

SOME PROVISIONAL AND INCOMPLETE REMARKS ABOUT MANDEVILLE AND BOLINGBROKE

Related to the draft-article about Horatio's identity.

1. *Bolingbroke's determinant influence on Mandeville's later bibliography.*

Looking at Mandeville's bibliography one can't fail to notice his remarkable and striking production after the year 1725. We think it plausible that Bolingbroke's intervention, in 1726/7, incited Mandeville to all these works, excepting the very last one, *A Letter to Dion* (1732), which was occasioned by Berkeley's *Alciphron*.

In view of his circle of friends, acquaintances, clients or patients and common readers of contemporary papers, Mandeville must felt himself obliged to react to Bolingbroke's attacks. And reflecting on an appropriate means, he knew that simply confining himself to just another *Vindication of the Book* (1723) would not do. The attacks being ad hominem, he had to mind all his other works as well.

Focussing on the first and foremost problem, he obviously wanted to write a new *Fable of the Bees*, yet in such a manner, that readers would not only recognize it as being new. It should be evident not only that he did not distance himself from his initial *Fable of the Bees*, but also that any future judgement of this *Fable of the Bees* should imply reading the new book. This, we suppose, might have been the real reason why Mandeville entitled the new book *The Fable of the Bees, Part II*.¹ For Mandeville could easily have thought of a different title,² as he did for its continuation, *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732). Mandeville finished *The Fable of the Bees, Part II* on October 20, 1728.

Secondly, in order to control damage, Mandeville decided to the quick operation of revising *Free Thoughts on Religion, the Church, and National Happiness* (1720), which had been an international success and had not provoked the same criticism as *The Fable of the Bees, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* did in 1723 and afterwards. *Free Thoughts* is not the form of dialogues, and its revised edition was published in 1729.

Mandeville made the most remarkable amendment in the preface, by explicitly distancing himself from any suggestion that quoting Pierre Bayle would imply being in agreement with Bayle. Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury were known deists, and Shaftesbury had entertained very friendly relations with Pierre Bayle. Mandeville never quit his faith as a Christian theist. Moreover, the new edition of *Free Thoughts* might also be favourable for those readers who had missed or forgotten this interesting work, which cannot be considered apart from the 'New England' before the Walpole era.

Thirdly, and more time consuming, his psychosomatic *Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Passions* (1711) needed revision, in order to get a renewed, up-to-date advertisement for his medical profession,³ and, no less important, to answer Bolingbroke's criticism on his empiricist approach. The new edition, called *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases*, was published in 1730, and reprinted in the same year.

We think it useful to notice here that seemingly this *Treatise* would be a class of its own, or even a 'Fremdkörper', a foreign body, within Mandeville's bibliography. But this is not the case. The *Fable of the Bees, Part II* and *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* are in a sense psychotherapeutic works as well. Mandeville as the author of the dialogues between *Horatio* and *Cleomenes* does not really differ from the Mandeville or Philopirio in the *Treatise*. *Horatio* did not send for a doctor, so Mandeville could not reasonably pass off as a physician. But the problem being a matter of prepossession or prejudice from political ideology, Mandeville manages *Horatio* in these dialogues in the same professional way that he explained afterwards in *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases* as being his therapeutic approach of patients.⁴ As for some changes in this new *Treatise's* Preface, such as that 'Philopirio is a Foreigner' and that 'he has now been many Years, and is like to end his days in England', we think that these may be understood as resulting from Bolingbroke's attack.⁵

Fourthly, the disagreement between Bolingbroke and Mandeville about honour, as indicated in the preface of *The Fable of the Bees, Part II* ('martial Courage and Honour itself were ridicul'd'), and the misplaced suspicion of Mandeville's being a deist had to be dealt with. This resulted, again in the form of dialogues between *Horatio* and *Cleomenes*, in *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732).

In the end of this book it appeared that the disagreement or misunderstanding, which, as we think, is caused by people not being able or willing to tell christendom and christianity apart, had not been met with an satisfactory solution. But we don't know whether Mandeville did ever touch his promised book about the remaining purity and lustre of the doctrine of Christ, 'the great Physician of the Soul',⁶ after he had been occasioned to write his reply to Berkeley, called *A Letter to Dion* (1732).

2 In conclusion: *The lasting problem of prejudice and experience.*

Mandeville and Bolingbroke have been friends, at least from Mandeville's personal and professional point of view, and even when, as may be assumed, Bolingbroke had stopped talking with him. According to Trumbach, Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury (1671-1713) may have been acquaintances. Bolingbroke agreed with neither Mandeville nor Shaftesbury. Having now in mind Burke's query 'who now reads Bolingbroke, who ever read him through?', the thought might occur, that Bolingbroke's intellectual parts would have fallen short vis à vis for instance Shaftesbury or Mandeville. But this suggestion may change as soon as we see that each one of them, Mandeville, Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury, held an essentially different position.⁷

Bolingbroke's foundation was 'an image of an ideal political order', an ideology.⁸ And therefore, when being attacked by Bolingbroke in 1726/7, Mandeville did not target on politics as such, as Bolingbroke possibly would have welcomed. The treatment of prepossession or prejudice, whether caused by genes, education, disorder and / or ideology, may be said to fall under Mandeville's professional business. His objective was to denote Bolingbroke's prepossession by confronting *Horatio* with both Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* and his own *Fable of the Bees*. Thus Mandeville informs his readers of *Horatio's* more general incapability of judging ably, for while fiercely opposing Mandeville, he fails to understand Mandeville's real opposite Shaftesbury as well. In the last dialogue

in *The Fable of the Bees, Part II* (1729) *Cleomenes* advises *Horatio* to read both Shaftesbury and Mandeville once again. And *Cleomenes's* and *Horatio's* positions remained similar in the concluding paragraphs of *An Enquiry into the origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War*.

Having dealt with Mandeville's later works, we'll shift now our attention to his best known early work, *The Grumbling Hive or Knaves turn'd Honest* (1705). This is caused by Gerrard who speaking of Bolingbroke's *Ideas of a Patriot King* (1738) thinks that 'if this work is indeed 'utopian', it is utopian in a quite specific sense, carrying strong traces of the ideal commonwealth tradition evolved from Plato's *Republic* to More's *Utopia* and a variety of fictional commonwealths from Harrington's *Oceania* to Fénelon's *Aventures de Télémaque*'.⁹

This remark leads us to a new aspect of the Mandeville-Bolingbroke connection. In our Dutch edition of *The Fable of the Bees* we have shown at length that, as for its textual contents, Mandeville's *Grumbling Hive or Knaves turn'd Honest* is heavily relying on White Kennett's *Christian Honesty Recommended* (1704) and still more on Fénelon's fable *Les Abeilles* and his *Aventures de Télémaque*.¹⁰ And already Mandeville refers to the type of ideology as promoted by Fénelon as being 'a vain Eutopia, seated in the Brain'.¹¹

Remembering what Mandeville tells about the earlier friendship between *Horatio* and *Cleomenes*, for instance their common travelling abroad, and taking into account that Bolingbroke in spite of his deism and opinion on priests as being 'craftsmen', looked upon ecclesiastical organisations as necessary in his ideological concepts, we think it safe to surmise that *The Grumbling Hive or Knaves turn'd Honest* might be looked on as an early reply by Mandeville to Bolingbroke.

Kramnick (p. 16) specifies Bolingbroke's social and intellectual life in France and he tells us that 'The membership in the Entresol of the chevalier Ramsay, whose pietist and fundamental religious views seem so out of place in this freethinking circle is now more comprehensible. This disciple of Fénelon had himself contributed to *la thèse nobiliare* by his popularization of Fénelon in 1721 with his *Essai Philosophique sur le Gouvernement Civil*.' But to Bolingbroke this must have been a coming home, for there can be hardly any doubt that Bolingbroke, when he was young, had already read the very popular *Telemachus* and *Contes* by Fénelon, and, far more significant, that Fénelon's works must have been most attractive to him and confirmed him in his prime political sentiments.

Having in mind Mandeville's *Grumbling Hive or Knaves turn'd Honest*, which depicts a prospering and grumbling hive that, as a result of Jupiter's intervention, turned into a quiet but poor swarm of bees located in a hollow tree, we find this poem reversed in *The Craftsman* no. 297, March 25, 1732. Quoting Kramnick, p. 23-4: (He) 'found himself in a pleasant and fruitful island where a happy and prosperous people lived in freedom. The countryside abounded with produce and the cities were rich in skilled artisans and honest traders. The island's government and stable and free. "The constitution of her government was so happily mixed and balanced that it was the mutual interest of the

Prince and the people to support it." Liberty and plenty filled the happy Commonwealth. But suddenly, a tree shot up, and grew so high that its head was lost in the clouds and its branches darkened the land. "I saw it put forth a vast quantity of beautiful Fruit which glittered like burnished gold, and hung in large clusters on every bough. I now perceived it to be the Tree of Corruption, which bears a very near resemblance to the Tree of Knowledge, in the Garden of Eden, for whoever tasted the fruit of it, lost his integrity and fell, like Adam, from the state of innocence." The fruits bore inscriptions such as "East India", "Bank contracts", "South Sea", "Differentials", "Patents", "Credit", "Stocks" and other terms characteristic of the new order. Perched in the middle of the tree was a fat man who plucked down the golden apples and tossed them to the crowd below. The tree and its fruit poisoned everything in sight. As the blight spread and covered the entire land, the farms would not produce, the artisan went hungry, the merchant laid up his ships, and a "general scene of poverty discovered itself amongst all ranks of the people, and nothing was to be heard through the whole land but piercing lamentations and agonies of despair"- nothing, that is, but the gluttonous laughter of those scampering in and around the tree and eating of its financial fruits'.

Concluding we might develop a new suggestion about the origin of some of Mandeville's works in view of Bolingbroke's course of life and career. Supposing that *The Grumbling Hive or Knaves turn'd Honest* (1705) would have been Mandeville's first answer to Bolingbroke, the elaboration of this poem in *The Fable of the Bees, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (1714) may be regarded to be the second one. Bolingbroke was then a leading and very controversial political figure in the problem of succession to the throne after Queen Anne's death.¹² The third one seems to be contained in several passages of *Free Thoughts on Religion, the Church and National Happiness* (1720). *Free Thoughts* deals with the political developments in the period 1714-1720. In it we read a view which hardly can be overlooked as being most critical of Bolingbroke as a politician: 'An English Man who loves his Country, and complains of this Conduct, must be an arch Politician' (p. 344).¹³ And the fourth reply is *The Fable of the Bees, Part II* (1729). *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732) is not a reply separate from *The Fable of the Bees, Part II*, which may account for the fact that Mandeville did not entitle it *The Fable of the Bees, Part III*.

Mandeville and Bolingbroke were very different personalities. The gap between Bolingbroke's prepossession or prejudice and Mandeville's empiricism has obviously been permanent. The scapegoat that Bolingbroke invented, namely the Dutch and their financial system, was never sacrificed. And whatever their friendship may have been, and not to mention Mandeville's statement in his *Free Thoughts*, we can hardly imagine that Bolingbroke, in his endless talking of political and societal corruption by the alleged 'Dutch system', ever forgot Mandeville's Dutch sauciness or boorishness as is expressed in the first two lines of *The Grumbling Hive or Knaves turn'd Honest*'s 'Moral': 'Then leave Complaints: Fools only strive, To make a Great an Honest Hive'.¹⁴

Notes

1. See *Fable ii*, p. 22-3, for Mandeville's explanation.
2. For instance 'An enquiry into prepossession and prejudice'.
3. *A treatise of the hypochondriack and hysterick passions, vulgarly call'd the hypo in men and vapours in women* (1711), p. xiii-xiv: 'Wherefore as Times go, and the World is degenerate, I don't think, that he is either a bad Subject or a useless Member of Humane Society, who, without detriment to the Publick, serves his own Ends, by being beneficial to those that employ him: More I don't pretend to; neither would I have scrupl'd to direct the Reader to my Habitation, if I Made my constant abode in the City; but as I live with my Family out of Town, instead of dating this Epistle from my own House, I shall refer him to the Booksellers and Printer, named at the bottom of the Title Page, from whom any one may always learn where to find me.'
4. Bernard Mandeville, *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases* (1730), p. xiv-vx: 'Many readers perhaps will at first view find the same fault with *Philopirio*; but upon better Examination they'll be convinced that what he does is only out of Complaisance, and to fall in with the Humour of his Patient, to whom, when he comes to be well acquainted with him, he owns that he had made it his Study to do so.' And p. 377: 'Because I have observed, that when People, who have found many Medicines ineffectual, met with any Ingredients in a Prescription, that are either the same with, or in their Opinion less efficacious, than what they have already try'd to no purpose, they often take up a Prejudice against the whole Composition. This ought to be prevented in all Distempers, but more especially those, in which the Fancy had so great a Share, and the least Trifle is of moment. I am not only careful of the *Idiosyncrasis*, but likewise strive to fall in with the very Humours and Inclinations of my Patients: As for Example, as soon as I heard you was a Man of Learning, and lov'd Quotations from Classick Authors, I answer'd you in your own Dialect, and often strain'd myself to imitate, what in you is natural: I would not have talk'd so to a modishly ignorant Courtier, that would call it perhaps Pedantick.'
5. *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases*, (1730) p. xiii. Bernard Mandeville kept his Dutch nationality.
6. *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732), p. 205
7. Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution* (1998), dl 1, p. 81. 'Bolingbroke would have agreed that "men have a natural sociability; that is, we are determined by self-love to seek our pleasure and our utility in society". But it was self-love, not an innate moral sense as in Shaftesbury, that drove man to sociability.' Mandeville's concept of 'self-liking' differs from Bolingbroke's 'self-love', Mandeville rejects Shaftesbury idea of an innate moral sense. To Mandeville, men's sociability is not natural, as asserted by Bolingbroke, nor resulting the way Shaftesbury suggests, but resulting gradually from men's being governed and being educated to self-governing. In other words, Shaftesbury thinks man to be good and social, Bolingbroke thinks him to be bad and social, whereas Mandeville judges empirically, that we cannot tell whether man is good or bad, and that though man being of all creatures the least fit to live in societies, he is of all creatures the best of being capable of being brought to live in societies.
8. Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his circle* (1968), p. 5, including note 14.

9. Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole; Politics, Poetry and national Myth 1725-1742* (1994), p. 186. Also p. 200: 'Bolingbroke(...) would have been familiar with (...) Fénelon'. Here there may be added Bolingbroke's '*The First Vision of Camilick*' (*The Craftsman*, no 16, January 27, 1727). At first sight the name Camilick may be associated with Machiavelli, one of Bolingbroke's favourites. But the name Camilick sounds like Kamerik, the Dutch or Flemish name of the town, which is called Cambray in French. The bishop of Cambray was Fénelon, and Camilick's vision corresponds with Fénelon's vision as well.

10. Bernard Mandeville, *De fabel van de bijen* (2008), p. 299-321.

11. *Fable i*, p. 36.

12. Maybe more so Mandeville's *Mischiefs to be apprehended from a Whig government* (1714), a dialogue as well.

13. The conduct in question is king George's, towards Spain, which started the 'War of the Quadruple Alliance' (1718-1720). For Bolingbroke's complaint of king George in this case, see Bolingbroke, *Some Reflections on the present State of the Nation*, in *A letter to Sir William Windham* etc. (1753), blz. 196-8.

14. *Fable i*, p. 36.