s concepts of conscience and self-love, this claim is best taken to mean that they ultimately endorse the same combination of principles. Self-love does so in view of their conduciveness to the agent’s happiness, and conscience does so in view of their moral rightness. Butler depicts the relation between self-love and conscience as follows:

Reasonable self-love and conscience are the chief or superior principles in the nature of man: because an action may be suitable to this nature, though all other principles be violated; but becomes unsuitable, if either of those are. Conscience and self-love, if we understand our true happiness, always lead us the same way. Duty and interest are perfectly coincident; for the most part in this world, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future, and the whole; this being implied in the notion of a good and perfect administration of things.¹⁷³

Why do self-love and conscience converge? Or, in other words, why is virtue in the agent’s interest? Butler’s theory of human nature encourages the following answer: Firstly, it must be noted that what is in the agent’s interest is constituted by her nature,¹⁷⁴ which has been designed by God. Only a combination of principles that is adapted to this nature promotes the agent’s true happiness. Self-love’s function, then, is to secure the agent’s happiness by endorsing a combination of principles adapted to the agent’s nature. Following one’s nature in this sense promotes one’s interest. To follow one’s nature means also to respect the supreme authority of conscience. Since the agent’s self-love prompts her to follow her nature in order to gain happiness, self-love (indirectly)

¹⁷² Ibid., Sermon 3, p. 39, § 9.

¹⁷³ Ibid., Sermon 3, p. 39, § 9.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 102, § 9: “Self-love then does not constitute *this* or *that* to be our interest or good; but, our interest or good being constituted by nature and supposed, self-love only puts us upon obtaining and securing it.”

prompts the agent to respect the authority of conscience, and to live the virtuous life. We might say that self-love recommends indirectly what conscience recommends directly. Ultimately, divine design guarantees that there is a convergence between true self-love (as opposed to erroneous self-love that does not aim at true happiness) and conscience, since the fact that they lead us in the same way has its roots in the design of human nature.

It has been argued above¹⁷⁵ that Hutcheson asserts the egoistic argument for the Interest Claim. For him, the reason why virtue is in the interest of the agent is that it provides her pleasure. The obligation to virtue, however, lies in the moral sense's approval of benevolence, and not in the pleasure that can be gained from it. Butler gives a teleological argument for the Interest Claim. Virtue is in the interest of the agent because it is in the design of her nature to follow the supreme principle of conscience. It is true that being virtuous provides the agent happiness, yet this is not the reason for the truth of the Interest Claim. In a similar vein, Butler specifies in the *Preface* to the *Sermons* against the egoistic argument given by Shaftesbury for the Interest Claim that the obligation to virtue does not lie in the happiness that virtue provides the agent, but in conscience's authority. "For the natural authority of the principle of reflection is an obligation the most near and intimate, the most certain and known".¹⁷⁶

In this context, a note on the famous "cool hour" passage in *Sermon* 11 is required. In this passage, Butler discusses the relation between self-love and conscience and makes the following statement:

Let it be allowed, though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good, as such; yet, that when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any

¹⁷⁵ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.3.

¹⁷⁶ Butler, "Fifteen Sermons" , Preface, p. 9, § 26.

pursuit, till we are convinced that it will be for our happiness, or at least not contrary to it.¹⁷⁷

As Penelhum highlights, this passage has been taken to encourage an interpretation of Butler as “an ethical egoist, who believes that even the authority of conscience has to be justified on the ground that following it is in our interest.”¹⁷⁸ Against this interpretation, a series of commentators, including Penelhum, have convincingly argued on the grounds of the context of the quoted passage that it does not represent Butler’s own view. Rather, he discusses a possible concession, which without further qualification would be in conflict with the rest of his moral philosophy. For Butler, conscience’s authority does not depend on its being justified by self-interest or self-love – conscience is ultimately the principle with the highest authority in human nature.

In the passage quoted above from *Sermon 3*, § 9, and in *Sermon 3*, § 8,¹⁷⁹ Butler seems to allow exceptions to the general rule that self-love and conscience are always consistent. He claims that “Duty and interest are perfectly coincident; *for the most part in this world*, but entirely and in every instance if we take in the future, and the whole [my emphasis]”.¹⁸⁰ This suggests that exceptions, at least concerning the agent’s interest in the present world, are possible. Yet, we have to note that Butler does not discuss any concrete examples. Furthermore, the

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., Sermon 11, p. 109f, § 20. This passage has provoked a series of discussions. Cf. Broad, *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, pp. 79f.; Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*, pp. 113ff.; Penelhum, *Butler*, pp. 73 – 76; Darwall, *British Moralists*, pp. 265f.; McNaughton, “British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century: Shaftesbury, Butler and Price”, pp. 212f.

¹⁷⁸ Penelhum, *Butler*, p. 73.

¹⁷⁹ In Butler, “Fifteen Sermons”, Sermon 3, p. 38f., § 8, Butler writes: “It is manifest that, in the common course of life, there is seldom any inconsistency between our duty and what is *called* interest: it is much seldomer that there is any inconsistency between duty and what is really our present interest; meaning by interest, happiness and satisfaction. Self-love then, though confined to the interest of the present world, does in general perfectly coincide with virtue; and leads us to one and the same course of life. But whatever exceptions there are to this, which are much fewer than they are commonly thought, all shall be set right at the final distribution of things. It is a manifest absurdity to suppose evil prevailing finally over good, under the conduct and administration of a perfect Mind.”

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., Sermon 3, p. 39, § 9.

point seems hardly reconcilable with his assertions that the agent's interest is constituted by nature, and that virtue consists in following nature. Also, Butler maintains in other passages that promoting the private good and promoting the public good "do indeed perfectly coincide".¹⁸¹ The exceptions are most coherently interpreted as references to an erroneous concept of happiness or interest in order to explain the *appearance* that there is sometimes a conflict between happiness and virtue. Ultimately, however, the appearance is false.

Conclusion

In our discussion of Butler's moral philosophy in this chapter, we have defended an analysis of Butler's concept of self-love in terms of self-love as self-respect. Self-love is treated as an affection of a second order that has the agent's true self as its object and that endorses the gratification of a combination of particular principles suited to the agent's real nature. Our emphasis on the differences between Butler's self-love as self-respect and other concepts of self-love, such as Hutcheson's hedonistic concept, has allowed for a better understanding of the particularities of some of Butler's theses concerning self-love. Furthermore, we have discussed the relation of Butlerian self-love to egoistic theories of human nature and other important concepts of moral philosophy, such as benevolence, conscience, interestedness and virtue.

We have seen that, in comparison with other authors, Butler has a strikingly positive view of self-love that is in some respects comparable to Aristotle's view of the recommendable form of *philautía*. This explains his

¹⁸¹ Ibid., Sermon 1, p. 18, § 4.

surprising claim that self-love is in general rather too weak than too strong. This claim is misleading without a clear distinction between Butler's concept of self-love as self-respect on the one hand and the widespread concepts of hedonistic and egoistic self-love, as well as Mandeville's notorious concept of self-love as excessive pride, on the other. Self-love and benevolence are not in conflict, according to Butler, because they are affections of a different order, and because the second order-affection of self-love endorses the first-order affection of benevolence as a part of human nature, which is designed by God. Virtue, then, is said to be in the interest of the agent because self-love and conscience lead her the same way. In Butler, the concept of interestedness is tied to self-love as self-respect, and not to selfish first-order affections. Thus Butler rejects the claim that virtue is disinterested, since self-love makes the agent respect the authority of conscience. Without awareness of the differences between Hutcheson's and Butler's concept of disinterestedness, the fact that Force discusses Butler's rejection of the interest paradigm in the context of the concept of disinterestedness might be slightly misleading.¹⁸² It must be highlighted that the rejection of the interest paradigm in Butler is not linked to his discussion of self-love as self-respect, but to his claim that we are motivated by private as well as public particular principles.

In accordance with our analysis, several commentators have highlighted that self-love, in Butler, is best understood as a second-order affection. It is surprising, however, that in spite of the very interesting relations between Butler's and Hutcheson's accounts of self-love, these have rarely been the subject of comparison, in particular not by scholars who work on Butler. Neither in the monographs on Butler by Duncan-Jones¹⁸³ and Penelhum¹⁸⁴ nor in the edited volume by Cunliffe¹⁸⁵ is

¹⁸² Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 192f.

¹⁸³ Duncan-Jones, *Butler's Moral Philosophy*.

¹⁸⁴ Penelhum, *Butler*.

Hutcheson mentioned at all. With its focus on the questions of self-love, and with the distinction between the different concepts of self-love, this study has thus made an important contribution towards a comparison of two key moral philosophers of the early 18th century. We have highlighted the consequences of their concepts of self-love for their rejection of the claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions, for their assertion that self-love and benevolence are not in conflict, and for their description of the relation between self-love and virtue.

In the following chapter, we are going to analyse Archibald Campbell's view of self-love. Campbell, like Butler, recommends self-love and places it at the very centre of his moral theory. However, unlike Butler, who refutes the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, Campbell is a psychological egoist and defends a strikingly positive view of self-love as love of praise.

¹⁸⁵ Cunliffe, ed., *Joseph Butler's Moral and Religious Thought*.

Chapter VI – Archibald Campbell: True Self-Love as a Foundation for Moral Philosophy

1. Introduction

1.1. Campbell and his Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue

Towards the end of the *Preface* to the second volume of the *Fable of the Bees* (1729), Bernard Mandeville reports an event, which took place in London in 1728:

In the London Evening-Post of Saturday March 9, 1727-8. the following Paragraph was printed in small Italick, at the End of the Home-News.

On *Friday* Evening the first Instant, A Gentleman, well dress'd, appeared at the Bonfire before St. *James's* Gate, who declared himself the Author of a Book, entituled, *The Fable of the Bees*: And that he was sorry for writing the same: and recollecting his former Promise, pronounced these Words: *I commit my Book to the Flames*; and threw it in accordingly.

The Monday following the same piece of News was repeated in the Daily Journal, and after that for a considerable time, as I have said, in most of the Papers: But since the Saturday mention'd, which was the only time it was printed by itself, it appear'd always with a small Addition to it, and annex'd (with a N.B. before it) to the following Advertisement.

ΑΡΕΤΗ - ΛΟΓΙΑ

Or an Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue, wherein the false Notions of *Machiavel*, *Hobbs*, *Spinos*a, and Mr. *Bayle*, as they are collected and digested by the Author of *the Fable of the Bees*, are examined and confuted; and the eternal and unalterable Law of

Nature and Obligation of Moral Virtue is stated and vindicated; to which is prefixed a Prefatory Introduction, in a Letter to that Author. By *Alexander Innes*, D.D. Preacher-Assistant at St. Margaret's Westminster.

*The small Addition which I said was made to that notable piece of News, after it came to be annex'd to this Advertisement, consisted of these five Words (upon reading the above Book) which were put in after sorry for writing the same.*¹

The anecdote reports that someone who pretended to be Bernard Mandeville publicly burned a copy of the *Fable of the Bees*. The news in the *Daily Journal* suggest that this person's reading of the *APETH – ΛΟΓΙΑ* convinced him of the falseness of his own claims in the *Fable*. It seems that what Mandeville describes was a fraud organised by booksellers² - an effective method of drawing attention to a new treatise given Mandeville's notoriety at the time.

The book mentioned as *APETH – ΛΟΓΙΑ* is in fact a plagiarised version of Archibald Campbell's *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*, which would only be published by its real author in 1733 in Edinburgh. Archibald Campbell (1691-1756) was born in Edinburgh and died near St. Andrews. He studied at the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. When travelling to London in 1726, he gave the manuscript of the *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* to Scotsman Alexander Innes.³ Innes, at the time preacher-assistant at St. Margaret's, Westminster, published Campbell's treatise under his own name in 1728 in London under the title *APETH – ΛΟΓΙΑ*.⁴ He added a *Prefatory Introduction* of his own, in which he fiercely attacked Mandeville.⁵

¹ Mandeville, *Fable, Volume II*, pp. 23 – 26.

² Cf. Kaye's footnote 3 in *Ibid.*, p. 23f.

³ Cf. Kaye's footnote 1 in *Ibid.*, p. 25, Margaret Batty, "Campbell, Archibald (1691-1756)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), p. 733.

⁴ The full title is as quoted by Mandeville.

⁵ The *Prefatory Introduction* ends with the following words: "Now, Sir, if you agree to this, I hope you are not so destitute of Friends, but that you may find some charitable Neighbour or other, who will lend you a helping Hand, and throw in the *Author* at the same Time by Way of *Appendix*, the doing of which will, in my Opinion, complete the *Solemnity* of the Day. I am not your *Patient*, but *Your most humble Servant*, A.I." Alexander Innes, *Arete-Logia or, An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue* (Whitefish MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004 [1728]), p. xli.

Campbell discovered Innes' plagiarism in 1730 when travelling again to London. In his *Discourse Proving that the Apostles were no Enthusiasts* from 1730, Campbell publicly claimed the authorship of the *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*. In 1731, Campbell was appointed professor of divinity and church history at the University of St. Andrews.⁶ When he republished his *Enquiry* in Edinburgh under his own name, Campbell added considerably more text and footnotes and omitted Innes' *Prefatory Introduction* with the rather questionable attacks against Mandeville. It appeared, however, that the *Committee of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for Purity of Doctrine* was not pleased with a number of its claims. Campbell thus had to answer a series of criticisms. The charges by the committee, as well as Campbell's defence, were published in Edinburgh in 1735 in a pamphlet entitled *Remarks upon some Passages in Books publish'd by Mr. Archibald Campbell, with His Explications on them*.⁷ Campbell's problems with the Committee seem to have been settled with his replies to these charges.⁸ In 1739, Campbell furthermore published *The Necessity of Revelation*, an attack on the Deist Matthew Tindal.

⁶ In 1730, Campbell travelled to London in order to settle matters in the mentioned case of plagiarism. His letters to his wife indicate that at the same time, he took the necessary steps for the appointment. In his letter from March 27th, he asks his wife whether she would prefer to settle in St. Andrews or in England, both of which would be possible. In his letter from April 30th, he announces her that she will be settled "the Professor's Lady".

Campbell's letter of May 23rd 1730 furthermore indicates that he was contacted by Mandeville when staying in London: "In the mean time I cannot but tell you that, among other People that have enquir'd after me, Doctor Mandeville, the Author of the Fable of the Bees, has for some Weeks past, been seeking to meet with me, but hitherto I have had the Misfortune not to see him. However I design by all Means to gratify that Gentleman, & to have a Meeting with him before I leave this place." Unfortunately, there is no further information about whether a meeting between Campbell and Mandeville actually took place.

(The cited letters are held in the National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, GD461/14.)

⁷ The Committee of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for Purity of Doctrine and Archibald Campbell, *Remarks upon Some Passages in Books Publish'd by Mr. Archibald Campbell, S.T.P. Professor of Divinity and Ecclesiastical History in the University of St. Andrews, with His Explications on them*. (Edinburgh: 1735)

⁸ Batty, "Campbell, Archibald (1691-1756)", p. 734. - However, a passage in the University Minutes of the University of St. Andrews indicates that Campbell was not elected representing Commissioner of the University of St. Andrews to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh because of his problems with the Committee for the Purity of Doctrine. University Minutes of the University of St. Andrews, Vol. IV: University Records, April 25 1726 – June 8 1742: March 26th, 1736, p. 203.

Archibald Campbell's works are nowadays almost unknown to philosophers.⁹ This might be rooted in the fact that Campbell was first of all a theologian and not a philosopher, however well acquainted with the classical philosophers. Furthermore, his argumentative strategies are often not really transparent, which poses sometimes considerable difficulties in the reconstruction of his theses. Nevertheless, his *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*, a voluminous treatise on self-love, deserves a place in our analysis of theories of self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy. As we shall see below, Campbell conceives of self-love as a fundamental feature of human nature and claims that it is the basis for morality.¹⁰ Furthermore, the *Enquiry* contains a theologian's philosophical discussion of the positions of Mandeville, Hutcheson, Hobbes and other important authors.¹¹ Campbell therefore provides a unique vantage point on the debates concerning self-love in the early 18th century. Hutcheson himself answered some of Campbell's objections in the fourth edition of his *Inquiry* (1738). Some of Campbell's ideas anticipated elements of theories of sympathy in 18th-century

⁹ A recent major contribution can be found in Luigi Turco, "Sympathy and Moral Sense: 1725-1740" *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 1, no. 7 (1999), pp. 89 – 100. Turco discusses Campbell's place in the development of theories of sympathy in Scottish moral philosophy and argues that Campbell's arguments contain some elements of the reduction of Hutchesonian moral sense to Smithean sympathy. Furthermore, there are entries in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB) Batty, "Campbell, Archibald (1691-1756)" , and in the Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century British Philosophers John Valdimir Price, "Archibald Campbell (1691-1756)" in *The Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century British Philosophers* (1999), Campbell's works are also briefly discussed in Stewart, "The Scottish Enlightenment" , pp. 280f., mentioned in Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment. A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660-1780. Volume II: Shaftesbury to Hume* , pp. 178f. and, less recent, in James McCosh, *The Scottish Philosophy, Biographical, Expository, Critical, from Hutcheson to Hamilton* (Bristol: Thoemmes Antiquarian Books Ltd, 1990), pp. 89ff. (a reprint of the 1875 edition). Some remarks on Campbell's influence on Hutcheson can be found in Scott, *Francis Hutcheson. His Life, Teaching and Position in the History of Philosophy* , pp. 106ff.

¹⁰ Price, "Archibald Campbell (1691-1756)" , p. 172 calls the *Enquiry* "one of the eighteenth century's most vigorous, if excessively repetitive, expositions of self-love as a basis for morality."

¹¹ The title page of the *Enquiry* in Campbell's edition mentions that it is directed "against the Author of the *Fable of the Bees*, &c." and that it contains "Some Reflections on a late Book, intitled, *An Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*". Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue* , title page.

Scottish moral philosophy.¹² His treatment of self-love and his arguments concerning the importance of self-love in human nature and morality are original and of great interest to the present study. Campbell's well documented disagreements with the *Committee for the Purity of Doctrine* of the Church of Scotland concerning some of his claims about self-love make the study of his work yet more enticing. These writings allow for a valuable insight into the orthodox theological view of the Church of Scotland on the debates on self-love. Let us note, however, that the present study focuses on questions concerning the concept of self-love in the moral philosophy of the period, and so the theological aspects of Campbell's writings will be of secondary importance. Furthermore, we will pay more attention to the relation between Campbell's theses with those of the other authors investigated here than with those of the numerous classical authors he quotes so extensively.

1.2. *An overview of the Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*

1.2.1. *General Remarks*

The *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* is written in a style that is often repetitive and burdened with quotations from classical sources, which are sometimes only loosely connected to Campbell's own points. He mainly quotes from Cicero, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle and Arrian.¹³ Like Mandeville, Campbell stresses that he does not intend to argue from a distinctive Christian point of view. As the "heathen philosophers", he claims to argue from the point of view of reason:

I have mixed my self among heathen Philosophers, as Persons, who, according to our Author [i.e. Mandeville], have no Improvement from Revelation, and are only guided by the Light of Nature; and in this Character, I have taken Notice of those Truths, which I found in their

¹² Turco, "Sympathy and Moral Sense: 1725-1740" , p. 94f.; McCosh, *The Scottish Philosophy, Biographical, Expository, Critical, from Hutcheson to Hamilton* , p. 90.

¹³ Turco, "Sympathy and Moral Sense: 1725-1740" , p. 91 fn.

*Writings, without considering from whence they had them, which is a question quite foreign to the Purpose in View.*¹⁴

Campbell's own theses are sometimes difficult to discern, and he often does not argue very thoroughly for them. On occasion he simply opposes his own theses to those of others, or claims that his opponents' views are not understandable without, however, showing (and often without even attempting to show) that they are inconsistent or incorrect. In spite of such argumentative weaknesses, the *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* contains a series of very interesting claims, which provide important further insights into the debates analysed in this study. In particular, Campbell's frequent attacks on Mandeville, Hobbes and Hutcheson are worth investigating in the light of the present study.

Campbell is a very peculiar figure among the other philosophers investigated, and his position within the framework of our study is clearly worthy of further discussion. He is the only author who combines i) an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question (which is in accordance with the Augustinian view held by the Church of Scotland and Mandeville) with ii) a positive answer to the Human Nature Question (which is in conflict with the Augustinian view that emphasises the moral corruption of human nature). Mandeville's and Hobbes' negative answers to the Human Nature Question motivate Campbell's attacks, even if they all assert an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. Campbell's problems with the *Committee for Purity of Doctrine* of the Church of Scotland partly concern his positive view of human nature, which boils down to an attack on the "Calvinist doctrine of total depravity".¹⁵ Interestingly, Campbell reacts to a critical remark of Hutcheson's against "some Moderns" who, after Epicurus, declare that "our most generous Actions proceed wholly from selfish Views" and thus put forward a Philosophy that "must be fruitful of

¹⁴ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, *Preface*, p. xxxf.

¹⁵ Batty, "Campbell, Archibald (1691-1756)", p. 734. One of the points that we will investigate in greater detail is the question of self-denial in view of the corruption of human nature. Cf. section 3.4.2.

nothing but Discontent, Suspicion and Jealousy”¹⁶. Campbell claims that “*It would cost me no great Pains to shew, that my Principles are not those of Epicurus*”¹⁷, yet at the same times writes in return: “*Is a Thing false, because Epicurus maintain’d it? Or is a Thing true, because the late Earl of Shaftesbury (whose Principles Mr. Hutcheson professes to explain and defend) was pleased to declare for it?*”¹⁸ Campbell would not refer to himself as an Epicurean, and his theological views do not allow such a classification, yet his moral psychology is deeply marked by Epicurean features. Also, Campbell’s view of true self-love is so positive that he declares it to be the foundation of moral virtue. He tries to distinguish his position from Mandeville’s by arguing for a distinction between true and mistaken self-love (yet, interestingly, not directly addressing the question of the corruption of mankind).

1.2.2. The Enquiry

Campbell’s 1733 edition of his *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*¹⁹ incorporates three major treatises, with a *Dedication* and a *Preface* to the book, a detailed table of contents with an outline of Campbell’s arguments, and an appendix to the first treatise.²⁰ The first treatise, like the book itself, is entitled *An Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* (pp. 4 – 255, henceforth referred to as *Enquiry*, incorporating the short *Appendix*). One of Campbell’s main goals in writing this text is to argue against the claim attributed to Mandeville and Hobbes that moral virtue

¹⁶ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 142.

¹⁷ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. xiv.

¹⁸ Ibid., *Preface*, p. xiii. Cf. also Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 324.

¹⁹ The full title is as follows: “An Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue. Wherein it is shewn (Against the Author of the *Fable of the Bees*, &c.) That Virtue is founded in the *Nature* of Things, is *unalterable*, and *eternal*, and the *great Means* of private and publick Happiness. With Some Reflections on a late Book, intituled, *An Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*. By Archibald Campbell, S.T.P and *Regius Professor* of Ecclesiastical History in the University of St. Andrews.”

²⁰ Some important differences to the 1728 edition by Innes are a) the replaced *Preface*; b) an added section *The Contents*; c) some relatively large sections added to (Section II, pp. 14 – 48, Section VIII, pp. 201 – 214) or omitted from (Innes, *Arete-Logia* or, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, pp. 185 – 189) the first and the second *Treatises*; d) the added *Appendix* to the first treatise; and e) the changed order of the second and the third *Treatises*. Unless otherwise indicated, the present section is based on Campbell’s own edition of the *Enquiry* (1733), and on the respective pagination.

depends “*on the arbitrary Will of Civil Governors.*”²¹ Rather, moral virtue “has a Foundation in Nature, and is a Thing real and unchangeable.”²²

Throughout the *Enquiry*, Campbell will argue that

[...] the Moral Virtues have their Foundation in the Nature of Things, or, are eternally porportion'd to that great commanding Principle of all rational Agents, whereby they never but necessarily pursue their own Interest or Happiness.²³

In other words, self-love is the natural foundation that makes moral virtue “real and unchangeable”. This is one of the main theses in Campbell’s book, which we will examine in sections 2 and 3 of this chapter.

In his moral psychology, Campbell claims that self-love is the ultimate motivational principle for all actions of all rational beings.²⁴ This claim is also true in the case of God.²⁵ Campbell specifies that self-love, which he conceives of as a desire for pleasure for the agent, or sometimes as the desire for one’s well-being and happiness,²⁶ “diversifies” itself into different desires and motives.²⁷ Most importantly for his account of moral philosophy, self-love manifests itself as a desire for esteem of other rational beings.²⁸ The desire for esteem or self-love as love of praise is a consequence of the ultimately selfish natural tendency to associate with similar creatures and to form societies. The desire for esteem can only be gratified in the company of other rational agents, and no constant happiness is possible without such company.²⁹ The natural social appetites, then, have their origins in self-love, or are claimed to

²¹ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, pp. 201 and xvi. Another point criticised by Campbell is Mandeville’s provocative claim that virtue is the offspring flattery begot upon pride. (Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 178.) We have argued in chapter III, however, that this concerns the social virtues and not moral virtue – a view Campbell does not take into consideration. Furthermore, Campbell attacks the claim that moral norms are arbitrary, and the claim that man has no natural tendencies to society.

²² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. xvi.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 4f., 12, 50 etc.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 53, 257 etc.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14, 54.

constitute a special form of self-love.³⁰ Campbell takes the capacity for communication as proof of the reality and naturalness of mankind's social tendencies,³¹ highlighting his disagreement with Hobbes and Mandeville. However, Campbell too relies on an ultimately selfish analysis of the social appetites.

Campbell distinguishes the desire for esteem, which is self-love as love of praise, and which plays a key role in the *Enquiry*, from pride in a Mandevillian sense, which is “contrary to the social Appetite”.³² The desire of esteem is a desire of true glory (in the sense of what Campbell calls “universal unlimited esteem”) from others, and it is never in conflict with social appetites.³³ Esteem in this sense, which is the object of a rational agent's desires, can be gained by adjusting one's affections to the self-love of others, or by gratifying their self-love.³⁴ Here, Campbell reaches a conclusion that reminds us of Hutcheson: “So that *universal Love* and Benevolence is the great Affection of our Minds, that is *adapted* to this universal Principle of *Self-love*.”³⁵ Being benevolent to others, in the sense of acting in order to promote their happiness, ultimately promotes the agent's own well-being by means of the gratification of her desire for esteem.³⁶ Gratifying others' self-love necessarily brings about their esteem for the agent and thus ultimately gratifies the agent's self-love. Since this relation between benevolent actions, the gratification of others' self-love, and the gratification of the agent's own self-love by means of a gratification of her desire for esteem is “naturally steady, fix'd, immutable, and *eternal*”³⁷, it is obvious to Campbell that

³⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

³¹ Ibid., p. 48.

³² Ibid., p. 88f.

³³ Ibid., pp. 90, 76.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 103.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 109.

³⁶ It is essential to note that Hutcheson refuses to call such actions “benevolent”, since their ultimate aim is not the promotion of the well-being of the other agent, but the promotion of one's own well-being by means of the gratification of the selfish desire for esteem. For these, Hutcheson speaks of *beneficence*, but not of *benevolence*. Cf. also section 3.4.1. below.

³⁷ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 139.

Virtue, in its own *Nature*, is proportion'd and adapted to the *Self-love*, or the natural Taste and appetite of all *rational Agents* whatsoever; is the great and the only *Instrument*, that can advance us to universal and immortal *Fame*, to *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*; is every where *the same* all over the Universe, and is subject to *no Change*, but is immutable, uniform, and *eternal*, in respect both of its *Original* and *Duration*.³⁸

It is thus not true that “the *Moral Virtues* are all a *Chimera*”³⁹, as Campbell takes Mandeville to claim. Furthermore, it is interesting to note the proximity of the claim that virtue is adapted to self-love to the claim that virtue is in the agent’s interest. Campbell asserts that virtue is the best means to assure pleasure for the agent, i.e. he puts forward an egoistic argument for the Interest Claim and opposes Mandeville’s Augustinian view that virtue requires self-denial. Yet again, he will be forced by the *Committee for Purity of Doctrine* to comment on the “divine Commands to Self-denial”⁴⁰.

1.2.3. The Further Explication

The second treatise is entitled *Treatise II viz A further Explication of the Principles in the foregoing Enquiry, with some Reflections upon a late Book, intituled, An Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (pp. 257 – 467, henceforth referred to as *Further Explication*). It contains further elaborations of Campbell’s moral philosophy and numerous criticisms of Hutcheson’s account of human nature and morality in the *Inquiry*. Campbell’s criticisms are based on his reading of the 2nd edition of Hutcheson’s *Inquiry*. He seems not to have considered the revised 3rd edition from 1729 for his new edition of the *Enquiry* in 1733.⁴¹

³⁸ Ibid., p. 167.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 179. In his criticisms, Campbell only refers to notorious passages from Mandeville’s *Enquiry*, which is the treatise where Mandeville’s *moral* theory is rather unclear. Cf. Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, pp. 185f. and 189f.

⁴⁰ Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, p. 9.

⁴¹ We have already mentioned that Hutcheson, in the third edition of his *Inquiry* (1729), reacts to some criticisms by John Clarke of Hull. Some of Hutcheson’s changes also invalidate Campbell’s criticisms against the second edition of the *Inquiry*.

The *Further Explication* reintroduces the idea that virtue or moral goodness consists in the “Proportion and Agreement, which any Action of a rational Mind bears to the Self-love of all those other intelligent Beings, to whom she is naturally associated”.⁴² Again, Campbell highlights that “Self-love, as it exerts it self in the Desire of universal unlimited Esteem, is the great commanding Motive that determines us to the Pursuit of such [virtuous] Actions”.⁴³ Self-love, in this form, is recommended as a virtuous motive. Campbell compares several kinds of pleasures⁴⁴ and argues in line with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson (and Aristotle, whose remarks on self-love from the *Nicomachean Ethics* he quoted at the very beginning of the *Enquiry*) that the pleasures of the mind are superior to the pleasures of the body. Having introduced a method of calculating the value of pleasure and pain⁴⁵, which seems to be inspired by Hutcheson, he puts forward a conception of self-love as reflected hedonism:

*Self-love, Self-interest, or whatever other Phrase can express this Principle in a rational Agent, signifies our embracing and pursuing those Perceptions, whether pleasing or painful at present, which, after we have look'd into the Nature and Consequences of Things, and fairly balanc'd them together, we judge to be most valuable, with relation to the Mind the only Seat of all our Pleasures, and properly one's Self.*⁴⁶

Self-love, in the sense of reflected hedonism, necessarily prompts us to desire the love and esteem of other agents as the most important source of pleasures of the mind.⁴⁷ Moral virtue is then said to consist in the “Love and Esteem which one rational Agent bears to another.”⁴⁸ An action's moral goodness consists

[...] in the Suitableness and *Congruity*, which that Action bears to this *natural Turn* of Mind, essential to every rational Agent, whereby we receive and pursue *pleasing Perceptions*. Or, in the Conformity it has to our *Self-*

⁴² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 257. Campbell's use of the feminine pronoun “she” is rooted in the Latin expression “mens rationalis”.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 257f.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 261ff.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 276ff.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 317.

love, while it concurs and co-operates with this Principle in approving our being happy, and to secure and promote our *Well-being*.⁴⁹

Campbell gives virtue an ultimately self-interested basis. This holds even if he specifies that only *true* self-love, and not its *mistaken* varieties, are virtuous. Furthermore, Campbell asserts that the motives for virtuous actions are self-interested or based on self-love. Contrary to Hutcheson, he claims that benevolence is too calm to motivate us, or that it must be analysed in terms of self-love, as he also claims.⁵⁰

The *Further Explication* contains more attacks against Hutcheson. Campbell criticises Hutcheson's idea of the possibility of disinterested love and disinterested benevolence⁵¹ and the Hutchesonian distinction between natural and moral goodness,⁵² and argues that moral virtue ultimately consists in pleasure for the agent. Relying on the theory that moral judgments are based on the observer's imagined benefit from the judged action, Campbell argues for a hedonistic reduction of Hutcheson's moral sense theory. We shall take a closer look at these points in section 3.

1.2.4. Other writings

The third treatise is entitled *Treatise III. Shewing, That Moral Virtue promotes Trade, and aggrandizes a Nation* (pp. 469 – 546, henceforth referred to as *Treatise III*). It contains an attack against Mandeville's claim that moral vice can be for the benefit of the public. Campbell wants to show "*that the Principles of Moral Virtue are the only Means to aggrandize a Nation*".⁵³ Criticising Mandeville's conception of luxury as too broad, and his conception of virtue as self-denial as a "mean, starving, idle, dreaming

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 319.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 323. Cf. our discussion in section 3.4.1.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 340ff., 366.

⁵² Ibid., p. 354ff.

⁵³ Ibid., p. xviii.

Thing”⁵⁴, Campbell argues that virtue, which “leaves every Man in the full Possession of all his natural Desires and Appetites, to be indulg’d and gratified within the Limits of the *Self-Love* of those intelligent Beings among we are mixed”⁵⁵, indeed promotes trade and aggrandises a Nation. In the aforementioned *Remarks upon Some Passages in Books publish’d by Mr. Archibald Campbell* (henceforth referred to as *Remarks*), published by Campbell in 1735 as a reaction to his problems with clerical censorship, Campbell further develops certain points of the *Enquiry*. Among the points that attracted the attention of the Committee for Purity of Doctrine was that Campbell “makes Self-love or Self-interest the Origine, the first Spring, the leading Principle, the only Standard and great Cause; yea the sole and universal Motive to all virtuous and religious Actions.”⁵⁶ This was said to contradict the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, as well as the *Catechisms*, “where Self-love and Self-seeking are mentioned amongst the Sins forbidden in the first Commandment.”⁵⁷ Furthermore, Campbell’s positions “make not the Nature of Virtue to ly in a Conformity to, or keeping of the Law of God.”⁵⁸ To claim that self-love is the ultimate motive for all actions of all rational beings, including God, is unacceptable. “This, as it relates to God, makes all his Actions necessary, and so the Creation not to be the free Act of his Will [...] and, as it relates to us, the divine Commands to Self-denial, are thereby made altogether impossible to be obeyed.”⁵⁹ Finally, “not the Will of God in his Law, but the Self-love of others, is made the Rule and Bounds of our natural Desires and Appetites.”⁶⁰ Amongst other points, Campbell argues that his theory does

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 527.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 534.

⁵⁶ The Committee of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for Purity of Doctrine and Campbell, *Remarks upon Some Passages in Books Publish'd by Mr. Archibald Campbell*, p. 6.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 6.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

not entail a contradiction with “the great Gospel-rule of Self-denial”⁶¹ and elaborates and explains his arguments for the claim that self-love is the motive for virtuous actions as well as the standard for moral virtue.

2. Self-love in human nature ---

2.1. Hedonistic self-love, psychological hedonism and self-preservation

Both Campbell’s theory of human nature and his reductive analysis of morality are based on a *hedonistic concept of self-love*. Even if he uses the term “self-love” in different contexts, for example when discussing the desire for esteem, he presupposes that the latter can be analysed in terms of a desire for a special kind of pleasure. Self-love, in its most general sense, is thus not a kind of love in the sense of a complex emotion or a kind of caring for the self, but a self-directed desire for a specific object – Campbell repeatedly mentions pleasure, happiness, and well-being.

At the beginning of the *Enquiry*, Campbell writes that “Self-love is to be counted the very same with our *natural Desire after Pleasure or Happiness*.”⁶² There are numerous other passages repeating that self-love is a desire for pleasure for the agent, especially in the *Further Explication*. Campbell presupposes in line with other authors that the desire for pleasure for the agent is “natural”:

If we reflect upon our Constitution, we shall find, that human Nature is so turned, or is cast in such a Mould, that it is necessarily susceptible of

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 19.

⁶² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 5.

Pleasure and Pain. [...] Now, from this original Cast of human Nature, that exerts it self, I do believe, from the first Moment of our Existence, there immediately ariseth a very active and commanding Principle, I mean, *Self-love*, or Self-preservation, according to the Influence of which, we necessarily delight in *Pleasure*, and seek and pursue after it; but hate *Pain*, and avoid and flee from it.⁶³

According to this preliminary approach to hedonistic self-love, an agent can be said to act from self-love when she acts in order to seek (any kind of) pleasure or to avoid (any kind of) pain. From a teleological point of view, self-love under normal circumstances aims at self-preservation. In section 2.3. below, we will focus on Campbell's distinctions between different kinds of pleasures and different forms of self-love.

Campbell also claims that *every* action is motivated by hedonistic self-love, or that self-love is the sole motive for actions:

'Tis very certain, that all Men have implanted in their Nature a Principle of *Self-love* or Preservation, that irresistibly operates upon us in all Instances whatsoever, and is the great Cause, or the *first Spring* of all our several Motions and Actions, which Way soever they may happen to be directed.⁶⁴

And elsewhere, he claims even more explicitly that

[...] all rational Agents whatsoever are intirely under the absolute Government of Self-love, and can favour Nothing, at any Rate, but as it serves to gratify this Principle, or to assist and relieve their natural Desire of Well-being [...]⁶⁵

Again, this claim is repeated in numerous passages throughout the several parts of the *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*.⁶⁶ Given the combination of Campbell's hedonistic concept of self-love and his claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions, he puts forward psychological hedonism as a theory of human nature.

In accordance with the claim that self-love is the only motive for actions, he argues for an analysis of seemingly other-directed motives,

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 260f. Cf. also Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 274.

⁶⁴ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 4.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 142.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 4, 98, 101, 258, etc.

such as benevolence, pity and parental love, in terms of an ultimately self-directed desire for pleasure.⁶⁷ Within this framework, Campbell simultaneously attacks Mandeville and Hutcheson. On the psychological level, Campbell suggests an analysis of Hutcheson's concept of benevolence in terms of self-love. When it comes to self-love's moral value, we can take it that he objects to Mandeville in stating that being motivated by self-love in its *true* sense does not have the morally problematic consequences Campbell derives from Mandeville's claims. Ultimately, this strategy has to rest on a distinction between different forms of hedonistic self-love, and on the claim that Mandeville does not differentiate between them. This will be developed shortly.

Campbell regularly equates self-love with the desire (or principle) for self-preservation.⁶⁸ As in Mandeville, however, it becomes clear from his discussion of suicide that self-preservation must be conceived as a consequence of an agent's acting according to self-love under normal circumstances, but not as the ultimate aim of all desires. In order to save the claim that all actions are motivated by self-love, Campbell explains that the agent who commits suicide and thus does not preserve her existence is still motivated to act by self-love:

In particular, one cannot but observe, that Self-love or Interest is so deeply laid in human Nature, that it even then exerts it self very powerfully, when, one should think, People are directly contradicting it; for most certainly such unhappy Creatures, as with their own Hands make away with themselves, and go about utterly to extinguish their Existence, do thereby intend to relieve themselves from some dark gloomy Thoughts, that are too tormenting to be endured, which is nothing but a violent *Effort* of Self-love, in one's Pursuit after Ease and Happiness.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ For example *Ibid.*, p. 340ff.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 258, 261, 274, 281 etc.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 258f. This is similar in Mandeville's treatment of suicide. Cf. also Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, p. 114 on this point.

Self-love, conceived of as a desire to experience pleasure and to avoid pain can prompt an agent to suicide.⁷⁰ Acting out of self-love and acting for the sake of self-preservation, therefore, are not the same – even if Campbell frequently treats them as such. Under normal circumstances, however, self-preservation is a consequence of behaviour motivated by self-love.

In order to “prevent any Prejudices that may arise from introducing *Self-love* as a laudable Principle”⁷¹, Campbell quotes Aristotle. It is interesting to note that before discussing Aristotle’s two notions of *philautía*, Campbell insinuates that there is a distinction between the mere maintenance of our physical existence on the one hand and the pursuit of our well-being, which requires respecting our needs as social beings, on the other:

And as Self-love is the Principle that universally prevails over all Mankind; so, according to the Influence it really has over us, we are necessarily concern’d, not so much to maintain our Existence, as to pursue our *Well-being*, or to have our Existence preserved to us in such Circumstances wherein we may feel ourselves ever easy and happy.⁷²

As we will see shortly, the preservation of one’s well-being in circumstances that make the agent happy requires the reflected pursuit of true self-love as opposed to following mistaken self-love.

⁷⁰ John Clarke of Hull, who suggests with Campbell a hedonistic reduction of all motives (including benevolence) to self-love, explains the phenomenon of suicide similarly: “Self-love is a Principle common to all Mankind, and inseparable from human Nature, and indeed all Natures capable of Happiness and Misery. The Instances of such as voluntarily destroy themselves, by offering Violence to their own Lives, are so far from being any Objection against this, that they are a Confirmation of it. For none are observed to act in that manner, out of Gaiety of Temper, but only when they are driven to it, by a melancholy State of Mind, that renders them incapable of any real Enjoyment of Life, and subjects them to great and insupportable Misery. Then the Mind, from the powerful Principle of Self-Love, is hurried on to seek for an End of its Anguish and Distress, by getting out of a World of Woe, in hopes of a State of utter Insensibility, or of finding it self in some other World, where it apprehends it cannot be worse, but may possibly be better.” John Clarke, “The Foundation of Morality in Theory and Practice considered” in *British Moralists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897 [1730]), p. 223.

⁷¹ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 5.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 4f. This point recalls Barbeyrac’s distinction between *preservation of existence* and *perfection of self* in his discussion of Pufendorf’s notion of self-preservation. Pufendorf, *Le droit de la nature et des gens*, p. 200, fn 2.

2.2. *The diversification of hedonistic self-love*

Campbell claims that self-love in the sense of a universal hedonistic motivational principle “diversifies” itself into different kinds of desires, affections and passions: “all the Desires of the Mind are nothing but Self-love diversify’d, or the different Ways wherein it moves and affects us.”⁷³ This is best understood as meaning that all desires, even desires that generally count as non-hedonistic ones, can be analysed as desires that ultimately aim at some kind of pleasure for the agent.

2.2.1. *Self-love as love of praise and sociability*

Campbell’s moral theory is founded on one particular form of selfish desires, or on one “diversified” form of hedonistic self-love, namely a rational agent’s desire to be esteemed by other agents. This corresponds to self-love as love of praise as introduced in chapter I of this study,⁷⁴ and Campbell frequently calls the desire for esteem “Self-love”. He claims that, in rational agents, self-love as the desire for pleasure naturally “exerts it self in the Desire of universal unlimited *Esteem*.”⁷⁵ According to Campbell’s moral theory, self-love as love of praise provides the motives for all virtuous actions. This point will be discussed in greater detail in section 3. The desire for esteem is explained as being grounded on hedonistic self-love in that it “is nothing but Self-love exerting it self.”⁷⁶ That “this Desire after the Love and Esteem of others, comes immediately from Self-love”⁷⁷ is manifest from the fact that our happiness depends on the esteem of others. If they esteem us, they “heartily concur with us in

⁷³ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 12.

⁷⁴ Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.2.

⁷⁵ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, pp. 257f.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

our Endeavours”⁷⁸ to be happy, but if they hate us, they interfere. Therefore, self-love prompts us to acquire their esteem.

Campbell also claims that the “Desire of *Esteem coincides*, or is the same with the Desire of *Companions*, to whom we stand well affected.”⁷⁹ On this basis, he asserts – against Hobbes and Mandeville, as he writes – that there are *natural social appetites*, or natural instincts to associate with other individuals of the same species.⁸⁰ Human beings’ “Propension to associate together”⁸¹ is grounded in an attraction towards beings “of a like or common Nature”⁸², which can also be observed in animals. This propension to associate is so strong that it leads to the formation of societies, unless it is outweighed by other, stronger desires or passions.

What is more fundamental – the desire of esteem or the natural social affections? Campbell argues against Hobbes that the desire for esteem presupposes some natural affection towards similar creatures.⁸³ Yet, these social appetites can be analysed in terms of hedonistic self-love. Thus Campbell claims that “*Self-love* immediately prompts us to embrace [them] with kind tender Affections”⁸⁴, and he speaks of “our *social Appetite*, that flows from [Self-love]”.⁸⁵ Furthermore, he argues that the propension to associate with similar creatures is based on the fact that we love ourselves in others.⁸⁶ Thus, even if the desire for esteem presupposes natural social affections, this is not a threat to Campbell’s psychological egoism, as he analyses the natural social affections in terms of hedonistic self-love. On this point, he differs greatly

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 315.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 47.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 16ff.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 14.

⁸² Ibid., p. 14.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 33.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 33.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 309.

from Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler, who all argue for the reality of natural social affections that are irreducible to egoistic affections.

To distinguish his approach from Hobbes' and Mandeville's, Campbell objects to Hobbes's stance by stating that it is absurd to say that "we desire Honour *primarily*, or from a Propension of Nature, and Companions only *secondarily*, or by Accident."⁸⁷ Rather, the "Desire of *Honour*, and the Desire of *Companions* are only different Expressions signifying the *same Thing*, or the self-same Thing set in different Lights."⁸⁸ The desire for companions is as natural as the desire for esteem or honour. In Campbell's moral psychology, however, this still boils down to the combination of a) a selfish reduction of the desire for company and b) the claim that an agent who desires esteem from others *necessarily* has a desire for company. Campbell may contradict Hobbes in claiming b), but he does not in claiming a). Ultimately, the natural affections towards other rational beings can only be said to be "natural" because of the naturalness of their purely self-interested basis. Campbell does not, however, attack Hobbes' egoistic assumptions.

With respect to the gratification of the desire for companions, or of the social desires, Campbell asserts that in solitude, a human agent cannot "enjoy himself with any Satisfaction, even though he should be well provided in all Things whatsoever that can be thought necessary to render a single Life every way happy"⁸⁹. The strongest interpretation of this passage is that (i) without the company of other agents who could gratify her desire for esteem, the agent cannot gain *any pleasure at all*. Thus, it would be a necessary condition to the experiencing of any

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 35.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 35.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 12f. The following explications are not to be found in the 1728 edition of the *Enquiry*. Campbell added these passages for the edition of 1733: "For, by every one's Experience, there is so strong a Propension, so irresistible a Desire in the Mind of Man to have *Companions* of his own Make, or to *associate* himself with other rational Beings, that all the other Sweets and Enjoyments of Life, even the Contemplation of the Nature of Things, with all the inward Transports of Mind it can afford to us, would without *this* be quite tasteless and insipid."

pleasure that the desire for company and the desire for esteem can be gratified. A weaker interpretation is that (ii) the desire for company is so important or strong that the human agent will never experience a *sufficient amount of pleasure* to feel happy, if she is not able to satisfy her desire for company, and thus her love of praise.⁹⁰ Both interpretations show the fundamental importance for the desire for esteem in Campbell's theory of human nature. Whichever interpretation is correct, it is obviously essential for the gratification of an agent's self-love in the hedonistic sense that she acquire the esteem and love of other agents.

It is illuminating to note two differences with Mandeville's Augustinian understanding of self-love as love of praise. Firstly, Mandeville treats love of praise as an effect of self-love as excessive pride.⁹¹ Campbell, however, does not presuppose such a relation and treats love of praise as a variety of hedonistic self-love, thus avoiding the morally problematic aspects highlighted in Mandeville. Self-love as love of praise is not caused by a morally corrupt selfish passion, but is a morally innocent form of self-love. Within Campbell's distinction between *true* and *mistaken* self-love, which will be discussed shortly, self-love as excessive pride is counted as a mistaken form of self-love, which is incompatible with the agent's true interests.

Secondly, and again in the context of his distinction between true and mistaken self-love, Campbell is more specific than Mandeville as to the aim of the desire for esteem. Where Mandeville asserts that the desire for praise will be gratified by any kind of praise, even obviously unjustified or insincere praise (flattery), Campbell is far more restrictive. Criticising Mandeville, he highlights that the desire of esteem has to be distinguished

⁹⁰ It seems to me that both interpretations are compatible with the passage in *Ibid.*, p. 13. Without companions, Campbell claims, "all the other Sweets and Enjoyments of Life [...] would without *this* be quite tasteless and insipid."

⁹¹ Cf. also Nicole, "De la charité et de l'amour-propre", pp. 183f. on "Que la plus générale inclination qui naisse de l'amour-propre est le désir d'être aimé."

from a mere desire for “*Vain-glory*, or popular Applause”.⁹² The desire for esteem is not the same as “pride” in the sense of a state of mind which “is therefore apt to raise in one’s Mind the Ideas of a Passion very mean and infamous, and clean contrary to the social Appetite.”⁹³ For Campbell, and contrary to Mandeville, the desire for esteem aims at justified approbation of the agent by others. Furthermore, the desire for esteem is a desire of “true Fame and Glory, which is nothing else but *universal unlimited Esteem*”.⁹⁴ A rational agent ought to extend her desire for esteem to all other rational agents, and not only to particular groups⁹⁵, and she ought to desire “*eternal Fame and Glory*”, i.e. esteem from God.⁹⁶ The obligation for this, however, is rooted in the agent’s self-interest. The gratification of self-love, exerting itself as the desire for universal and eternal esteem, will provide the agent with the greatest amount of pleasure. Campbell’s essential point in all this is that the way to society does not involve conflicting selfish interests, as in Mandeville, but a harmony between the individuals’ selfish interests.

2.2.2. *The universality of self-love and the possibility of benevolence*

How can the desired esteem from other agents be gained? According to Campbell, this is accomplished by gratifying others’ self-love, which necessarily causes their esteem for the agent.⁹⁷ But what makes human agents gratify the self-love of others? Here, Campbell puts forward a rather surprising claim: “*Universal Love and Benevolence* is the great Affection of our Minds, that is *adapted* to this universal Principle of *Self-love*”.⁹⁸ If an agent is benevolent towards other agents and towards mankind in general, and if she loves God, she employs the surest means to

⁹² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, pp. 75f.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 89.

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 75f, p. 91.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 73 – 76.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 86.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 103 and 142.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p 109.

gain universal and eternal esteem, and thus to gratify her own self-love. If we momentarily ignore the fact that gratifying others' self-love ultimately aims at the gratification of the agent's own self-love, Campbell's view reminds us of Hutcheson's conception of universal benevolence as the most virtuous affection.

Campbell, however, faces a problem. For a psychological egoist, only *beneficence*⁹⁹ is possible, i.e. promoting the good of others for ultimately self-interested motives. Let us remember that Campbell claims that self-love is "the great Cause, or the *first Spring* of all our several Motions and Actions, which Way so ever they may happen to be directed"¹⁰⁰. Contending that we act on *benevolent* motives - i.e. on motives that ultimately aim at promoting the well-being of other agents - is not compatible with the universal claim of psychological hedonism. Since Campbell firmly insists on psychological hedonism, he must also claim that no *benevolent* actions occur. The occurrence of *beneficence*, however, is compatible with the claim of psychological egoism.

There are two possible ways to try to avoid a fundamental inconsistency in Campbell's system. Firstly, in certain passages Campbell arguably restricts the claim about the universality of self-love to *motivating* desires, and does not extend it to desires in general. One of his criticisms of Hutcheson, which we will examine in section 3.4.1., is that benevolence is too weak to motivate us to virtuous actions, and that therefore the motive for virtuous actions must be a selfish principle.¹⁰¹ This suggests that he thinks that desires that are not grounded in self-love are psychologically possible, however too weak to motivate human agents in reality.

Alternatively, we will also highlight that Campbell provides a general analysis of *benevolence* in terms of self-love. He argues that benevolence

⁹⁹ Cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.3.c).

¹⁰⁰ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 4.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 323.

“is not *disinterested*, but is manifestly founded on *Self-interest*.”¹⁰² Thus, what Campbell calls *benevolence* is *beneficence* in Hutcheson’s terminology. According to Campbell, we tend to promote the happiness of others precisely *because* we take pleasure in gaining the esteem of others for having gratified the self-love of other agents. This claim is compatible with the interpretation of Campbell that he considers all desires – not only motivating ones – to be selfish.

2.3. “True” and “mistaken” self-love

Campbell distinguishes between true and mistaken self-love. The distinction is essential for his moral philosophy, because he asserts not only (1) that self-love motivates all actions, but also (2) that it is the motive for all morally virtuous actions, and (3) that it is the standard for determining an action’s moral value. This raises the following problem: If self-love is the motive for all actions, then there are morally evil and irrational actions that are also motivated by self-love. How can self-love under these circumstances be praised and recommended as the motive for morally virtuous actions, or be claimed to provide a standard for determining the moral value of an action? Obviously, it will also motivate morally vicious actions and lead to their approval. Furthermore, Campbell needs to distinguish his egoistic account of human nature from Mandeville’s.

In order to protect the moral claims (2) and (3), and to distinguish his approach from Mandeville’s, Campbell asserts that, for rational agents, there are different forms of self-love, or different ways of loving oneself with different moral values. Thus, it is essential to “determine the true Meaning of Self-love”¹⁰³. Unlike Hutcheson, Campbell does not base his

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 369f.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 275, *marginalia*.

distinction between different forms of self-love and their evaluation on a theory of the emotions. Hutcheson suggests a distinction between self-love as a calm affection and as a violent passion in order to distinguish between morally more and less acceptable forms of self-love. Campbell, on the other hand, speaks of desires, affections, and passions interchangeably, for both self-love as a desire for pleasure and self-love as a desire for esteem,¹⁰⁴ and does not elaborate a theory of the emotions like Hutcheson. However, he indicates criteria to distinguish true and mistaken self-love. These are sometimes rather explicit, sometimes only implicit. The importance of the distinction for Campbell's moral philosophy justifies, however, taking a close look at them in order to provide a reconstruction of his arguments.

2.3.1. *Short-sighted as opposed to provident self-love*

When discussing self-love as a motive for actions, Campbell presupposes a distinction between a form of self-love that is short-sighted, and naturally found in non-rational creatures such as brutes, and a form of self-love “which properly belongs to a *provident* Creature, or a *rational Agent*, who is capable of understanding what Influence the gratifying of any present Sensations may have upon his Futurity.”¹⁰⁵ Short-sighted and provident self-love “can never be reconcil'd”.¹⁰⁶ A similar distinction is invoked when Campbell claims:

Self-love, Self-interest, or whatever other Phrase can express this Principle in a rational Agent, signifies our embracing and pursuing those Perceptions, whether pleasing or painful at present, which, after we have look'd into the Nature and Consequences of Things, and fairly balanc'd them together, we judge to be most valuable, with relation to the Mind the only Seat of all our Pleasures, and properly one's Self.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ For example, *Ibid.*, pp. 90f.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 282. Campbell seems to claim here that in cases of conflicts between short-sighted and provident self-love, the latter has always to be preferred. This is a claim that can also be found in Hutcheson.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

Campbell argues in this passage for a concept of true and recommendable self-love in terms of a reflected hedonism. Acting out of true self-love is not simply gratifying the desire which happens to be the most intense at a given moment. Rather, it involves reflection upon the nature of things, the consequences of one's actions and a reflected judgment about the best means to reach one's goals. The satisfaction of less intense long-term desires can be more important than the satisfaction of intense short-term desires. In the case of a conflict between short-term and long-term goals, reflected and provident self-love motivates the rational agent to act for the satisfaction of her long-term desires. Mistaken, short-sighted self-love provides motives that are against the true interests of the creature. Provident self-love aims at pleasure for the agent, but it does so in a reflected way. A central aspect in this context is that there exists, according to Campbell, a hierarchy between different pleasures.

2.3.2. True self-love and the hierarchy of pleasures

Campbell asserts that "all our Safety and Happiness depends upon the *good Choice we make of Pleasure and Pain*, which cannot be done unless we have some particular Science whereby to govern our Judgment in those Points."¹⁰⁸ How is this to be understood? Campbell, like Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, distinguishes between different kinds of pleasures and argues for a qualitative hierarchy.¹⁰⁹ Self-love, understood in terms of an unspecified desire for pleasure, can be directed to objects of different value. True self-love aims at the pleasures of higher value, whereas mistaken self-love aims at pleasures of lower value, as we shall see shortly.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 297.

¹⁰⁹ Interestingly, neither Hutcheson nor Campbell treat the question of whether an agent ought to provide other agents with certain kinds of pleasures rather than others. They only discuss the value of the kinds of pleasures with respect to the agent who experiences them.

Perceptions (Campbell also speaks of sensations) of pleasure and pain have two sources, which determine their value. Firstly, there are pleasures derived “from the Impressions of some Objects that are *external* to the Mind”¹¹⁰, such as the human body or other, external objects. These impressions have their causal origin in disturbances of the “human Machine”¹¹¹, or in the senses, and they are called bodily pleasures. Secondly, there are pleasures of the mind, which are derived “from some Thoughts and Reflections, about which the Mind is *immediately* imploy’d.”¹¹² Such are the social pleasures that stem from the satisfaction of the desire of esteem, and the pleasures of beauty and imagination. The social pleasures will be discussed in greater detail in the next subsection.

The pleasures of the mind are superior to the bodily pleasures. This is true in a quantitative as well as in a qualitative sense, Campbell claims. Teleologically speaking, the bodily pleasures have been given to us by God in order to preserve our body and our species.¹¹³ However, “these sensual Pleasures are all mortal, [and] must necessarily expire with the Body”¹¹⁴. The pleasures of the mind, however, are eternal, and “the Mind, without being under the Influence of her bodily Senses, can entertain herself with the most pleasing Ideas.”¹¹⁵ Their eternality makes the pleasures of the mind quantitatively immensely more important than those of the body, even if the former may often be less intensely felt than the latter.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, there is a qualitative or axiological difference, which rests on the fact that the mind is essential to the agent’s self whereas the body is not. Campbell claims that not the body but the “*Mind is properly one’s*

¹¹⁰ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 261.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 261.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 267f.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

¹¹⁶ In section 2.3.4., we will discuss Campbell’s *quantitative* approach to the value of pleasures in terms of the multiplication of their degree (or felt intensity) with their duration.

*Self*¹¹⁷. And: “One’s *Self-interest*, or Self-preservation, is the same, as to say, the *Interest*, and Preservation, or Well-being *of the Mind*.”¹¹⁸

Preferring the bodily pleasures in case of an inconsistency between the pleasures of the mind and the pleasures of the body, or pursuing principally the bodily pleasures, would be a case of mistaken self-love. “Such a Pursuit, far from being *Self-love*, or *Self-Preservation*, would, on the contrary, be *Self-hatred* or *Self-destruction*.”¹¹⁹ The pleasures of the mind, and especially the social pleasures, have to be given more importance than the bodily pleasures. However, this does not mean “that *Self-love* obligeth us to renounce those pleasing Perceptions we have by Means of our Body.”¹²⁰ Total renouncement would, of course, be a case of self-neglect, given that the bodily pleasures, too, have the teleological function of keeping the body alive.¹²¹ Campbell does not, however, specify how to determine their importance.

2.3.3. Social pleasures

In the moral context, the social pleasures are the most important pleasures of the mind to be considered. The body cannot provide the pleasures that “arise from the Esteem and Commendation of a whole System of rational Agents.”¹²² The *social pleasures*, which arise from the satisfaction of self-love as love of praise, are much more valuable than the bodily pleasures. Therefore, they must be given more weight in determining what is in the agent’s interest. If the pleasures of the mind and the pleasures of the body are in conflict, or cannot be experienced at the same time, the following has to be considered:

Now we know from Experience, that the Pleasures which spring from these two Sources, are not always consistent with one another. For there is

¹¹⁷ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 285.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 285.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 290.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 287.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 267.

¹²² Ibid., p. 286.

nothing more obvious, than that whatever particular Mind is so powerfully devoted to some agreeable Sensations, that come from her Body, that she must needs have them at any Rate; she can never attain those delightful Perceptions, that arise from the Esteem and Commendation of a whole System of rational Agents.¹²³

Attributing too much importance to the bodily pleasures in cases of conflict will make the enjoyment of the social pleasures impossible.

Another point concerns the *scope* of self-love when aiming at the social pleasures. As we have seen, the social pleasures are thought to stem from the satisfaction of the desire for esteem. This latter ought to aim at universal and eternal esteem, not at the esteem from only a particular group. Keeping this in mind, Campbell claims:

And the great Cause of all the Enormities that those human Plagues are guilty of, is their *confining* of this Principle, or their contracting it within the narrow Bounds of their own Gang, and not suffering it to exert itself according to *Nature*, and to take that wide and diffusive Course that extends to all these intelligent Beings with whom they are naturally associated.¹²⁴

Thus, the social pleasures at which true self-love aims are the social pleasures that stem from the gratification of the desire for universal unlimited esteem, not from the gratification of the partial desire for esteem from a particular group. True self-love has as its ultimate goal the esteem of all rational agents. Campbell supports Hutcheson in emphasising the importance of universality, a point on which Hutcheson and Butler have been shown to differ. Yet, where Hutcheson recommends the universality of benevolence, Campbell recommends the universality of the desire for esteem.

Let us note that the social pleasures, which Campbell regards as the most important pleasures of the mind, are explained as having their origin in the satisfaction of the desire for esteem. They are thus ultimately self-directed. Hutcheson refers to these pleasures as the “pleasures of honour”. In his hierarchy of the pleasures, they are judged less valuable

¹²³ Ibid., p. 286.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 106.

than the moral pleasures. Campbell, however, does not speak of such a thing as the moral pleasures. When it comes to morality, as we shall see in section 3, Campbell focuses solely on the pleasures arising from the satisfaction of the desire for esteem.

2.3.4. *The mathematics of pleasure*

Campbell produces an additional argument for the quantitative superiority of the pleasures of the mind - especially the social pleasures. He suggests a mathematical approach to the computation of the value of pleasing perceptions “in order to determine the true Meaning of Self-love”¹²⁵. The application of mathematical methods in the domain of moral philosophy reminds one of both Hutcheson’s *Essay* and his *Inquiry*. In the fifth section of the *Essay* Hutcheson suggests a quantitative model to compare the value of different kinds of pleasures, and in the third section of the *Inquiry*, he presents his mathematical approach to compute the morality of actions. Campbell for his part suggests a model to quantify the value of pleasing and painful experiences to determine the agent’s true self-interest in the egoistic sense.

In order to “determine the true *Moment* or *Value* of any Perceptions”¹²⁶ of pleasure and pain, Campbell distinguishes the qualities of *degree*, *duration* and *consequences* (or “consequent perceptions”¹²⁷). As with Hutcheson, he does not treat the question of how to empirically determine these qualities, but relies on intuition. The main purpose of his proposed model seems to be the comparison of similar cases – yet he also discusses some numerical examples.¹²⁸ The quantitative value of a perception is computed by multiplying its *degree* (which is best

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 275, *marginalia*.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 279.

¹²⁷ Ibid., pp. 278 and 275.

¹²⁸ Cf. our discussion of Hutcheson’s moral mathematics in chapter IV, section 3.1.1.c). Campbell writes as to the purpose of his model: “And as every Man can thus determine the *full Value* of any particular Set of Perceptions, so can he compare one Set with another, and judge which is most valuable, *that is*, which is capable to entertain him with the highest and most lasting Felicities.” Ibid., p. 281.

understood as intensity of feeling) with its *duration*, and by adding the value of its *consequent perceptions*. Pleasure, in Campbell's model, has a positive value, pain a negative one. In the case of mixed perceptions,¹²⁹ the different values simply have to be subtracted from each other. A mixed perception's *pleasing* value is diminished by its *painful* value, and the *resulting* value can be positive or negative.

It has been mentioned that Campbell claims that the pleasures of the body are finite in duration. The pleasures of the mind, however, are eternal, since the mind "without being under the Influence of her bodily Senses, can entertain herself with the most pleasing Ideas."¹³⁰ If their duration is eternal, thus Campbell's argument, then they are infinitely more valuable than the bodily pleasures.¹³¹ This consequence is at least supported by Campbell's high estimation of the mind as "the only Seat of all our Pleasures, and properly one's Self."¹³² In any case, Campbell's mathematical approach to the pleasures is ultimately intended to support his claim that the pleasures of the mind are superior to the pleasures of the body.

2.3.5. Summary of the core features of true self-love

At this point, let us summarise Campbell's suggested central features of true self-love, which is recommended by Campbell as a motive for virtuous actions and contrasted with mistaken self-love. In cases of conflict between different kinds of pleasures, true self-love, which is provident and involves reflection upon the consequences of one's actions, gives more weight to long-term than to short-term pleasures, even if the former may be less intense. It gives more weight to qualitatively higher than to qualitatively lower pleasures, and thus prefers the pleasures of

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 276.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p. 274.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 280f.

¹³² Ibid., p. 290.

the mind to the bodily pleasures. The social pleasures, which arise from the satisfaction of the desire for esteem, are the most important pleasures of the mind and most relevant to morality. Since true self-love aims at the social pleasures, it not only is compatible with the promotion of the well-being of others, but also requires it, as we shall see shortly. The social pleasures can only be experienced by means of promoting the well-being of others, i.e. by gratifying their self-love. Let us note again that according to Campbell all actions are motivated by self-love - either a true or a mistaken form of it. However, only true self-love (i.e. reflected provident self-love), which aims at attaining the pleasures from the satisfaction of the desire for universal unlimited esteem, provides motives for moral actions, and provides the standard to determine an action's moral value.

An important corollary of the distinction between true and mistaken self-love is that Campbell can claim that, even for agents who always act on (some form of) self-love, *self-denial* in some sense is possible.¹³³ The agent has to suppress her tendencies to follow one of the various forms of mistaken self-love, and has to cultivate herself with the goal of being motivated by true self-love. This point is important for Campbell's defence of his moral theory against the objection that his moral psychology discourages self-denial and self-cultivation. Furthermore, we shall see how Campbell argues that virtuous actions are motivated by self-love as a desire of esteem (i.e. self-love as love of praise).

2.3.6. True self-love necessarily incorporates a concern for the well-being of others

An objection of Campbell's regarding the critical view of self-love of Hutcheson is that he and others had "narrow and contracted Notions of

¹³³ Cf. section 3.4.2.

Self-love or Interest”¹³⁴, and thus came to erroneous conclusions about true self-love and its moral value. A passage criticising Hutcheson invokes the distinction between true and mistaken self-love and self-interest:

And, I hope, this Gentleman [i.e. Hutcheson] will give me leave to observe, he does not always affix the same *Ideas* to *Self-Love*, *Interest*, and the like, which cannot but prove the Cause of a good deal of Mistake and false Reasoning; whereof we have an Instance in the Point just now before us. For here he remarks, that *we never call that Man benevolent, who is in Fact useful to others, but at the same Time only intends his own* (I would call it *false or mistaken*) *Interest, without any Desire of, or Delight in the Good of others: (Which I always apprehend as an essential Ingredient in one’s true Interest.)*¹³⁵

Campbell indicates that the concern for the well-being of others is an essential part of true self-love. It is noteworthy, however, that the concern Campbell speaks about is ultimately self-interested. According to Campbell’s egoistic theory of human nature, if an agent has a concern for the well-being of others, it is instrumental to the gratification of her desire for esteem. Yet, Hutcheson’s point is that an ultimately self-interested concern for the well-being of another does not give rise to benevolent actions, even if it is a concern for the well-being of another. All it can give rise to is *beneficence*.

The passage quoted by Campbell is from the 2nd edition of Hutcheson’s *Inquiry*. Hutcheson writes: “We never call that Man benevolent, who is in fact useful to others, but at the same time only intends his own Interest, without any desire of, or delight in, the Good of others.”¹³⁶ In the 3rd edition of the *Inquiry*, as a reaction to John Clarke of Hull’s criticisms, Hutcheson is more precise and states: “We never call that Man benevolent, who is in fact useful to others, but at the same time only intends his own Interest, without any ultimate desire of the Good of others.”¹³⁷ The addition “without any *ultimate* desire of the good of

¹³⁴ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 259.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

¹³⁶ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 103.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

others [my emphasis]” draws attention to Hutcheson’s point that the distinction between genuine benevolence and mere beneficence rests on the distinction between *ultimately* disinterested and interested desires. If an agent has a desire for the well-being of others for selfish instrumental reasons, then the action can be counted as *beneficent*, yet it is not approved of as *benevolent*. For Hutcheson, then, an agent’s instrumental concern in others’ well-being does not raise approbation or esteem in an observer (and thus cannot serve to gratify the agent’s desire for esteem). Campbell seems to overlook this, but his point that true self-love involves an (instrumental) concern for the well-being of others is still important for his account of its moral evaluation.

Another point is worth mentioning in this context: In a letter to Campbell, John Simson, professor at the University of Glasgow and former teacher of Hutcheson, suggests calling Campbell’s notion of self-love “disinterested”:

*Now that every individual man is endowed with self-love or a principle of self-preservation whence flows this general Rule that every one is so to exercise his self-love as to allow the same free exercise to every other person of his self-love, or so to do to others as he would have them do to him. which I take to be your opinion and when self-love is thus exercised with one equal regard to the happiness of others as of our selves, I think it may be called disinterested self-love; that the Terms as commonly used be inconsistent.*¹³⁸

Simson is aware that the suggested use of the terms is unusual. In general, self-love is called (in some sense) “interested”, as we have seen in Hutcheson and Butler. Yet, given Campbell’s regular insistence on the fact that true self-love necessarily involves some concern for the well-being of others, Simson suggests calling Campbell’s concept of true self-

¹³⁸ Letter from Simson to Campbell, Glasgow, February 26th 1732. National Archives Edinburgh, GD461/15 (Correspondence with Simson). In this letter, Simson discusses a series of questions concerning the *Preface* to Campbell’s own edition of the *Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, and refers to discussions with Hutcheson on the subject of moral philosophy. - To a certain extent, Hutcheson’s discussion of the moral indifference of calm self-love without negative effects for others resounds in Simson’s letter. Cf. chapter IV, section 3.1.2.

love “disinterested” in order to distinguish it from other forms of self-love that do not include an “equal regard to the happiness of others as of our selves”. Campbell does not explicitly state Simson’s idea of equality of regard nor his idea of the general rule “*that every one is so to exercise his self-love as to allow the same free exercise to every other person of his self-love*” in the *Enquiry*’s edition from 1733, but he regularly emphasises that true self-love requires one to take account of the interests of others in *some* degree (albeit for self-interested reasons).¹³⁹

3. Self-love and morality

The concept of self-love is essential to Campbell’s view of human nature. Furthermore, it is fundamental to many aspects of his moral theory. At first sight, given Campbell’s criticisms of Hobbes and Mandeville, as well as the widespread reading of these two authors as promoters of self-love and vice, the importance Campbell attributes to self-love in his own moral theory is intriguing. In the Preface to his *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue*, Campbell emphasises that

[...] Self-love, *rightly understood*, is so far from reducing Moral Virtue to a mere Chimera, that it is the very Measure and Standard, whereby we judge of the Virtue and Goodness of Actions; I say, one should think, that the making this out, is beating the Enemy in his Quarters, and forcing him either to confess the Truth and Authority of Moral Virtue, or to ly under the Shame of mere Obstinacy and Perverseness.¹⁴⁰

The “enemies” whom Campbell mentions in this passage are notably authors such as Mandeville, Hobbes, and Spinoza. He criticises them for

¹³⁹ The following passage from the *Enquiry* is very close to Simson’s suggestion, however: “[...] *Virtue* leaves every Man in the full Possession of all his natural Desires and Appetites, to be indulg’d and gratified within the Limits of the *Self-love* of those intelligent Beings among whom we are mixed.” Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 534.

¹⁴⁰ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. xvii.

having misunderstood the concept of self-love and therefore having put forward a false and harmful theory of moral virtue. Campbell is convinced that self-love, “rightly understood”, provides a solid basis for the different aspects of his moral theory, and obviously thinks that his own moral theory will be sufficiently distinct from Mandeville’s and Hobbes’ accounts to exempt himself from the criticisms directed at them. One of his key criticisms of Mandeville is that it is not true “that to become truly virtuous, we must take off our Eyes from our own *Interest*”¹⁴¹. In other words, true self-love provides the motives for virtuous actions.

Besides criticising Hobbes and Mandeville, Campbell also attacks Hutcheson. We have already noted that some of his arguments against Hutcheson’s moral theory are based on the reproach that Hutcheson did not grasp the concept of true self-love. Campbell accuses him of having purported “narrow and contracted Notions of Self-love or Interest”¹⁴². When it comes to his own moral theory, Campbell’s main concern is to protect his claims against the objection that basing morality on self-love “reduces moral virtue to a chimera” - or, put differently, that such an account of morality makes virtue arbitrary and does not provide an appropriate basis for the distinction between moral good and evil.¹⁴³ With the *correct* notion of self-love, Campbell claims, these consequences can be avoided, and we can give a positive answer to the question “*whether [Moral Virtue] has any Foundation in Nature, and is a Thing real and unchangeable.*”¹⁴⁴

In the present section, we will take a closer look at some of Campbell’s important theses concerning true self-love and morality. Regarding the concept of morality itself, he claims that moral virtue is

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 451.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 259.

¹⁴³ Several criticisms of the *Committee for the Purity of Doctrine* focus on this point. Cf. Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, pp. 5 – 10. Campbell must have been aware from the philosophical debates on self-love that he makes himself vulnerable to a series of criticisms directed against Mandeville.

¹⁴⁴ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. xvi.

reducible to self-love in the sense that the morality of an action consists in its accordance with self-love, and he attacks Hutcheson's distinction between natural and moral goodness. Concerning moral epistemology, he asserts that self-love is the standard by which we correctly determine the moral value of an action, in other words that moral judgments are self-interested. As regards moral motivation, Campbell claims that virtuous actions are motivated by self-love in the sense of a desire of esteem, i.e. self-love as love of praise.

3.1. Morality reduced to self-love, or: The moral goodness of an action lies in its suitableness to self-love

What makes an action morally virtuous? Campbell's answer to this question is most clearly formulated in the context of his critique of Hutcheson's position. Hutcheson gave an account of the moral value of an action in terms of its benevolent motivation. Before discussing Campbell's objections, let us also recall that for Mandeville, who was frequently accused of reducing moral virtue to self-love, an action is morally virtuous if it is motivated by a rational ambition to promote the good of others and if it involves self-denial. Mandeville is certainly not treated appropriately by Campbell, who simply quotes the notorious phrase that "*the moral Virtues are the political Offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride*"¹⁴⁵ in order to dismiss the entire Mandevillian moral theory with the argument that it makes a "Chimera" and "idle Fancy" of moral virtue.

Let us now take a closer look at Campbell's answer to the question of what makes an action morally virtuous. Campbell restricts virtue to

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 1. The other Mandevillian claim intensively discussed by Campbell is "Private Vice, Publick Benefit". The third *Treatise* in Campbell's *Enquiry into the Original of Moral Virtue* includes a response to Mandeville.

“that which passeth betwixt two intelligent Minds, or that which lies immediately in the Conduct of one Mind towards another.”¹⁴⁶ Criticising Hutcheson, he claims that the moral goodness of an action consists in its accordance with self-love, not benevolence. In the *Preface*, for example, he writes:

*And upon the whole, I conclude, that the Actions of rational Beings, one towards another, are to be counted virtuous, as they are proportion'd and adapted to the particular Property of Self-love, or a Desire after Happiness, which is universally essential to all intelligent Natures.*¹⁴⁷

The claim that an action performed by a rational agent is, if it is “adapted to self-love”, morally virtuous is ambiguous unless it specifies *whose* self-love or desire for happiness is supposed to be gratified. The following reconstruction of the different steps that are involved in the performance of a virtuous action, according to Campbell, help to highlight this point: (1) Agent A performs an action *a* that gratifies agent B’s self-love¹⁴⁸. (2) For this reason, B approves of action *a* as virtuous and (3), as a consequence, esteems A. (4) B’s esteem for A then leads to the gratification of A’s self-love¹⁴⁹.

What makes action *a* virtuous? Step (1), the gratification of B’s self-love, or step (4), the gratification of A’s self-love? Without further specification, the claim that an action is morally virtuous if it is adapted to self-love admits both interpretations – let us call the first the *altruistic interpretation* and the second the *egoistic interpretation*. Campbell argues for the altruistic interpretation, according to which an action is morally virtuous if it gratifies the self-love of *other* persons. For example, Campbell asserts in the *Further Explication* that he makes

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 317.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. xvi.

¹⁴⁸ I.e. her hedonistic self-love, which may include her self-love as love of praise. We have to note furthermore that Campbell does not distinguish between an agent’s gratifying other agents’ *true* or *mistaken* self-love. Also, he does not distinguish gratifying their love of esteem from gratifying other kinds of self-love, for example a simple desire for bodily pleasures. Thus, he evades the question of whether there are morally different ways of gratifying other agents’ self-love.

¹⁴⁹ I.e. her self-love as love of praise.

[...] Virtue, or *moral Goodness*, to consist in the Proportion and *Agreement*, which any Action of a rational Mind bears to the *Self-love* of all those other intelligent Beings, to whom she is naturally associated.¹⁵⁰

Alongside other, similar passages, this passage strongly encourages the altruistic interpretation.¹⁵¹ Thus, step (1) makes A's action a virtuous, and not step (4).

Further evidence for the altruistic interpretation can be found in Campbell's self-defence in the *Remarks*, which were published in 1735 as a reaction to the Church's charges against his *Enquiry*. One of the charges was that Campbell made "Self-love to be the Standard of Moral Virtue, and not the Will or Law of God, agreeable to his infinite Perfections."¹⁵² In his defence against this charge, Campbell clarifies that he wants to put forward the altruistic interpretation, i.e. the analysis of moral virtue in terms of an action's gratification of *other* agents' self-love. He quotes and explains passages from the *Enquiry* where he claims that moral virtue "lies directly in the Fitness and Congruity which such Affections and Actions bear to the Glory of God, and the Well-being and Happiness of Mankind."¹⁵³ Furthermore, he writes that "I profess that the Happiness of that System of rational Beings, to whom we are associated, is the Standard of Moral Virtue".¹⁵⁴

However, we have to note two points. Firstly, Campbell opts for the altruistic interpretation of the claim that an action is morally virtuous if it is adapted to self-love, which is not the claim of an ethical egoist. We shall see in section 3.3., however, that he argues for an entirely self-interested analysis of moral approbation. In other words, an observer who makes a moral judgment about an action makes it always on the basis of

¹⁵⁰ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 257.

¹⁵¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 202, p. 205, p. 317 etc.

¹⁵² Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, pp. 19, 6, 8.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 39. Furthermore, he quotes another passage from the *Enquiry* (namely p. 220): "That the intrinsick Goodness or Rectitude of Moral Virtue, or of universal Love and Righteousness (as it relates to our Fellow-men) lies directly in the Fitness and Congruity which such Affections and Actions bear to the Self-love and Preservation, or the Well-Being and Happiness of Mankind, or of human Nature." Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, p. 39.

¹⁵⁴ Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, p. 38.

the action's effect on her self-love. Secondly, when specifying A's motives for performing action a, we have to keep in mind that Campbell is a psychological hedonist who holds that *every* action is motivated by self-love. A's motive for performing the virtuous action a is thus not the motive of gratifying B's self-love for B's sake, but the motive of gratifying B's self-love with the ultimate goal of gratifying A's own desire of esteem. Still, according to the present account, the moral value of action a does not depend on the degree to which it gratifies A's self-love in step (4), even though it is *ultimately* performed to gain the esteem of others.

Given Campbell's mathematical approach to the pleasures, we can take him to claim that the more "pleasing perceptions"¹⁵⁵ an action provides to others, the morally better it is. We have to note that even if the altruistic interpretation is correct, Campbell's conception of morality is still not compatible with Hutcheson's. The intention of gratifying other agent's self-love for the ultimate goal of gaining their esteem, in Hutcheson's theory, counts as an instance of *beneficence*, but not of *benevolence*, and thus has no moral value.

Even on the altruistic interpretation, there is an important psychological connection between virtue in the sense of the satisfaction of others' self-love on the one hand and the satisfaction of the agent's own true self-love on the other. If A satisfies the self-love of B, the satisfaction of B's self-love *necessarily* brings about B's esteem and approbation for A.¹⁵⁶ Since B's esteem gratifies A's self-love as desire for esteem, A's acting virtuously in the sense of gratifying B's self-love leads to the gratification of A's own self-love. Thus, A has self-interested reasons to perform morally virtuous actions. Virtue, to use another expression, is in the agent's interest, because it leads to the gratification of her true self-love. This resembles Hutcheson's claim that virtuous

¹⁵⁵ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 319.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

actions provide us with the highest, i.e. the moral pleasures. Yet, the respective definitions of virtue differ widely.

3.2. Moral goodness is reducible to natural goodness

In the *Further Explication*, Campbell addresses Hutcheson's distinction between natural and moral goodness on the level of moral ontology. This point is independent of the question of whether the altruistic or the egoistic interpretation of the claim that an action's moral goodness consists in its accordance with self-love is correct. It is possible to defend both interpretations while claiming that moral goodness is reducible to natural goodness. Yet, the question regarding the reducibility of moral goodness to natural goodness is significant in the disagreement between the two authors, and exposes Campbell to unanswered criticisms.

In Hutcheson, the distinction between moral and natural goodness is based on a distinction between a rational agent's intention to produce good for others on the one hand, and the consequences of an action and of mere phenomena of nature, such as the fruits of a field, on the other. Hutcheson shows that we approve of them differently, and Campbell does not really provide an answer to this point. He agrees with Hutcheson's hedonistic analysis of natural goodness, yet disagrees with his claim that moral goodness is irreducible to natural goodness (in Hutcheson's terms) or pleasure:

'Tis true, as I have just now said, there is a Difference betwixt *moral Goodness*, and that which is call'd *natural*. But then this Difference does not ly in that the one is *Pleasure*, and the other *Something else*; it consists only in the Kind, Degree, or Consequents of the pleasing Perceptions, which those different Objects, that are call'd *morally* and *naturally good*, derive to us.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 355.

Moral goodness, for Campbell, consists in nothing else but pleasure.¹⁵⁸ An action is good if it produces pleasure, i.e. a natural good. If there is a difference between moral and natural goodness, it must be explained in terms of different kinds of pleasure (for example by distinguishing between the kind of pleasure arising from the satisfaction of the desire for esteem and other kinds of pleasure), or in terms of a quantitative difference. For Hutcheson, however, pleasures of all kinds are part of the natural good and have no intrinsic moral value. Campbell does not really answer this point, simply rejecting Hutcheson's claim that the approbation of moral goodness is something substantially different from the approbation of mere natural goodness. What he seems to seek in this argumentation is a reinforcement of his claim that moral approbation is the self-interested approbation of pleasure by the observer.

3.3. Moral approbation is self-interested

Is moral approbation self-interested in the sense that an action is morally approved if and only if it provides the observer with pleasure? Hutcheson denies this, and argues that approval by the moral sense is independent of the agent's private interest, or of the natural good she derives from the observed action.¹⁵⁹ Mandeville's provocative claim that the moral virtues are the offspring flattery begot upon pride has often been interpreted as a positive answer. Campbell for his part argues that "*Self-love is the Standard whereby we can only judge of the Virtue and Value of any Action whatsoever.*"¹⁶⁰ Self-love indicates the moral quality of an action in terms of the pleasure it provides to the observer. Thus,

¹⁵⁸ We have to note that this claim is different from the claim that moral goodness causes pleasure in the observer, which is also asserted by Hutcheson.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.

¹⁶⁰ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 440.

Campbell asserts that moral judgments are self-interested in that they reflect the observer's benefit from the observed action.

Hutcheson claims that the moral sense's approval and disapproval of actions, motives and characters, are independent of the observer's self-interest. In other words, the fact that an agent does or does not derive a benefit from an action has no influence on her moral approval of that action. Thus, the moral sense can approve of actions that provide no natural advantage, or even cause a loss in natural good to the observer, and it can morally disapprove of actions that provide the observer a natural benefit. According to Hutcheson, "It is plain we have some secret Sense which determines our Approbation without regard to Self-Interest"¹⁶¹.

In opposition to Hutcheson, Campbell formulates his point as follows:

For, when he [i.e. Hutcheson] says, we approve an Action as morally good, because it flows from the Love of others, and Study of their Happiness, 'tis the same as to say, because it bears a Conformity to our *Self-love*, or *Interest*, as I have just now explain'd.¹⁶²

Campbell puts forward an account of moral judgments as determined by self-interest or based on self-love. An observer morally approves or disapproves of actions and agents because they affect her self-interest, i.e. because they provide her pleasure or pain:

We are determin'd thus to love them [i.e. the rational agents] from the *Pleasure* which they minister to us by their moral Qualities or Actions.¹⁶³

And in another passage he asserts:

And therefore it appears to me, that we affect and value other intelligent Beings in Proportion to their Benevolence towards us, or according as they contribute to give us *Pleasure*, or to advance our Happiness.¹⁶⁴

The more pleasure an agent derives from an action or an agent, the stronger is her moral approval. When comparing the approval of so-called

¹⁶¹ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 92.

¹⁶² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 321.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 357.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 360. Cf. also p. 361.

moral goodness in rational agents and natural goodness in inanimate or irrational beings, he claims that the two kinds of goodness have the same origin, namely self-love. This holds even if “our Love [i.e. approbation] to rational Agents, under the Notion of Beneficent, is of a more *elegant* Nature, and cannot but, on many Accounts, be vastly stronger and higher.”¹⁶⁵ Ultimately, the observer’s approval of rational agents is more “elegant” because only rational agents can satisfy her self-love in the sense of desire for esteem or love of praise. Yet, since both forms of approbation are based on self-love, there is no essential difference between the approbation of so-called moral goodness and natural goodness.

That moral approval is self-interested also holds in cases in which the moral judgment is made by an observer who cannot be said to directly benefit from the action – i.e. in Hutcheson’s disinterested cases. Imagine an observer O morally judging an action which is performed by agent A in favour of agent B. O’s well-being is not directly affected by the observed action. For Campbell,

[...] when we love and honour *A*. for his Benevolence towards *B*. we secretly put ourselves in *B*’s Circumstances, and in our Minds conceive ourselves the Objects of *A*’s Kindness or Bounty: And after this Manner do we take Part in all the Concerns of our Fellow-men. So that there can be no *beneficent Action* done in any Part of the World, which, when it occurs to our Observation, does not affect us, and tend to our *own private Interest*, or serve to give us *Pleasure*.¹⁶⁶

Campbell assumes that there is a process of imagination which allows the observer O to take real pleasure in beneficent actions that are not directly

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 379.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 440. Cf. his discussion in Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 365. In another section, Campbell claims that “[...] we love the Beneficent from *Self-interest*. And it is very certain that the same Principle determines us to love not only those Persons that are beneficent to ourselves, but such likewise as are beneficent to others. For, according to what I have before observed, we can have no *Sense* or Perception of the *Goodness* of those Qualities which are exerted by rational Agents, but by considering ourselves *fit Objects* to whom they may be apply’d, or, *which is the same Thing*, by imagining ourselves in the Circumstances of those Persons towards whom they are exerted; that by thus putting ourselves under the *Influence* of these Qualities, we may judge whether they give us *Pleasure*, and tend to promote our Happiness.” Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 382.

affecting her.¹⁶⁷ And it is *for* this pleasure from imagination that the action appears as morally praiseworthy to O. The moral approval thus depends on O's successful imagination of being in the place of the person B, who benefits directly from A's action. If O were not successfully imagining being in B's place and did not feel the resulting pleasure of imagination, she would not judge A's benevolent action to be morally praiseworthy. Thus, moral judgments are self-interested even in Hutcheson's disinterested cases. With this analysis, Campbell provides an egoistic account of why we approve of actions that do not directly benefit us. He claims that his position does not contradict Hutcheson's. If Hutcheson argues that moral approval is based on a concern for the happiness of others, this is "the same as to say, because it bears a Conformity to our *Self-love*, or *Interest*".¹⁶⁸

Thus, in spite of the claim discussed in section 3.1., according to which an action is morally virtuous if it gratifies others' self-love, Campbell turns out to be an egoist in his account of moral approbation: "I would beg to know, if he, or any Man alive, will commend one single Action of mine, or count it virtuous, if it has not the good Fortune to favour his *Self-love*, and promote his *Interest*?"¹⁶⁹ An action is approved as virtuous if and only if it gratifies the observer's self-love. However, presupposing that due to the process of imagination, the observer's self-love always correctly indicates her all actions that gratify others' self-love as virtuous actions, since they provide her pleasure, too, Campbell might be in a position to make his egoistic account of moral approbation compatible with the claim that an action is morally virtuous if it gratifies others' self-love. Yet, this position seems difficult to reconcile with Hutcheson's

¹⁶⁷ Turco, "Sympathy and Moral Sense: 1725-1740", p. 95 highlights in his analysis the importance of this kind of process of imagination in the Smithean concept of sympathy.

¹⁶⁸ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 321.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 454.

examples of actions that are approved as morally virtuous in spite of their involving a disadvantage for the observer.

In the fourth edition of the *Inquiry* from 1738, Hutcheson reacts to Campbell's egoistic analysis of moral approbation by drawing a parallel with his own discussion of Hobbes' analysis of pity.

As Mr. *Hobbes* explains all the Sensations of *Pity* by our Fear of the like Evils, when by Imagination we place ourselves in the Case of the Sufferers; so others [i.e. Campbell] explain all Approbation and Condemnation of Actions in distant Ages or Nations, by a like Effort of Imagination: We place ourselves in the Case of others, and then discern an *imaginary private Advantage or Disadvantage* in these Actions.¹⁷⁰

As with the attempt to explain the passion of pity by way of a selfish process of imagination, the attempt to explain moral approbation by way of a selfish process of imagination must fail:

So this Explication will never account for our high Approbation of brave unsuccessful Attempts, which we see prove detrimental both to the Agent, and to those for whose Service they were intended; here there is no private Advantage to be imagined.¹⁷¹

The moral approval of unsuccessful attempts to further the well-being of others cannot be explained on Campbell's account of a process of imagination, since there is no pleasure to be derived. Hutcheson's rejection of Campbell's self-interested analysis of moral approbation rests on the assumption that we approve of actions that are motivated by benevolence, where the intention to promote the well-being of others is unsuccessful. If it is true that we morally approve of such actions, then moral approbation cannot be explained in terms of a self-interested process of imagination. Campbell for his part does not address this criticism.

¹⁷⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 216.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

3.4. *True self-love provides the motives for virtuous actions*

One of the central questions in early 18th-century British moral philosophy concerns the motives for virtuous actions. Can an action be virtuous if it is ultimately motivated by self-love or self-interested desires? For Hutcheson, who is attacked by Campbell, a virtuous action is ultimately motivated by benevolence, not by self-love. Self-interested desires may support the cultivation of benevolent dispositions. However, in the absence of benevolent motives, or if the selfish motives are predominant, the action does not count as virtuous, even if it is *beneficent*. In Mandeville's moral philosophy, which is often not appropriately treated by Campbell, a morally virtuous action is motivated by a rational ambition to promote the well-being of others and includes self-denial in the sense of the voluntary frustration of one's passions. Thus, an action motivated by self-love or self-liking can be compatible with the *social* virtues, such as the rules of honour, and can be beneficent to others; yet it does not count as *morally* virtuous. For Mandeville, the fact that ultimately self-interested desires cannot motivate virtuous actions leads to a negative answer to the Human Nature Question. He often asserts that selfishness is so dominant in human nature that virtuous actions are impossible.

Campbell, in contrast, claims that all virtuous actions are motivated by self-interest and that the presence of selfish motives does not diminish the moral value of an action.¹⁷² It has been highlighted above that, in his theory of human nature, Campbell is a psychological hedonist. He claims that all human actions, virtuous and vicious ones, are motivated by an ultimate desire for pleasure for the agent herself. It is a corollary of this position that if any virtuous actions occur (and Campbell asserts that they do), they have to be explained as being motivated by self-love, since

¹⁷² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 333.

there are ultimately no other motives. Campbell specifies that not all forms of self-love motivate virtuous actions. Only

Self-love, as it exerts it self in the Desire of universal unlimited *Esteem*, is the *great* commanding Motive that determines us to the Pursuit of such [virtuous] Actions.¹⁷³

Campbell seems to restrict his claim to self-love as a desire for universal and unlimited esteem, i.e. to *true* self-love. Elsewhere, he points out that self-love “*rightly understood*”¹⁷⁴ is the motive for virtuous actions. It has been highlighted above that Campbell supposes that there are *mistaken* forms of self-love that can motivate vicious actions and actions that are, all things considered, against the agent’s interest. Again, the distinction between true and mistaken self-love is essential to Campbell’s defence against objections to his claim that self-love is the motive of virtuous actions.

3.4.1. Benevolence and self-love

In order to understand Campbell’s point of view, it is appropriate to discuss a point of disagreement between him and Hutcheson, and to take a closer look at Campbell’s reaction to Hutcheson’s claim that virtuous actions are not motivated by self-love, but by benevolence. Hutcheson’s claim excludes even Campbell’s true self-love, because it ultimately aims at the agent’s own well-being, and not at the well-being of other agents, even if true self-love necessarily involves an instrumental concern for other agents’ well-being. According to Campbell, if a human agent performs an action that involves an intention to promote the well-being of another person, the action ultimately aims at the gratification of the agent’s self-love, understood as a desire for esteem. Thus, such an action can be *beneficent*, yet not genuinely *benevolent* in Hutcheson’s terms –

¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 258. Furthermore, cf. Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 322 etc.

¹⁷⁴ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. xvii.

and for Hutcheson, beneficent actions are not approved as morally virtuous, even if they are motivated by Campbell's true self-love.

In order to defend his claim that virtuous actions are motivated by self-love in the sense of a desire for esteem, i.e. by self-love as love of praise, Campbell formulates several objections to Hutcheson's view. Firstly, he puts forward the claim that calm universal benevolence, which is the morally best motive according to Hutcheson, is often too weak to motivate actions on its own:

The calm sedate Passion of *universal Love* and Benevolence is certainly unequal to this Purpose [to motivate virtuous actions]: It does indeed, as I have just now said, *bend* the Mind, in some Degree, towards Action; but I dare say, every Man proves it true by Experience, that this *Bent* is so weak, or the Passion moves the Mind so gently, that under its *Influence* it can withstand no great Opposition, nor undergo any great Labour or Application. So that, in order to rouse the Mind's Activity, and to make it steady and *vigorous* in the Pursuit of *Virtue*, or in imparting Happiness to all other Beings around it, there is Need of some other Passion, that has sufficient Power to *animate* and *support* it: And the Passion that is fully able thus to incite and bear up the Mind, is in my Apprehension, the Desire of *Esteem* [...]¹⁷⁵

This passage is in conflict with Campbell's psychological egoism because it seems to admit that, under certain circumstances, calm universal benevolence can indeed motivate actions. Nevertheless, it is very weak and must normally be supported by self-love to be effective. We have to note that this concerns calm universal benevolence, but neither calm partial nor passionate benevolence, which may be more likely to motivate actions. However, in other passages Campbell claims: "*Love* of others is so far from being the chief, and an essential *Motive* to *Virtue*, that, in the present Argument, it is no Motive at all [...]"¹⁷⁶. The passion that is strong enough to motivate actions that promote the well-being of others is desire of esteem, which is an ultimately self-interested passion. Thus, for psychological reasons, there can be beneficent but not benevolent

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 323.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 445.

actions. If there are any virtuous actions, and if it is true that benevolence is too weak to motivate any actions at all, then virtuous actions must have a different motive.¹⁷⁷

Let us note that Hutcheson denies both claims: a) the psychological claim that benevolence is too weak to motivate actions; and b) the moral claim that beneficent actions that are motivated by self-love as a desire of esteem are morally virtuous. He also insists on this latter point for actions that are only *predominantly* motivated by self-love. For his part, Campbell tries to support his point about the insufficient strength of benevolence with the claim that “every Man proves it true by Experience”, yet he does not provide any further arguments.

Secondly, Campbell goes on to argue that benevolence “is not *disinterested*, but manifestly springs from *Self-interest*.”¹⁷⁸ This is an egoistic analysis of benevolence and not a claim about its strength. Attacking Hutcheson’s thesis that love of benevolence is disinterested, Campbell writes:

According to the Views which I have of Things, I always conceive, that whatever Objects any of our Affections are employ’d about, we never but apprehend them under some *Ideas* or other, that have a plain *Relation to ourselves*, and are the *Spring* of those particular Affections which happen to be exerted. And I do own, that if those *rational Agents* to whom we bear Good-will, do not appear to us under any such *Ideas*, our Benevolence towards them is quite disinterested. But, as it is impossible for us not to apprehend the Objects of our Benevolence under some particular *Ideas* or other; so I am well perswaded, that every Man, who attends to what passes in his own Breast, will easily discern, that those *Ideas* in which they appear to us, and whereby our Benevolence towards them is excited, refer directly to *Self-interest*.¹⁷⁹

Campbell’s argument for the analysis of benevolence in terms of self-love might be reconstructed as follows: (1) Any affection caused by an idea is caused by an idea that has a relation to the agent experiencing the

¹⁷⁷ This approach implies that benevolence is not reducible to self-love.

¹⁷⁸ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 351.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 366f. and 383.

affection. (2) Therefore, love of benevolence, which is an affection caused by an idea, is caused by an idea that has a relation to the agent experiencing the affection of benevolence. (3) Therefore, benevolence is not disinterested, but self-interested.

The expression “to have a relation to the agent” is highly ambiguous. Let us distinguish two fundamentally different meanings. Firstly, in a broad and uninteresting sense, it simply means that the ideas that cause the affection are *the agent’s ideas* in the sense that they are experienced by her. This seems to be the meaning used by Campbell in the first part of the quotation. If the expression is understood in this sense, claim (1) is undisputed, since every idea is, in an unproblematic and uninteresting sense, the idea of the agent who has it. However, (3) does not follow, since instances of Hutchesonian disinterested benevolence are also caused by ideas that are “the agent’s ideas” - for example by the apprehension of benevolence in another agent, or by the apprehension of an agent in distress.

Secondly, in a more specific sense, the expression “to have a relation to the agent” in claim (1) could mean that ideas only cause affections if they involve a representation of something as being of relevance to the agent’s *self-interest*. This seems to be the meaning used in the second part of the quotation (“those *Ideas* [...] refer directly to *Self-interest*”). Yet in this case, claim (1) needs further development, and Campbell would have to address Hutcheson’s point that we can be disinterestedly affected by the happiness of others in virtue of our public sense, or that we have natural benevolent affections that involve a disinterested desire to promote the happiness of others.

Hutcheson offers several replies to the claim that benevolence is self-interested. He distinguishes between benevolence and beneficence, as we have already seen. In the *Inquiry*, he objects to those who “may

deduce Benevolence from Self-Love”¹⁸⁰, stating that the ultimate goal of benevolent actions is not to gain selfish pleasures but to promote others’ happiness.¹⁸¹ Benevolence, which is the motive for virtuous actions, is ultimately disinterested. Hutcheson also claims that an agent reflecting upon her own benevolent motives feels, as a consequence, moral pleasures. However, a virtuous action is not motivated by the desire to gain these pleasures. We have discussed above that, according to his paradox of moral motivation, it is psychologically impossible to gain the moral pleasures when acting with the intention to gain them.¹⁸² A virtuous action ultimately aims at the promotion of the well-being of others, and only in this case can the moral pleasures be gained. Campbell’s view (about which Hutcheson’s objections remain unanswered) is that virtuous actions are performed in order to gain the pleasures that arise from the gratification of the desire for esteem (i.e. Hutcheson’s pleasures of honour).

3.4.2. Self-cultivation, self-denial, and true self-love

Another point that relates to an objection from Hutcheson is only indirectly linked with Campbell’s claim that self-love is the motive for virtuous actions. It instead concerns the *consequences* of the theory of psychological egoism for the cultivation of our unselfish affections. Presupposing that psychological egoism is false, Hutcheson claims in the *Preface* to the *Essay* that

[...] many have been discourag’d from all Attempts of cultivating *kind generous Affections* in themselves, by a previous Notion that there are no such Affections in Nature, and that all Pretence to them was only *Dissimulation, Affectation*, or at best some *unnatural Enthusiasm*.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, p. 220.

¹⁸¹ E.g. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁸² Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.3.

¹⁸³ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 3f.

The core of this objection against psychological egoism, which also concerns Campbell's theory of human nature, is that it is a *harmful* theory of human nature. The idea that self-love is the only possible motive for human actions prevents human agents from cultivating their benevolence and thus from being genuinely virtuous, rather than simply being beneficent to others for self-interested reasons. Obviously, the objection presupposes that psychological egoism is false and that there is in fact the possibility of cultivating benevolent affections.

Campbell seems to be in a position to address this point indirectly with his distinction between true and mistaken self-love. Self-cultivation, and self-denial, in the sense of the frustration of harmful selfish passions are possible. There are different forms of self-love, some of which motivate virtuous actions and are recommendable, some of which motivate vicious actions and are condemnable. Self-cultivation consists in the cultivation of the right and recommendable forms of self-love and in the control and frustration of the harmful forms of self-love. Self-love as love of praise, especially if it consists in a desire for *universal unlimited esteem*, motivates virtuous actions and has to be preferred to other, harmful or more narrow forms of mistaken self-love, which are in conflict with others' interests and ultimately against the agent's own interests. However, even if there is some sense of self-cultivation in Campbell, the fundamental disagreement between Hutcheson and Campbell remains if actions motivated by a desire for esteem are candidates for virtuous actions.

The claim that self-love is the motive for virtuous actions seems also to have located Campbell in a heterodox position regarding the Scottish church. In the *Remarks*, the *Committee for Purity of Doctrine* lists some of Campbell's theses that are considered dangerous. The claim that self-love is the motive for virtuous actions is commented on as follows:

From these Expressions it appears, that he makes Self-love or Self-interest the Origine, the first Spring, the leading Principle, the only Standard and great Cause; yea, the sole and universal Motive to all virtuous and religious Actions.

This is supposed to contradict the Westminster Confession of Faith,

[...] where Self-love and Self-seeking are mentioned amongst the Sins forbidden in the first Commandment.¹⁸⁴

Furthermore, if self-love is supposed to motivate all actions, then

[...] the divine Commands to Self-denial, are thereby made altogether impossible to be obeyed.¹⁸⁵

Against these objections, Campbell points out that only “a false or mistaken Self-love [...] indeed bears a clean Contradiction to that excellent necessary Rule of Christian Self-denial.”¹⁸⁶ Yet, he asserts that he can make room for self-denial in view of his distinction between true and mistaken self-love. Just before this passage, he refers to page 290 of his *Enquiry*, where he put forward his conception of reflected hedonism:

[...] Self-love or Self-interest, or whatever other Phrase can express this Principle in a rational Agent, signifies our embracing and pursuing those Perceptions, whether pleasing or painful at present, which after we have look'd into the Nature and Consequences of Things, and fairly balanced them together, we may judge to be most valuable with relation to the Mind, the only Seat of all our Pleasures, and properly One's self.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, p. 6. In the *Larger Catechism* added to the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, the following were listed as sins forbidden by the First Commandment (“*Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*”): “Atheism, in denying, or not having a God; Idolatry, in having or worshipping more than One, or any with, or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching Him for God, and our God; the Omission or Neglect of any Thing due to him, required in this Commandment; Ignorance, Forgetfulness, Misapprehensions, false Opinions, unworthy and wicked Thoughts of Him; bold and curious Searching into His Secrets; all Profaneness, Hatred of God; Self-love, Self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate Setting of our mind, Will, or Affections upon other Things, and taking them off from Him in Whole or Part; vain Credulity, Unbelief, Heresy, Misbelief, Distrust, Despair; Incurigibleness and Insensibleness under Judgments, Hardness of Heart, Pride, Presumption, carnal Security, Tempting of God, using unlawful Means, and trusting in lawful Means, carnal Delights and Joys, corrupt, blind, and indiscreet Zeal, Lukewarmness, and Deadness in the Things of God; Estranging our selves, and Apostatizing from God, Praying, or Giving any Religious Worhsip to Saints, Angels, or any other Creatures, all Compacts, and Consulting with the Devil, and hearkning to his Suggestions, making Men the Lords of our Faith and Conscience; Slighting and Despising God, and his Commands; Resisting and Grieving of his Spirit, Discontent and Impatience at his Dispensations, Charging him foolishly for the Evils he inflicts on us; and ascribing the Praise of any Good we either are, have, or can do, to Fortune, Idols, our selves, or any other Creature.” Church of Scotland, *Confession of Faith*, p. 241 – 245.

¹⁸⁵ Committee for Purity of Doctrine, *Remarks*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁸⁷ Quoted after Church of Scotland, *Confession of Faith*, p. 21; referring to Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 290.

Conflicts are possible between mistaken forms of self-love (or selfish desires that are deficient in some way or other, as described in section 2.3.) and true self-love (or selfish desires that are not deficient). In cases of conflict, self-denial consists in resisting or frustrating the mistaken forms of self-love and satisfying the true forms of self-love.

3.4.3. Campbell on pity in Hutcheson

Campbell, in the *Further Explication*, replies to Hutcheson's discussion of pity in the 2nd edition of the *Inquiry* with an egoistic analysis of actions motivated by pity. In a paragraph that is omitted in the 3rd edition and replaced by a more elaborate discussion¹⁸⁸, Hutcheson rejects the general claim "That Virtue perhaps is pursu'd because of the concomitant Pleasure."¹⁸⁹ He objects that not all virtue is pleasant, as shown by the passions of pity and compassion. These passions are approved as virtuous (and seem sometimes even morally required) because they are instances of benevolence and involve a genuine concern in the well-being of others. Characteristically, such situations involve uneasiness and do not provide us pleasure. Yet, actions motivated by pity do not aim at getting rid of the feeling of uneasiness: "Removal of our Pain is seldom directly intended in the uneasy Benevolent Passions: nor is the Alteration intended in the State of the Objects by such Passions, imagin'd to be a private Good to the Agent, as it always is in the selfish Passions."¹⁹⁰ Rather, actions motivated by pity ultimately aim at the relief of the person in misery, which is why they are virtuous. Only when reflecting on them later may we derive some pleasure from the consciousness of having acted virtuously, yet experiencing this pleasure is not the reason why the action

¹⁸⁸ Hutcheson, *Inquiry*, pp. 223f.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

was performed. Pity, in Campbell's reformulation of Hutcheson, is "a natural kind Instinct".¹⁹¹

Campbell's reply, which aims at defending the more general claim that all virtuous actions are motivated by self-love, is based on an analysis of pity as a mixed emotion. Campbell's arguments are not always entirely transparent, but he seems to claim the following: He admits that Hutcheson's objection against the selfish analysis of pity would be valid "upon Supposition, that these Passions [i.e. pity and compassion] are only painful, or that the Objects which excite them, affect us only with Uneasiness."¹⁹² If we acted in favour of the sufferer on a passion that had only painful aspects, then self-love would indeed not be the motive, since no pleasure could be gained.¹⁹³

However, it is also a fact for Campbell that if the passion of pity were only painful, then the person in misery would not be assisted, but avoided. A person in misery is only assisted if there is at least some pleasure to be expected for the agent from her bringing relief to the person in misery. On this basis, Campbell argues that pity, insofar as it motivates helping behaviour, is a mixed affection. Pity involves "a good deal of Love and Benevolence towards those Persons, who are the Objects of them"¹⁹⁴, "a very sensible *Pleasure* in the Safety and Happiness of those Persons, for whose Sake or Interest they are exerted", and the concomitant pleasure of self-approbation.¹⁹⁵

In accordance with his egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, Campbell assures us that "in all those Passions, whereby we are excited to relieve the Miserable, the main Thing that determines us, or that which is

¹⁹¹ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 392. The passage in Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 390 - 392, which Campbell marks as a quotation from Hutcheson, is in fact a mixture of quotes and his summary of Hutcheson's arguments in Section II, § VIII of the 2nd edition (1726) of the *Inquiry*.

¹⁹² Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 392.

¹⁹³ This point is only valid, however, if the desire of avoiding pain is not counted as an instance of self-love.

¹⁹⁴ This seems to suggest that the emotion of pity involves a genuine concern for the well-being of others, even if subsequent actions are egoistically motivated.

¹⁹⁵ Campbell, *An Enquiry Into the Original of Moral Virtue*, p. 393.

directly intended, is the *Pleasure* we have in the Safety and Happiness of those Persons, about whom these Affections are employ'd; to which the *Pain*, wherewith they are mixed, serves only as a powerful Auxiliary, that eggs us on in our Endeavours to become Masters of that Satisfaction.”¹⁹⁶ Actions to relieve the misery of the person who is the object of pity are egoistically motivated. We are indeed also “*excited directly to desire the Relief of the Miserable*”¹⁹⁷, not *only* to desire the relief of our own uneasiness (which then would lead to our avoiding rather than assisting the miserable person). Actions motivated by pity also aim at the relief or alteration of the situation of the person in misery. Ultimately, however,

[...] the Alteration intended in the State of the Objects, is secretly imagined to be a *private Good*; so it manifestly appears, that these Passions, whereby we are excited to pursue this Alteration, are founded upon, and exert themselves from *Self-love*, or *Interest*, I mean *private Pleasure*, whether it arises from our own, or other Peoples Happiness: And therefore these Affections are both chosen, or at first yielded to, for their *concomitant Pleasure*; and are voluntarily brought on, or indulged and pursued, with a View to *private Good*.¹⁹⁸

It seems that Campbell agrees with Hutcheson that the agent who experiences pity does not only desire the relief of her own uneasiness but also the relief of the person in misery. The other person's relief is, however, only instrumental to the satisfaction of a selfish desire for pleasure and is thus not desired for ultimately other-directed reasons, as claimed by Hutcheson. Actions that are motivated by pity ultimately only aim at some benefit for the agent, and not for the person in misery.

Campbell's argument in depicting pity as a mixed and ultimately selfish passion does not always seem totally transparent. According to our reconstruction, he suggests that pity involves both pleasurable and painful aspects, and that only the pleasurable aspects have motivational force. Given that his goal is to show that pity is self-interested, there would be no need to make this claim as the painful aspects can be said to

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 395.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 395.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 396.

give rise to self-interested pain-avoiding behaviour. His conclusion, however, emphasises another point: Actions motivated by pity ultimately aim at the concomitant pleasure involved in the passion of pity. Campbell does not need to specify whether this is the pleasure caused by the relief of the sufferer or the subsequent pleasure of self-approbation, since in both cases, it is ultimately pleasure for the agent herself, and not for the sufferer.

It seems that Campbell's analysis remains vulnerable to Hutcheson's objections. Campbell suggests that actions motivated by pity ultimately aim at pleasure for the agent herself. Hutcheson rejects this point with a thought experiment, as has been shown above.¹⁹⁹ This rejection remains unanswered by Campbell. Also, his discussion of Hutcheson's claim that the selfish analysis of pity wrongly predicts that we would avoid instead of help the person in sufferance remains unclear. Campbell also remains vulnerable to Butler's criticisms of egoistic analyses of pity.²⁰⁰

It is interesting to note that both Campbell and Mandeville suggest egoistic analyses of pity. Campbell's egoistic analysis is, however, more positive from the moral point of view. For Mandeville, virtue requires self-denial, and pity is at best a useful passion, which cannot motivate virtuous actions, however. Since Campbell grounds virtue on self-love, pity as an ultimately self-directed passion can give rise to virtuous actions. Unlike Hutcheson, however, Campbell does not even discuss the potentially problematic features of the passion of pity, i.e. the difficulties in controlling pity and its being uninformed by reason.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.6.a). The thought experiment is introduced in the 3rd edition of the *Inquiry*.

²⁰⁰ Cf. chapter V, section 2.1.5.

Conclusion

Whether or not it is ultimately successful in its argumentation, Campbell's very rarely commented *Enquiry* is certainly the most emphatic attempt to rehabilitate self-love as a virtuous principle in human nature. Besides Luigi Turco's analysis of Campbell's place in the development of the concept of sympathy in Scottish philosophy, our study provides an important analysis of his moral philosophy, and the first substantial analysis of Campbell's contribution to the debates on self-love. Given the importance of the concepts of self-love to the moral philosophy of the period, and the connections between Campbell and the other authors investigated, this reveals important new aspects of the debates on self-love. Campbell, as we have seen, is the only author to combine an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question with a positive answer to the Human Nature Question, as well as a positive view of self-love – an undertaking that is very challenging in a period marked by counterattacks on the provocations of Mandeville.

Taking into account that Campbell and Mandeville both assert an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, it is appropriate to highlight again some differences. A first substantial disagreement concerns their concepts of morality: Mandeville claims that morality requires self-denial in the sense of the voluntary frustration of one's passions, whereas Campbell denies this, claiming that self-love as love of praise is the motive for morally virtuous actions. This is the basis for his assertion of a positive answer to the Human Nature Question, which constitutes another fundamental difference between the two authors. Furthermore, Campbell's moral philosophy does not rely on the concept of self-love as excessive pride, which is one of the pillars of Mandeville's claim that human nature is corrupt. Whereas Mandeville recommends self-liking for its social utility, yet claims that it is in conflict with moral virtue, Campbell

directly recommends self-love as love of praise as a motive for virtuous action. This is the most positive view of self-love among the five authors investigated.

Conclusion

This study has provided an analysis of the debates on self-love in early 18th-century British moral philosophy. Our examination and comparison of the treatments of self-love by Shaftesbury, Mandeville, Hutcheson, Butler and Campbell have revealed various aspects of their concepts of self-love and of their roles in questions of human nature and morality. In accordance with other commentators, such as most recently Gill and Force, we have highlighted that the period is deeply marked by the importance of both the Human Nature Question (i.e. the question of whether human nature is fundamentally good or evil) and the Motivation Question (i.e. the question of what motivates human agents, where the claim that self-love is the only motive in particular attracts a great deal of attention). Our study has contributed a clearer picture of the central role of the concepts of self-love in these contexts. It has been shown firstly that the period's tendency to emphasise the positive aspects of human nature, as described in Gill's study¹, frequently involves elaborate arguments against what Force and Hirschman after Hume call the selfish hypothesis.² These are combined with the assertion that there are natural other-directed principles, such as Shaftesbury's natural affections, Hutcheson's benevolence and Butler's public principles. Furthermore, we have shown that there is a tendency towards a moral rehabilitation of

¹ Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*.

² Force, *Self-Interest before Adam Smith*, pp. 5 and 7ff.; Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, p. 42.

different kinds of self-love, as in Shaftesbury, Butler, Campbell and, less emphatically, Hutcheson. This tendency is in clear contrast with the Augustinian condemnation of self-love as morally corrupt.

On several occasions, it has become apparent that our distinction between five different concepts of self-love is of great value for an appropriate reconstruction and comparison of essential arguments.³ Shaftesbury opposes the self-affections in the sense of an egoistic concept of self-love to the natural affections, arguing that a natural degree of both is necessary for natural and moral goodness. Mandeville puts self-love as excessive pride in the very centre of his theory of human nature, linking it with hedonistic self-love and self-love as love of praise. Hutcheson structures his moral philosophy around a hedonistic concept of self-love, and Butler has been shown to rely on a concept of self-love as self-respect. For Campbell both hedonistic self-love and self-love as love of praise are essential.

In order to illustrate again the necessity of distinguishing the different concepts of self-love, let us focus on the widely discussed claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions, which is at the core of the Motivation Question. According to an interpretation that relies on the widespread hedonistic concept of self-love, the claim means that every action aims at pleasure for the agent, which is the claim of psychological hedonism. Campbell and Mandeville have been shown to be psychological hedonists in asserting that all motives can be analysed in terms of hedonistic self-love. Hutcheson, who also adopts a hedonistic concept of self-love, has been shown to emphatically reject the claim that hedonistic self-love is the only motive for human agents in arguing that benevolence also motivates actions. Butler, however, when rejecting the claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions, attacks neither

³ Cf. chapter I, section 3.2.

psychological hedonism nor psychological egoism, since he relies on a concept of self-love as self-respect.

Furthermore, the necessity of distinguishing different concepts of self-love is evident from the importance of the concept of self-love as excessive pride, which Mandeville, in his later writings, calls self-liking. In his theory of human nature and of the civilising process, Mandeville assigns it a central place, which motivates his negative answer to the Human Nature Question. In spite of its great social utility, the passion of self-liking is an impediment to virtue. The correct but superficial description of Mandeville as an egoist by Gill⁴ does not focus enough on essential characteristics of Mandeville's moral psychology, his theory of the civilising process and his moral theory - characteristics which are highly pertinent to his answers to both the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question. The same necessity of having a clear view of the concept of self-love has been demonstrated for a series of claims in Butler, which are highly misleading if we do not take into account his concept of self-love as self-respect.

Concerning the aforementioned tendency to morally rehabilitate self-love against Mandeville and others, we have highlighted that Shaftesbury claims in a Stoic vein that a natural degree of the self-affections in rational and non-rational creatures is necessary to virtue and natural goodness. Traces of a similar view can be found in some rarely discussed passages in Hutcheson. We have also argued that Hutcheson's view of calm hedonistic self-love in the context of the passions - affections axis is more positive than his overall view of hedonistic self-love in the context of the self-love - benevolence axis, where he has a tendency to oppose the two kinds of motives. These points have led us to partly question the critical view of self-love ascribed to Hutcheson by Smith. Butler has been shown to be very favourable towards the moral

⁴ E.g. Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, p. 141ff.

value of self-love, which is explained by his adoption of a concept of self-love as self-respect. Self-love, according to Butler, recommends the same actions as conscience. Campbell, lastly, relies on a strategy to put forward a positive view of human nature and self-love that is very different from Shaftesbury's, Hutcheson's and Butler's. Whilst defending psychological hedonism, he claims that self-love as love of praise as a special form of hedonistic self-love is the motive for virtuous actions. Considering these points, the moral rehabilitation of self-love appears to be an issue of considerable importance for these authors. Thus, the moral rehabilitation of human nature is in general also reflected in a positive evaluation of self-love, and not just in a rejection of the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question.

Let us highlight again some of the main results of our investigation into the selected authors' contributions to the debates on self-love, with a focus on the Motivation Question and on the Human Nature Question, and with punctual comparisons to other studies with a broadly comparative focus. Shaftesbury is one of the most prominent philosophers of the period to assert a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. According to his view, the human species is part of a well-ordered universe, and human beings – as other, non-rational creatures – have a natural tendency to promote the good of their species and of the whole.⁵ They are naturally disposed towards moral virtue: Besides being endowed with a moral sense, their affections naturally tend towards virtue, which provides them their greatest happiness.⁶ One aspect of Shaftesbury's optimism with respect to human nature is that he gives a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, which is very influential for subsequent authors. In a Stoic vein, Shaftesbury argues in the *Inquiry*

⁵ Cf. chapter II, section 2.2.

⁶ Cf. chapter II, sections 2.3. and 2.4.

that not only self-directed self-affections but also other-directed natural affections are part of the natural constitution of the human agent.⁷ Thus, he rejects the interest paradigm jointly held by Augustinians and Epicureans.

The natural affections are at the core of both natural goodness and moral virtue. However, the self-affections – which are best understood as egoistic self-love⁸ – are also part of the natural constitution of human beings and, according to Shaftesbury's position in the *Inquiry*, they “become necessary and essential to goodness.”⁹ A rational creature is in a morally problematic state not only if its self-affections are excessively strong, but also if they are weaker than their natural degree.¹⁰ Thus, Shaftesbury's positive answer to the Human Nature Question is not only based on a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question, but is also reflected in his positive treatment of the self-affections, which are not conflicting with the other-directed natural affections when in their natural degree. We have argued that this point is underestimated by Gill, who emphasises Shaftesbury's anti-egoism and claims that he has an ethics of benevolence. We have also highlighted that Adam Smith, due to Shaftesbury's claim that the self-affections are necessary for virtue, ranges Shaftesbury among the “modern systems, according to which virtue consists in propriety”.¹¹ This leads him to contrast Shaftesbury's account of virtue with Hutcheson's virtue of benevolence.

Our study of Shaftesbury's treatment of the selfish passions of pride and self-admiration in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies* has revealed important differences between these writings and the *Inquiry*. In particular, we have drawn attention to the fact that Shaftesbury's view of virtue in the *Inquiry* is in conflict with the account he develops in the

⁷ Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.1.

⁸ Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.1.a).

⁹ Shaftesbury, “*Inquiry*”, p. 197. Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.2.a).

¹⁰ Cf. chapter II, section 2.3.2.a).

¹¹ Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 346: VII, II, I, 48.

Pathologia and the *Miscellanies*.¹² A consequence of these latter writings' approach to virtue seems to be that the happiness of others must be considered an external thing that is not in the power of the agent, and thus should not be represented as a true good. Shaftesbury does not spell out this consequence, but Hutcheson comments on the point in the context of a remark on some Stoics' view of benevolence.

Mandeville is certainly the most notorious early 18th-century philosopher to assert a distinctive negative answer to the Human Nature Question, and as a result his works become key points of reference for subsequent authors. Given his importance for the period's discussions on both the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question, he seems underrepresented in Gill's study. In an Augustinian vein, Mandeville emphasises the moral corruption of postlapsarian human nature. Contrary to Shaftesbury, he claims that being morally virtuous requires self-denial in the sense of the frustration of our passions.¹³ The selfish passions are depicted as so powerful that, according to a coherent interpretation of Mandeville's position, it is impossible to be genuinely virtuous after the Fall. He occasionally seems to suggest, however, that there are very rare instances of virtuous actions.¹⁴ Human agents are determined by what Mandeville calls "self-love" (i.e. hedonistic self-love) and "self-liking" (i.e. self-love as excessive pride). Self-liking again causes strong love of praise (i.e. self-love as love of praise).

The main pillar of Mandeville's negative answer to the Human Nature Question is his egoistic answer to the Motivation Question and, in particular, the importance he attributes to self-liking or self-love as excessive pride. Mandeville asserts, in accordance with other Augustinian thinkers, that this fact about human psychology does not exclude the

¹² Cf. chapter II, section 3.4.

¹³ Cf. chapter III, section 4.1.1.

¹⁴ Cf. chapter III, section 4.1.1.

possibility of a stable and prospering society.¹⁵ Rather, the fact that human beings are mainly driven by the passion of self-liking, a passion which bears all the marks of the French Augustinians' *amour-propre*, is essential for the civilising process.¹⁶ If it is properly manipulated by skilful politicians, it is the passion of self-liking which itself makes a stable and prosperous society of selfish agents possible.¹⁷ Human agents can only gratify their passion of self-liking and their love of praise in a society, which gives them egoistic reasons to behave in accordance with the social virtues. The value of self-liking, or of self-love as excessive pride, is thus ambivalent. From the moral point of view, self-liking is corrupt and makes it impossible for human agents to be genuinely virtuous. From the point of view of society, however, Mandeville emphasises that it is an extremely useful passion. These and other views of Mandeville provoke harsh reactions from subsequent authors, who often accuse him of reducing morality to some kind of self-love, and of recommending vice.¹⁸ The essential role of self-love as excessive pride in Mandeville shows that a treatment of this author that is based on the fact that he is a psychological egoist is simplistic. This view dilutes essential aspects of his moral psychology, of his account of the civilising process and of his view of the relation between social virtues and moral virtue.

In opposition to Mandeville and in line with Shaftesbury, Hutcheson asserts a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. Human agents act virtuously by following their natural benevolent affections, which ultimately aim to promote the happiness of others. Furthermore, human agents are endowed with a moral sense that makes them disinterestedly approve of benevolence as morally virtuous. Genuine benevolence cannot

¹⁵ Cf. chapter III, section 4.2.2.

¹⁶ Cf. chapter III, section 3.2.2.

¹⁷ Cf. chapter III, section 3.2.2.c).

¹⁸ Cf. chapter III, section 4.2.

be analysed in terms of hedonistic self-love and has to be distinguished from mere beneficence. Hutcheson frequently emphasises that only benevolence is approved as morally virtuous.¹⁹

The Motivation Question is at the core of Hutcheson's moral psychology and moral philosophy. Of all investigated authors, he argues most systematically against the egoistic answer and attacks the claim that hedonistic self-love is the only motive.²⁰ His arguments for the reality of benevolence support his positive answer to the Human Nature Question, since it is benevolence that motivates virtuous actions. We have argued that Hutcheson's moral philosophy is characterised by the self-love – benevolence axis and the affections – passions axis.²¹ The former axis is mainly emphasised in the *Inquiry*, where one of Hutcheson's principal goals is to refute the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question – not only because it is false, but also because it is dangerous, as it keeps the agent from cultivating her natural benevolent inclinations.²² The latter axis is mainly elaborated in the *Essay* and leads to a refined account of the moral value of self-love in the third edition of the *Inquiry*. This might be a reflection of Hutcheson's acknowledgment of the very positive view of self-love of Butler. Both axes play important roles in Hutcheson's theory of self-cultivation, which our study has closely investigated.

We have highlighted that Hutcheson's approach to the moral evaluation of self-love is ambivalent – a fact that has been neglected by a series of commentators, including Force and Gill.²³ Hutcheson's treatment of self-love in his moral mathematics, which focuses on the self-love – benevolence axis, is rather critical with respect to the moral value of self-love.²⁴ However, there are passages in which Hutcheson invokes Shaftesburian and Stoic themes and suggest that, under certain

¹⁹ Cf. chapter IV, sections 2.1.2. and 2.2.3.

²⁰ Cf. chapter IV, section 2.2.3.

²¹ Cf. chapter IV, sections 2.2.1., 2.2.3. as well as 3.1.1. and 3.1.2.

²² Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.2.

²³ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.1.

²⁴ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.1.1.

conditions, calm self-love is necessary to promote the good of the whole and sometimes even required for virtue.²⁵ Self-love, Hutcheson also highlights, can support virtue and has an important role in the cultivation of benevolence.²⁶ Yet the impression remains that Hutcheson emphasises the problematic aspects of self-love more than does Shaftesbury - the main foundation for Hutcheson's positive answer to the Human Nature Question remaining his assertion of the reality of benevolence. We have highlighted that in a remark against some of the Stoics, which also affects Shaftesbury's conception of virtue in the *Pathologia* and the *Miscellanies*, Hutcheson defends his virtue of benevolence, which is based on the "kind *disinterested Affections* towards our Fellows"²⁷ and essentially involves a concern for the happiness of others.

Butler joins Shaftesbury and Hutcheson in asserting a positive answer to the Human Nature Question and in rejecting the claim that human nature is morally corrupt. From Butler's theistic teleological perspective, the true nature of human agents is designed for virtue, vice being a deviation from this nature. Particular principles (i.e. the diverse appetites, passions and affections, both public and private) and general principles (i.e. self-love and conscience) are natural in the sense that they perform a function within the design of human nature.²⁸ They stand in a hierarchy of authority, conscience being the principle with the supreme authority.²⁹ Following one's nature - in the sense of acting on a combination of natural principles that respects this hierarchy - is being virtuous.³⁰ It is noteworthy that Butler's evaluation of the particular principles is rather different from Hutcheson's: For Hutcheson, the affections are unproblematic, whereas the passions have to be avoided.

²⁵ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.1.2.

²⁶ Cf. chapter IV, section 3.2.3.

²⁷ Hutcheson, *Essay*, p. 83.

²⁸ Cf. chapter V, section 1.1.3.

²⁹ Cf. chapter V, section 2.2.

³⁰ Cf. chapter V, section 1.1.3.

For Butler, it is not just affections but also passions and appetites which have a designed purpose and must be in their natural degree.³¹

Again alongside Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, Butler asserts a non-egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. It is in the nature of human beings not only to act for their private benefit but also to further the interests of others. There are other-directed principles, such as compassion (which is a particular principle)³² and benevolence (which has an ambiguous status in the *Sermons*),³³ which are irreducible to self-directed principles and thus prove that the egoistic answer to the Motivation Question is false.³⁴ We have argued, however, that Butler's attack on the egoistic answer must be distinguished from his rejection of the claim that self-love is the only motive for human actions. Unlike Hutcheson, who relies on the hedonistic concept of self-love, Butler brings into play a concept of self-love as self-respect.³⁵ We have discussed the far-reaching consequences of this difference for a series of arguments concerning self-love (e.g. his discussion of the claim that self-love is the only motive, his view of the relation between self-love and benevolence, and his claim that virtue is not disinterested).³⁶ For Butler, self-love is not a particular principle, as it is in the case of Hutcheson's hedonistic concept of self-love. It is a general affection that endorses a combination of particular principles in view of the agent's realisation of her true nature.³⁷ Butler puts forward a very positive view of self-love and argues that it is in accordance with conscience.³⁸ Self-love as self-respect directs us to virtue since it is concerned with the realisation of our true nature.

A clear distinction between Butler's concept of self-love and other concepts is necessary to understand the differences with other authors.

³¹ Cf. chapter V, section 2.1.2.

³² Cf. chapter V, section 2.5.1.

³³ Cf. chapter V, section 2.1.3.

³⁴ Cf. chapter V, section 2.1.4.

³⁵ Cf. chapter V, section 3.2.

³⁶ Cf. chapter V, section 3.

³⁷ Cf. chapter V, section 2.3.1.a)

³⁸ Cf. chapter V, section 3.3.

In spite of the interesting relations between Butler and Hutcheson, for example, these authors' contributions to the debates on self-love have rarely been compared.³⁹ Our study thus highlights important aspects of the relation between these two important moral philosophers of the early 18th century.

Campbell, lastly, has a very peculiar position in comparison with the other investigated philosophers. Our study provides the first substantial analysis of his important contribution to the debates on self-love, and the chosen framework allows for interesting comparisons with the other authors, such as Hutcheson and Mandeville. Campbell is the only author who combines an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question with a positive answer to the Human Nature Question. As in Mandeville's works, most of Campbell's moral psychology is driven towards asserting an egoistic answer to the Motivation Question. He relies on a hedonistic concept of self-love and argues, contrary to Hutcheson, for a selfish analysis of seemingly other-directed motives, such as benevolence and pity.⁴⁰

Unlike the Augustinian Mandeville, however, Campbell does not conclude from his egoistic answer to the Motivation Question that human nature is morally corrupt. This is unusual in Campbell's Augustinian environment, and it did not go unnoticed by the Church of Scotland.⁴¹ Campbell asserts that human beings can be genuinely virtuous on the basis of their self-love. The core element in his argument is the claim that self-love as love of praise, which aims at getting the esteem of other rational agents, provides the motives for virtuous actions. True self-love necessarily involves a concern for the well-being of others, which is,

³⁹ Cf. chapter V, section 3 and conclusion.

⁴⁰ Cf. chapter VI, sections 2.1., 2.4.1. and 3.4.3.

⁴¹ Cf. chapter VI, section 3.4.2.

however, instrumental to the agent's own well-being.⁴² The moral rehabilitation of human nature is thus linked with the moral rehabilitation of self-love in the sense of self-love as love of praise.

Our results shed light on a phase of 18th-century British moral philosophy during which the questions of self-love were most intensely discussed and largely influenced the debates on the Motivation Question and the Human Nature Question. The chosen framework has facilitated a thorough reconstruction and comparison of essential arguments by the investigated authors, and provided a closer view of different aspects of their positions in the history of philosophy.

⁴² Cf. chapter VI, section 2.3., especially 2.3.6.

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