

'The Vile Ingredients of the Wholesome Mixture': A Portrait of Bernard Mandeville and Adam Smith

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The first desirable blessings for any society are a fertile soil and happy climate, a mild government and more land than people. These things will render man honest and sincere [...] but they shalt have no arts or sciences; they must be wholly destitute of what we call the comforts of life [...] Man never exerts himself but when he is rouz'd by his desires.

- Bernard Mandeville, 'Remark Q: For Frugally They Now Liv'd On Their Salary', in *The Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, 3rd edn. (1723), ed. by F. B. Kaye, 2 vols (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), I, 142.

Our senses will never inform us of what [our brother] suffers. They never did, and never can carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations [...] It is the impressions of our own senses only, not those of his, which our imaginations copy. By the imagination, we place ourselves in his situation

- Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), Vol. 1 of *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, ed. by D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 9.

[Man] intends only his own gain; and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest, he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it

- Adam Smith, 'Of Systems of Political Economy', in *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), Vol. 2 of *The Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, ed. by R. L. Campbell and A. S. Skinner, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976-87), II, 456.

'No man so truly promotes his own interest as he that forgets it. No man reaps so copious a harvest of pleasure as he who thinks only of the pleasures of other men'

- William Godwin, *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793) in *The Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, ed. by Mark Philp, 7 vols (London: Pickering, 1993), I, 395.

[Man is] originally and essentially disinterested [...] he could neither desire, nor will, nor pursue his own happiness but for the possession of faculties which necessarily give him an interest out of himself in the happiness of others

- William Hazlitt, *An Essay on the Principles of Human Action* (1805) in *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. by P. P. Howe, 21 vols, (London: Dent, 1930-4), I, 6-7.

'The misguided imaginations of men have rendered the ascertaining of what is not true the principal direct service which metaphysical science can bestow upon moral science'

- Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Speculations on Morals and Metaphysics* (1817-1821), in a facsimile of Bodleian Shelley MS. d. 1., Vol. 4 of *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* facsimile series, ed. by E. B. Murray, 2 Parts (New York: Garland, 1986-2002), I, f. 114^r rev. (p. 331).