



SPECULATIONS ON PHILOSOPHY OF THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN NATURE AFFECTIVITY OF BERNARD DE MANDEVILLE

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 28 th November 2023 Accepted: 26 th December 2023 Published: 30 th January 2024	The paper is devoted to the philosophical thought of the unique English thinker, writer and practical doctor Bernard Mandeville. The author reflects on the original interpretation of the concept of affectivity of human nature. Mandeville did not consider this quality to be an obstacle or hindrance to the creation and functioning of a prosperous society; on the contrary, he is convinced that the most necessary qualities that make a person adapted to life in such a society are his selfish inclinations and base motives.

Keywords: affective, human nature, inclination, motivation, social reality, teaching.

INTRODUCTION

It is known that the spheres of spiritual-educational life and the events occurring in it are interconnected and interdependent; this is considered as one of the important laws of this sphere. From this point of view Mandeville, studying human nature, came out from the principles developed by Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679): man is "by nature" of purely selfish qualities and as a rule "acts for profit or glory, i.e. for the benefit" is to love oneself and not others" [2, p. 292]. However, the thinker, unlike Hobbes, did not consider these qualities to be obstacles or something like this to the creation of a prosperous society and its functioning. On the contrary, Mandeville is convinced that the most necessary qualities that adapt a person to life in such a society are his selfish tendencies and supporting motives. Objectively, Mandeville with his "apologetics for their evils" told the situation that existed in the commercial society that arose at that time. He carefully looked at the surrounding economic and social reality. In "The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest" by Mandeville one can find not only real pictures of the socio-economic life of England in the first decades of the XVIII century, but also an integral system of economic and socio-political views of its author, that is, his numerous recommendations relating to monetary, trade, and economic policies, and state building; in the latter, Mandeville remained faithful to the liberal doctrine of John Locke (1632-1704); he stood for the rule of law, for freedom of thought and speech, for religious tolerance and for the non-interference of the clergy in state affairs. But, as is known, it is impossible to achieve the prosperity of society with the help of economic and political measures alone.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

To make a society rich and powerful, Mandeville believes, it is necessary to affect the emotions of people. It was in the emotions, in the uninhibited emotions of people, that he saw the most important incentive for active economic activity aimed at creating all the comforts of life. And first of all, these are affects such as vanity, greed, envy which awaken a person from laziness, arouse his desires, force people to compete with each other, which leads to the revelation of their abilities and forces them to real work. From these positions, Mandeville criticizes the ethics of Stoicism which required renunciation of affects curbing passions and sensual inclinations, and which considered the main goal of life to be familiar with virtue. His objections are aimed at proving the impossibility of following the moral demands of the Stoics in real life. The panegyrics paid to virtue by the Stoics and their followers do not say anything, because one can recognize the superiority of virtue in theory, but not follow it in practice. And although there are many people who agree with the Stoics that peace of mind can be higher than the possession of life's goods, and no one can be truly happy if he is deprived of virtue, the true pleasures of all people remain earthly and sensual, as evidenced by their real life. Those who verbally extol virtue, but in everyday life are busy pursuing sensual pleasures, act like hypocrites. In his reflections, Mandeville showed how generously the most diverse strata of English society pay this tribute, how hypocrisy, having already ceased to be a trait of individuals, becomes an attribute of the prevailing morality.

He was perhaps the first of the English moral writers to make such a decisive attack on the hypocritical consciousness of his countrymen. Mandeville also built a system of moral values on human affects, with the help of which the savage in man was "broken" and civilized relations between people were established. Mandeville, like Locke, did not recognize the existence of innate moral principles, ideas or feelings and believed that they were not of natural, but of artificial origin [2, pp. 292-301]. Of his predecessors, Hobbes definitely said that the institution of morality arose only in the conditions of the political organization of society and the supreme power established the foundations of its

generally binding norms. Exploring the origins of moral virtue, Mandeville proposed a sophisticated model of the origin of such an institution and came to the conclusion that the moral system was created by the art of politicians who taught people to overcome their natural inclinations and affects of shame, fear and pride.

Constantly appealing to human vanity, flattering and playing along with it, politicians instilled in people the concepts of shame, honor and that idea of human dignity, which was associated with the curbing of selfish inclinations and base inclinations and encouraged them to prefer promoting the public good to personal interests. However, despite all this, the thinker believes, introducing people to moral virtue has not changed their nature: people avoid vices only for reasons of their own benefit or fear of public condemnation, and their desire for virtue, if it occurs, is ultimately conditioned, their own personal interests, the desire to satisfy their vanity. Despite the "invention of morality," man was and remains an egoistic creature. His nature, generally speaking, has not changed "since the fall of Adam," and there is no reason to believe that it will change in the future.

Mandeville adhered to the concept of the affective nature of man. He considered affects, i.e. the types of attraction and aversion inherent in human nature, the very essence of man, and considered them as the main factors that, taking possession of person, control him, whether he wanted it or not, and determine the conditions of his vital activity, strengthen or weaken the human ability to act. A professional psychiatrist, Mandeville, in the pages of his "Fable of the Bees," described many human affects, as well as exposed what they take, and analyzed various examples of human behavior and consciousness as the result of the interaction and combination of affects. The pages of his book devoted to such analysis will, presumably, turn out to be some of the most interesting for readers.

"An Essay on Charity, and Charity-Schools", 1723) is an example of Mandeville's journalism. In it he criticized the practice of charity and organization of parish schools for poor children, and also outlined some considerations regarding the state of school and university education in England. Here we will not find any fundamentally new theoretical provisions in comparison with those already contained in the comments. Considering the motives for charitable activities, Mandeville sees them in the same selfish inclinations, in the same vanity, love of power, selfishness that, in his opinion, marks other human actions. And in his arguments against charity schools he proceeds from the same economic considerations as in the comments about the need for the existence in a well-organized society of a large number of hardworking poor people, better than the ignorant, since education can turn them away from the desire to engage in difficult and menial work. But they do not contain a new turn in theoretical thought, "An Essay on Charity..." marked a turn in the fate of Mandeville's entire book, as well as in his own.

We find a new perspective in Mandeville's philosophical thought in his treatise "A Search into the Nature of Society", 1723). Firstly, this is an open and thorough criticism of the ethics of the natural "moral sense" of Anthony Ashley Cooper [3, p.33]. An admirer of Plato's philosophy, Anthony Ashley Cooper proceeded from the autonomy of morality, from the immutability of ideas about virtue and vice. "The beautiful and the honest" - Shaftesbury's moral and aesthetic ideal - was thought of by him as something universal and absolute. This point of view is absolutely not suitable for Mandeville. He is looking for examples that would show how different people's opinions about beauty are, how changeable their customs, morals, tastes and moral assessments are. What is considered beautiful in one country or at one historical time is not perceived as such in another country or at another time. What is moral for a European will seem immoral to an Easterner, and vice versa. Shaftesbury's moral and ethical ideal is unattainable and unrealistic; the hunt for it is not much more successful than the pursuit of ghosts. It must be admitted that Mandeville is largely right in his objections to Shaftesbury, and it cannot be denied that Mandeville's "The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest" was distinguished by greater realism in understanding the social relations and mores of post-revolutionary England than "characteristics of people, mores, opinions and times" (1711), written by Shaftesbury [3, p.33]. But here another, normative aspect comes into play when dealing with issues of this kind. Mandeville did not accept the humanistic spirit of Shaftesbury's concept, which was aimed at awakening in people the best, noblest feelings regarding the merits of human nature. Mandeville himself did not avoid the other extreme in his interpretation of this nature.

Mandeville, acutely noticing what moral types of personality shape contemporary social relations which in every possible way contribute to the development of selfishness and many vicious inclinations, considered them to be the main eternal properties of human nature. He pointedly ignored the richness and diversity of human nature when he denied or misinterpreted any altruistic motives of people and questioned the very possibility of selfless actions. Secondly, this is the concept of the positive, creative role of evil. Going beyond his idea of the vices of private individuals as a benefit for society as a whole, Mandeville comes to a more general idea of the productive significance of evil for progress and the very existence of social life. The thinker believes that now it is no longer just bad affects and base motives, but evil - both moral and natural, i.e. the vices and shortcomings of people, their weaknesses and unmet needs, as well as the unfavorable and destructive forces of nature for them, are considered by him as the beginning that makes people social beings and which is the basis and guarantee of their various economic activities, their success in crafts, arts and sciences.

The problem of evil has a long history in philosophy [1; 8; 11; 12]. Raised in the religious debates of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, it acted as a problem of compatibility in this world of evil, in particular moral evil, and the omnipotence and goodness of God. In this form, it occupied many theologians and thinkers of the XVII-XVIII centuries. In England, it was again staged in the book "On the Beginning of Evil" (1702) by Archbishop William King (1650-1729). This problem was solved in the treatise "The Moralists" (1709) by Shaftesbury. It was thoroughly studied by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) in the famous "Essay on the Theodicy of the Goodness of God, Human Freedom and the Principle of Evil" (1710). Mandeville radically rethinks it. In his interpretation, the problem of evil is

secularized, filled with socio-economic content and linked to the recognition of the critical importance of the material living conditions of people, their economic interests and needs, their success in knowledge and labor activity for the existence and development of society.

"The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest" left a noticeable mark on subsequent European philosophy and, above all, on the philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment. The influence of Mandeville's ideas was experienced, first of all, by David Hume (1711-1776), who tried to synthesize the theory of the "moral sense" of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson with ethical principles of Locke and Mandeville [7, p.604; 14, p.111-139; 15, p.21-42]. Hume considers that "the rules of morality are not the conclusions of our mind," since "we feel rather than judge morality" [7]. However, accepting the thesis about the sensual nature of morality, Hume, unlike Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, saw the predominance of selfish motives in people's behavior. "Since people are by nature selfish or have limited generosity," he wrote, "it is not easy to motivate them to do something for the sake of the interests of other people" [7, p.675].

At the same time, Hume recognized the existence of a special altruistic feeling of "sympathy" that people have for each other and which moderates their selfishness. In 1759, "The Theory of Moral Sentiments" by Adam Smith (1729-1790) was published, where the principle of "mutual sympathy" between people was further developed. Our sympathy for other people, sympathy for their grief or joy, Smith noted, indicated that people needed each other. Sharing the main tenets of Hutcheson's ethics, Smith at the same time believed that Hutcheson was mistaken in believing that self-love could in no way be a virtue: "The habit of frugality, hard work, modesty, and prudence, although usually explained by personal benefits, nevertheless seems to us worthy of approval and general respect" [5]. At the same time, Smith's attitude towards Mandeville was generally negative. Smith reproaches the author of "The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest" for simplifying and impoverishing "human nature," ignoring altruistic motives in people's behavior, and absolutizing their egoistic traits: selfishness, vanity, pride. Neglect of moral virtue, Smith points out, makes Mandeville's system quite dangerous in its consequences, since it instills the erroneous idea that selfish vices constitute the common good [6, p.28].

At the same time, many of Mandeville's ideas still appealed to A.Smith as the future classic of political economy. This applied primarily to those parts of "The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest" where the importance of the material interests and practical needs of people, their desire for well-being and prosperity is emphasized. A.Smith not only did not consider such a desire immoral, but, following Mandeville, pointed out that it "encourages us to cultivate the land, replace shacks with houses, build huge cities, create sciences and arts that ennoble and facilitate our existence" [5, p. 239]. To an even greater extent, the influence of Mandeville's ideas can be found in Smith's main work, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). A person is more likely to achieve his goal, writes Smith, if he turns not to the sympathy and benevolence of other people, but to their personal interests, if he talks to them not about his needs, but about their benefits. "Give me what I need, and you will get what you need... It is in this way that we receive from each other the majority of the services we need each other" [6, p.28].

An analysis of Mandeville's creation shows that he has much in common with the French philosophers of the XVIII century. Particularly close to him is Claude Adrian Helvetius (1715-1771), who argued that personal interest serves as the true foundation of the behavior of most people. "The most numerous human race," Helvetius wrote, "which in itself constitutes almost all of humanity, are people who are occupied exclusively with their own interests and have never thought about the general interest." However, Helvetius understood that self-interest often misleads people. Therefore, the theory of "reasonable egoism" that he developed was based on the need to combine personal and social interests by limiting selfishness and curbing passions.

Some researchers of Mandeville's works try to draw a parallel between the ethical views of Mandeville and the outstanding French thinker and philosopher of the XVIII century, Jean Jacques Rousseau. One can hardly agree with such a point of view, if only because the latter believed that man was good by nature, that people were inherently compassionate, softening their nature and restraining their selfish aspirations [3, p.39]. And yet, it was Rousseau who was able to continue Mandeville's thought about the inconsistency of social progress. It is enough to mention in this regard Rousseau's treatise "Discourse on the Sciences and Arts" (1750), where it was stated that "our sciences and arts owe their origin to our vices" [4, p. 53].

CONCLUSION

However, it seems to us that it would be wrong to see in such cases the direct and immediate influence of Mandeville, if only because the English moralist was able to see and express earlier, and sometimes more sharply than others, what later thinkers independently and consciously came to such a conclusion subsequent generations [3, p.38]. But then, all the more reason do we have to pay tribute to Bernard Mandeville and his creative genius which will certainly attract the attention of the Uzbek reader and allow our scientists to continue the study of both Mandeville's ethics and his entire philosophical heritage. And, on the other hand, it will also be interesting for those who study the history of world spiritual culture, who strive to join in with all the riches that the philosophical and social thought of the past has developed, and to critically assimilate them.

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