

Beyond Autonomy in Eighteenth-Century British and German Aesthetics

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Chapter 2

Beauty, Nature, and Society in Shaftesbury's The Moralists

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2 Beauty, Nature, and Society in Shaftesbury's *The Moralists*

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Introduction

The last decades have witnessed a re-evaluation of Shaftesbury's role as originator of a modern aesthetic disinterestedness detached from immediate moral, religious, and political values.¹ The overall aim of the following chapter is to contribute to this ongoing re-evaluation by addressing two matters in aesthetics that are still largely neglected. First, I wish to zoom in on how Thomas Hobbes's view of nature and society impedes, from Shaftesbury's anti-voluntaristic standpoint, a recognition of the intrinsic relatedness that distinguishes man's productive harmony with inner human nature as well as with the physical beauty of external nature. Second, through a close reading of the dialogue *The Moralists, A Philosophical Rhapsody* (1709), I want to show how Shaftesbury explores this productive relatedness by developing an organic notion of nature. Society is, for Shaftesbury, integrated in the beauty of nature, and vice versa. There is no autonomous position from which we can (re)create society since "Society" is, as Shaftesbury argues, always "natural" to us, and "out of Society and Community" we "never *did*, or ever *can* subsist" (*Moralists* 210 [319]; references to Shaftesbury's writings in this chapter are to *The Standard Edition*. Arabic numerals in square brackets refer to page numbers in the 1714/15 edition of *Characteristicks*). This integration should grant the concept of society a noteworthy role in aesthetics, and if we wish to be faithful to the temporality of Shaftesbury's philosophy, we must accept that his concept of society is crucial to the aesthetic claims he makes about the beauty of nature.

Hobbes on Nature

Hobbes is, in *Leviathan* (1651), the first to admit the offensiveness of his own idea "that Nature should . . . dissociate, and render men apt to invade, and destroy one another."² Nevertheless, a psychological egoism reigns in the apolitical condition of nature, wherein our self-interests tend to reproduce a disposition to conflicts.³ A solution presents itself in

our consenting to a sovereign, by which we give up a part of our right to determine what we need for self-preservation as well as our subjective claim to decide the necessary means to maintain this.⁴ By assigning power to the authority of the sovereign, we replace fear with the civil laws of the State.⁵ Thus, we move, or so Hobbes argues, from potential conflicts of interest in nature to predictability and normative standards upheld by the authority of the sovereign in political society.

These remarks by Hobbes, where the ground rule about the perfection of *status naturae* is forcefully contested, are well-known.⁶ Anticipating the opening of *Leviathan* in *De Cive* (first Latin edition published in 1642; English edition published in 1651), there is nothing beautiful or moral about the volatile state of nature. Hobbes perceives the classical Aristotelian “Axiom,” that man is by nature a political animal and thus “born fit for Society,” as “False.”⁷ Man does not “by nature seek Society for its own sake”; he does so because of his strong desire to “Profit from it.”⁸ Society has “to be made, and, once made, kept going, by suppressing what is anti-social in human beings.”⁹ Hence, while previous natural law tradition generally recognized a natural human sociability, Hobbes “departed radically from this tradition in his explication of human nature.”¹⁰

Hobbes’s conception of nature is a result of his materialist understanding of sensations, desires, and the imagination.¹¹ To him, there are two kinds of motion: vital and voluntary/animal motion. While the first is a physiological, involuntary motion, such as blood circulation, the second relates to conscious volitional actions, such as “to go, to speak, to move any of our limbs, in such manner as is first fancied in our minds.”¹² Sense is motions in the organs, and “Fancy is but the Reliques of the same Motion.” Thus, the imagination (*decaying sense*) is the “first internall beginning of all Voluntary Motion.” What is required before the internal motions assume a shape of “visible actions” is a certain *endeavor*. Passions, such as appetite and desire, are, to Hobbes, endeavors “toward something,” while aversion is an endeavor “fromward something.” When addressing these basic principles regarding causal relations of objects, a feature emerges that lingers at the center of Shaftesbury’s critique: due to the fact that “mans Body, is in continuall mutation,” it is, according to Hobbes, “impossible that all the same things should always cause in him the same Appetites, and Aversions.”¹³ As far as attraction goes, it is simply unthinkable that we can agree about our desires for objects. Hence, Hobbes is approaching moral questions about *good* (the object of appetite or desire) and *evil* (the object of hate and aversion), and aesthetic questions about *pleasure* and *delight* (the appearances of the motion of appetite), not only in subjective terms but, as it seems, also by relativizing value: these evaluative words are, according to him, merely understood “with relation to the person that useth them” since there is absolutely nothing “to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves; but from the Person of the man.”¹⁴ Good and

evil, as well as pleasure and delight, are thus relative to subjective desires, and there are apparently no objective moral and aesthetic properties in the material objects themselves.¹⁵ While Hobbes thus believes the good or beauty of a thing to be relative to the selfish desires of the agent in the state of nature, established rules enable men to come to a mutual understanding of how to engage with such things (though the rules are of course “relative to a *decision* by a ruler, judge, or arbitrator”).¹⁶

Carolyn Korsmeyer emphasizes the fact that Hobbes addresses pleasure by arguing that “all action is motivated by desire or aversion, and that human beings, having both a selfish nature and insatiable appetites, always act in ways calculated to maximize their self-interest.”¹⁷ Accordingly, pleasures involved in aesthetic experiences become signs of a selfishly calculated benefit that the agent might gain from the object (an idea combated by Shaftesbury's champion Francis Hutcheson).¹⁸ While we should indeed recognize that a “social contract is justified by the self-interest of each Hobbesian agent,”¹⁹ we might also ponder if it is accurate to claim that self-interest and power are, to Hobbes, the *sole* motivators of man's endeavors. Does man have desire only for random objects that agree with a strong self-interest and aversions only for objects that clash with it? To claim a definite answer here would be to neglect the complexity of human motivations. While Hobbes indeed argues that whenever man “Transferreth” his *jus naturale*, he does so because he expects to gain either a right or “some other good” and that, even though such an act is voluntary, “the object” nevertheless must be “some *Good to himselfe*,”²⁰ I will in the following limit myself to the focus maintained by Shaftesbury.

Love and Admiration for Its Own Sake

The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century debate on human motivation and political society could not fail to deal with the moral implications of the voluntaristic view that divine will “determines truth and goodness.”²¹ One of the fundamental questions asked of such theological voluntarism was precisely “[w]hat does *authority* consist in?”²² A critique of the voluntarism which Hobbes was claimed to uphold was essential to the Cambridge Platonists—a group of seventeenth-century philosophers and theologians with a great influence on Shaftesbury—to whom morality could not merely be a consequence of, or dependent on, divine legislation (the will of God).²³ Anyone who believed that there was a God and that God was “*just and good*” must, according to Shaftesbury, also firmly trust that there was “independently such a thing as *Justice and Injustice, Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong*; according to which he pronounces that *God is just, righteous, and true*” (*Inquiry* 100 [49–50]). To rely on the law of God to “constitute *Right and Wrong*” would simply give such moral terms “no significancy at all” (*Inquiry* 100 [50]).²⁴

Hobbes did, argues Shaftesbury in *Sensus Communis, An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour* (1709), “his utmost to shew us, that both in Religion and Morals we were impos’d on by our Governors” and “that there was nothing which by Nature inclin’d us either way; nothing which naturally drew us to the Love of what was without, or beyond *our-selves*” (*Sensus Communis* 56 [90]). In *The Moralists*, Shaftesbury condemns both Hobbes and theological voluntarists as “*nominal Moralists*” since they proceed “by making Virtue nothing in it-self, a Creature of Will only, or a mere Name of Fashion” (*Moralists* 126 [257]). Shaftesbury favors a moral and aesthetic realism in the sense that “distinctively moral properties are inherent in the things of which the properties are predicated.”²⁵ In *Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author* (1710), Shaftesbury puts his realism in the following way:

For HARMONY is Harmony by Nature, let Men judg ever so ridiculously of Musick. So is Symmetry and Proportion founded still in Nature, let Mens Fancy prove ever so barbarous, or (their Fashions ever so) Gothick, in their Architecture, Sculpture, or whatever other designing Art.

(*Soliloquy* 286 [353])

Shaftesbury’s attack on Hobbes leads us back to the question about human motivation: does man act morally because it is God’s will or because he rationally senses that it is the right thing to do? Given that theological voluntarism casts God’s rewards and punishments as motivation for human action, it seems to be in one’s own relative self-interest to obey the “natural rule of God.”²⁶ To Shaftesbury, this view is no better than “to be brib’d only or terrify’d into an honest Practice,” which, of course, “bespeaks little of real Honesty or Worth” (*Sensus Communis* 66 [97]).²⁷ If God is, as Shaftesbury remarks in *An Inquiry Concerning Virtue, or Merit* (1711), “belov’d only as the Cause of private Good,” God is just like “any other Instrument or Means of Pleasure by any vicious Creature” (*Inquiry* 114 [59]). Hence, it is important to recognize that Shaftesbury’s critique primarily concerns the fact that a divine legislation of morality might *itself* undermine religious faith since an increase in “violent Affection towards *private Good*” (or “selfish passion”) is proportionable to a decrease of “*Goodness it-self* or any good and deserving Object, worthy of Love and Admiration for its own sake” (*Inquiry* 114/116 [59–60]).²⁸

Thus, the obligation to act morally cannot revolve around a self-interest to conform with arbitrary legislation, ecclesiastical authority, or contracts. The problem ascribed to Hobbes’s perception is that morality is neither “really estimable in it-self” (*Sensus Communis* 66 [97]) nor a fundamental property of nature, “but because God’s will has chosen to define them as such, and so in this sense, the rules of

morality are arbitrary, being based entirely on God's infinite power."²⁹ To Shaftesbury, neither virtue nor beauty originates in arbitrary commands. Instead, they have an objective existence belonging to the eternal and rational order of nature. Here, it is important to recognize Shaftesbury's Stoic perception of natural a priori anticipations.³⁰ Shaftesbury introduces Epictetus's notion of *prolēpseis* (προλήψεις) in his private notebooks *Askēmata* (*Askēmata* 391) by referring to innate anticipation.³¹ Elsewhere, Shaftesbury refers to very similar concepts to defend "implanted notions" (ἐμφύτους ἐννοίας).³² He says it is man's nature to have a rational disposition within himself to acknowledge the absolute nature and beauty of moral truth (a disposition, however, that can only be realized by exhaustive introspection). Since there is, then, in the words of Shaftesbury, "implanted in the Heart a real Sense of Right and Wrong, a real good Affection towards the Species or Society" (*Inquiry* 116 [60]), an agreement to merely trust invented principles articulated by a common power (God or a sovereign) becomes irrational. At times, Shaftesbury is very explicit about this. For instance, when Theocles (one of the interlocutors in the dialogue *The Moralists*) attempts to defend the realism advocated by Shaftesbury in *An Inquiry*, Theocles states that the aim (of Shaftesbury) was to show that virtue was "not constituted from without, or dependent on *Custom, Fancy, or Will*; not even on the *Supreme Will* it-self" (*Moralists* 140 [267]). Thus, a blind submission to God's commands does not have anything to do with true virtue, beyond obstructing its realization.

Theological voluntarism and Hobbes's take on the state of nature bring, as we can see, questions about human motivation and authority to the fore. If values, like good and evil or beauty and ugliness, are relative to each man's subjective desire, an "interpersonal clash of substantive conceptions" is awaiting in the state of nature.³³ The Hobbesian institution of political society is expected to address these challenges by making man follow a "common axiological standard" established by the sovereign.³⁴ Thus, an artificial normativity can be established.

Today, Shaftesbury is often read in tandem with his Whig compatriot Joseph Addison, whose *Spectator* essays, entitled the "Pleasures of the Imagination" and published between June 21 and July 3, 1712, are, along with the Earl's *Moralists*, routinely assumed to denote "the beginning of modern aesthetic theory."³⁵ However, the differences between the two men's understandings of political society and nature are at times vast. Addison, who praises Hobbes's view of nature, advances a straightforward instrumentalism in which "Men who profess a State of Neutrality," failing to spot their own "Self-Interest" in the prosperity of the artificial body politic, ought to be amputated "like dead Limbs"; meanwhile, Shaftesbury elaborates the implications of voluntarism, with a greater attention to political and moral details.³⁶ Ultimately, what Shaftesbury and other anti-voluntarists rejected was the "voluntaristic moral

denigration of human nature; and the fear that voluntarism had unacceptable political implications.”³⁷ Being greatly concerned with moral motives, Shaftesbury finds highly provocative the idea that “individuals . . . instrumentally desire membership in the *civitas* solely due” to self-preservation.³⁸ According to him, no man can be virtuous if “he abstains from executing his ill purpose, thro a fear of some impending Punishment, or thro the allurements of some expected Pleasure or Advantage” (*Inquiry* 52 [21]).

Shaftesbury on Nature

Thus far, we have seen that Shaftesbury does not care for the idea that the goodness or beauty of a thing is relative to the agent’s self-interested desires, nor is he attracted to the thought that such desires are governed by arbitrary principles of a common power. Regarding whether human nature is fundamentally good or evil—the so called Human Nature Question—Hobbes provides, to speak with Michael B. Gill, a Negative Answer, while Shaftesbury offers the Positive Answer *par excellence*.³⁹ Next, I want to show just how Shaftesbury advances these positive ideas by arguing that a too strong self-interest prevents man from recognizing his intrinsically productive relationship to the beauty of nature as well as to society (which is part of the beauty of nature). Bringing together inner *human nature* and the physical beauty of *external nature*, Shaftesbury develops in *The Moralists*—his most influential work in German-speaking Europe—a notion of nature that aims to target this human blockage.⁴⁰ In the following section, I focus on Part II, Section 4 of the dialogue (unless stated otherwise, all current page references are to this section), in which, as we will see, Shaftesbury’s solution occurs in three rhetorical stages in the conversation between Theocles and Philocles: (1) a speech by Theocles on nature as a *whole*, (2) a conversation between Theocles and Philocles on the domination of nature, and (3) a dispute on society as part of nature.

Nature as a Whole

Section 4 opens by casting the roles of the conversation, with Theocles acting as “*the Divine and Preacher*” and Philocles acting as “*the Infidel*” (160 [281]), after which they decide to go for an evening walk with their guests: an old gentleman and his friend. The company immediately begins to praise nature, and while the guests admire the beauty of plants, Philocles takes the liberty to present his “Insight into the nature of *Simples*” (160 [282]). Though he expects to be commended for his expert knowledge, he is brusquely rebuked by Theocles for being “so ill a *Naturalist in this WHOLE*” and for grasping “so little the Anatomy of *the World and Nature*” (162 [283]). The fact that Philocles shows

“accurate Judgment in *the Particulars* of Natural Beings and Operations” cannot, from Theocles’s perspective, make up for the fact that he fails to “judg of the Structure of Things *in general*, and of the Order and Frame of NATURE” (162 [282]). Rather, Philocles’s expert knowledge becomes a disturbing signal of his ignorance of the beauty of nature: although he is, at this point, commended for being “conscious of better Order *within*” (162 [283]), he must learn that knowledge of the nature of simples is of little worth (or even counterproductive) as long as he holds an overdeveloped self-interest and fails to see the simples’ bearing on the beauty of the whole. This is precisely how he moves himself, and his own mind, from a knowledge of *part* to an awareness of the “universal designing mind” that constitutes the *whole*.⁴¹

This provides Theocles with an opportunity to introduce two arguments about similar failures. The first argument revolves around a general tendency of man to have unjustified opinions about his own conditions of possibility by imagining “a thousand Inconsistences and Defects in this *wider Constitution*” (162 [283]). He objects to the idea that parts might outdo “*the Whole* it-self.” In his notes in *Askêmata* (portions of the private notebooks were included in *The Moralists*), Shaftesbury voices this idea in the following manner:

If there be a Nature of the Whole, it must be a Nature more perfect than that of particulars contain'd in the Whole; if so, It is a Wise & Intelligent Nature; if so, then It must order every thing for its own good: and since that w^{ch} is best for y^e Univers is both the Wisest & Justest, it follows that y^e Supream Nature is perfectly Wise & Just.
(*Askêmata* 90)

Along the same lines, Theocles invites Philocles to meditate on the conditions for the perfection of particulars by casting doubt on the assumption that “there shou’d be *in Nature* the Idea of an Order and Perfection, which NATURE her-self wants” (164 [284]). A detached self-sufficient system would merely contradict the theistic idea of a coherent whole. Instead, the parts that make up a system must be considered, as a particular system, to have a “further relation” (166 [286]) to other expanding systems.

Thus, rather than allowing Philocles to go on, in an anthropocentric mode, about humankind’s own assumed perfection and power to control and expose an imperfection in its origin, Theocles wants to help Philocles recognize his inability to fully comprehend the infinity of things. Hence, Theocles’s second argument underscores the fact that, while there is, to a “fair and just Contemplator of the Works of Nature” (168 [288]) such as himself, abundant evidence of God’s “coherent Scheme of Things” (168 [287]), one must nevertheless recognize that “in an Infinity of Things,” the “Mind which sees not *infinitely*, can see nothing *fully*”

(168 [288]). Knowledge of a part is of course vital in order to distinguish its rational relation to the whole (indeed, even the kind of perceptiveness about “*Simples*” shown by Philocles can serve a purpose if adequately exercised). But expert knowledge itself can only abet such an undertaking by setting up the conditions for a reflective moral awareness of the harm triggered by a too strong Hobbesian self-interest. If man merely relates his experience of beauty to his own subjective interests, he will remain unable to recognize the relationship between *part* and *whole*. Ultimately, this kind of Hobbesian self-interest just precludes a deeper moral understanding:

the whole Order of the Universe, elsewhere so firm, intire, and immovable, is here o'erthrown, and lost by this one View; in which we refer all things to our-selves: submitting the Interest of *the Whole* to the Good and Interest of so small *a Part*.

(172 [291])

The point about part and whole is further clarified in one of the most frequently cited passages from *The Moralists* (from Part III, Section 2), often assumed to have introduced the modern conception of aesthetic disinterestedness.⁴² It occurs in a discussion between Theocles and Philocles about property and possession. Let us look at this paradigmatic passage in order to better recognize Shaftesbury's neglected point about the whole.

Imagine then, good PHILOCLES, if being taken with the Beauty of the Ocean which you see yonder at a distance, it shou'd come into your head, to seek how to command it; and like some mighty Admiral, ride Master of the Sea; wou'd not the Fancy be a little absurd?

Absurd enough, in conscience. The next thing I shou'd do, 'tis likely, upon this Frenzy, wou'd be to hire some Bark, and go in Nuptial Ceremony, VENETIAN-like, to wed the *Gulf*, which I might call perhaps as properly *my own*.

LET who will call it theirs, reply'd THEOCLES, you will own *the Enjoyment* of this kind to be very different from that which shou'd naturally follow from the Contemplation of the Ocean's *Beauty*. The Bridegroom-*Doge*, who in his stately Bucentaur floats on the Bosom of his THETIS, has less *Possession* than the poor *Shepherd*, who from a hanging Rock, or Point of some high Promontory, stretch'd at his ease, forgets his feeding Flocks, while he admires *her Beauty*. — But to come nearer home, and make the Question still more familiar. Suppose (my PHILOCLES!) that, viewing such a Tract of Country, as this delicious *Vale* we see beneath us, you shou'd for *the Enjoyment* of the Prospect, require the *Property* or *Possession* of the Land?

THE *Covetous Fancy*, reply'd I, wou'd be as absurd altogether, as that other *Ambitious* one.

(*Moralists* 320 [396–397])

The language in the passage is revealing. Theocles is literally asking Philocles if he thinks it is rational to exercise direct authority (“command”) and human power to dominate God’s creation (“ride Master of the Sea”). The reply suggests that Philocles thinks it would be as irrational as trying to hold nature as a property that he would have exclusive right to possess and use at his own selfish will. “*Property or Possession*” does not, as it seems, have anything to do with experiencing the beauty of nature. Indeed, a great divide occurs between the mandatory duties of the Doge of Venice—on Ascension Day, the Doge heads a procession of boats into the sea in order to renew the nuptial bond between the sea and Venice—and the poor shepherd. Any intention to profit from nature (strictly profitable by possession or, as in the case of the Doge, via a utility value) is out of the question for the shepherd: he is happily enclosed in its beauty—that of both inner and outer nature, that is to say, the *whole*. While Hobbes would have argued that the main reason for the artificial making of political society is the uncontrollable human tendency to act egoistically, Shaftesbury’s reference to the economically underprivileged shepherd demonstrates that it is in fact the reverse: although the shepherd might have strong motives to act egoistically, it remains highly unlikely, given that he experiences God’s rational creation as a whole, that these motives will have any influence on his actions. That the shepherd does not intentionally isolate any specific *part* as useful to his potential interest but rather is pleasantly abstracted—he even fails to give proper attention to the “feeding Flocks”—is suggested by the fact that he “admires” nature’s “*Beauty*.” Thus, any detached parts coinciding with selfish desires yield to the shepherd’s disinterested experience of the beauty of the whole.

Shaftesbury’s point about part and whole finds an illustrative analogy to works of art in *A Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules*.⁴³ Here, a successful painting deserves to be referred to as a *Tablature* when it “constitutes a Real WHOLE, by a mutual and necessary Relation of its Parts, the same as of the Members in a natural Body” (*Notion* 74 [348]). The entire design of the painting must be shaped by “*one single Intelligence*,” which then allows it to be “comprehended in *one View*.” Rather than being self-absorbed in specific parts, the viewer is naturally moved to experience the parts’ organic relation to the greater beauty of the painting as *one whole*. The artist who manages to understand the aesthetic significance of the *Tablature* must—as Theocles pleads Philocles to do—have “acquir’d the Knowledge of a *Whole and Parts*” before he engages in “*moral and poëtick Truth*” (*Notion* 134 [389]). Shaftesbury’s references to Aristotle are

evident in *The Judgment of Hercules*. The organic whole is like the living body, in which the vitality of singular parts are needed for the whole to reveal its beauty.⁴⁴ In the *Poetics*, Aristotle famously argues (resounding in its turn of Socrates in *Phaedrus*) that a plot in epic poetry should be formed around an action that is a perfect whole (*περι μίαν πράξιν ὅλην*) in itself, which permits the plot, like a whole living animal (or living being), to produce its own appropriate pleasure (*ὥσπερ ζῷον ἐν ὅλον ποιῆ τὴν οἰκείαν ἡδονήν*).⁴⁵

Domination of Nature

After Theocles's exposition of part and whole, it is Philocles's task to criticize him. By offering an idea about causality without "a *First Cause*" (178 [296]), Theocles is, from Philocles's perspective, taking too much for granted. In Theocles's theology, the relevant question is not "about what was *First*, or *Foremost*; but what is *Instant*, and *Now* in being" (180 [297]). According to Philocles, all Theocles offers is probability. While "Divines in general" allow nature "to be challeng'd for her Failings" without ever having to call the Deity into question ("Deity, they think, is not accountable for her: Only she for her-self"), his theology looks almost like a closed system: "You [Theocles] have unnecessarily brought *Nature* into the Controversy, and taken upon you to defend her Honour so highly, that I know not whether it may be safe for me to question her" (184 [299]). Thus, at the outset, Philocles simply does not seem to understand Theocles's anti-voluntarism. However, in a Socratic fashion, the latter naturally urges the former to continue, and he does so by revisiting the anthropocentric strain of his argument: man, "the noblest of Creatures," is sadly disadvantaged ("very weak and impotent") compared to "*Brutes*, and the irrational Species" (184 [300]), he laments from his narrow, anthropocentric, outlook. While the exposed and fragile "human Life" is burdened by "Labour" and "cumbersom Baggage," animals are favorably "cloth'd and arm'd by Nature her-self" (186 [300–301]). In the limited view of Philocles, this seems terribly unfair.

The envy of Philocles should be read as a tacit reference to the Promethean myth, especially the story about Prometheus's brother Epimetheus, which helps in clarifying the dangers of being too self-centered in respect to nature. In Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*, it is Epimetheus who clothes non-human creatures.⁴⁶ A central feature in the myth is his unsuccessful distribution of powers to mortals (*θηητὰ*).⁴⁷ Due to Epimetheus's lack of foresight, the distribution gets out of control. He neglects human beings while distributing the essential powers to non-rational creatures (*τὰ ἄλογα*).⁴⁸ Before Prometheus steals fire and technical skill from the gods, and Zeus orders Hermes to distribute a sense of shame and justice amongst men so that they can organize themselves in cities, there is, according to the myth, also a threat of man's destruction.⁴⁹ Alluding

to this risk, Philocles simply claims that human beings are, in comparison with other animals, unfavorably supported by nature. Theocles's reply to Philocles is acridly concise: why not grant man the power to "take possession of *each* Element, and reign in *All*" (186 [301]). Philocles recognizes his mistake and admits that it would be morally wrong to consider man to be "by Nature, LORD of *All*" (186 [301]). His perspective reveals, to Theocles, a disturbing human selfishness towards nature. Thus, Theocles stresses that "*Nature* her-self [is] not for MAN, but *Man* for NATURE," which furthermore brings out the moral imperative that man must "submit to *the Elements* of NATURE, and not *the Elements* to him" (186 [302]). Nature is neither a means to establish the moral superiority of man nor an object of which man has entire disposal. Above all, nature is, to Shaftesbury, physis (φύσις), which means that it is a productive "impower'd *Creatref*" (*Moralists* 246 [345]) that works as a principle of beauty, intrinsically manifest in every organism (including man and cosmos in itself).⁵⁰

We should recognize the underlying sense of Theocles's sharp remarks to Philocles: namely, a strong reservation about the emerging paradigm of science (natural philosophy), present in Shaftesbury's writings at an early stage.⁵¹ Man must steer clear of a too strong self-interest and instead think of himself in relational terms: "All things are united & have One Nature" (*Askêmata* 90). Human existence is constituted by organic relations to other kinds of existence. To detach an organism from this harmonious relationship involves precisely the kind of objectifying and self-interested tendency that Shaftesbury spots in the praxis of natural philosophy. When writing to his protégé Michael Ainsworth, Shaftesbury almost adopts the role of Theocles, stressing that, since it is a matter of Michael's (rather than Philocles's) moral progress, he must be aware that "all that pretended studdy & Science of Nature call'd natural Philosophy" is "far from being necessary Improvements of the Mind" (*Ainsworth Correspondence* 377). In fact, such scientific praxis can be counterproductive since, if used carelessly, it "serve[s] only to blow it [the mind] up in Conceit & Folly, & render Men more stiff in their Ignorance & Vices." Thus, instead of recognizing man's organic relationship to the beauty of nature, we might end up with a mind which is, in a Hobbesian fashion, more selfish, impolite, amoral, and detached from the perfection of nature. We must try, argues Shaftesbury in his letter to Ainsworth, to remove our self-interest and experience the world by "look[ing] impartially into all Authors, & upon all Nations, & into all parts of Learning, & Human Life" (*Ainsworth Correspondence* 389). Furthermore, to seek and discover "true *Pulchrum* [and] the *Honestum* [and] the τὸ καλὸν [beauty itself]" is to know God. Here, the search for beauty itself cannot fail to deal with single plants (which Philocles spoke about) or anything else: "Seek for y^e τὸ καλὸν in every thing; beginning as low as the Plants, the Fields, or even y^e common

Arts of Mankind: to see w^r is Beauteouse & what contrary” (*Ainsworth Correspondence* 389).

The essence of Theocles’s and Philocles’s discussion of dominion over nature has already been sketched in *Askêmata* (under the heading “Nature”), where it is introduced by the exhortation from Epictetus that we ought to stop wondering why other animals have, by nature, capacities prepared for their bodies.⁵² Thus, when Philocles complains about “Beasts” having “*Instincts*, which Man has not,” and Theocles agrees that “they have indeed Perceptions, Sensations, and *Pre-sensations*” (194 [307]) which human beings lack, it is not to launch further protests about human nature but to prove the political and social benefits of such absence. Providence does not rule by chance. In fact, human beings are not simply defined by a set of emotive qualities favorably attributed by Providence. They are, more importantly, defined by their lack of certain qualities found in other species. It is true, says Theocles, that while newborns of other species are “instantly helpful to themselves,” the “*human Infant* is of all the most helpless” (196 [308]). However, this does not disturb man’s moral existence. Rather, “this *Defect* engage[s]” man “the more strongly to Society,” where “*social* Intercourse and Community” is a “*Natural State*” (196 [309]). Consequently, matters of self-interest are uncalled for here: a fully natural reliance on, and confidence in, our fellow citizen should not be regarded as a weakness of human nature since it is precisely this so-called defect that “force[s] him to own that he is purposely, and not by Accident, made rational and *sociable*” (196 [309]). “What,” asks Theocles rhetorically, “can be happier than such a Deficiency, as is the occasion of so much Good?” (196/198 [309]).

Society as Nature

In the third rhetorical stage of Part II, Section 4, Theocles’s and Philocles’s discussion is interrupted by one of the guests: the latter’s “Adversary,” the nameless “old Gentleman,” who fails to recall that Philocles has, as we observed earlier, agreed to play a role of *advocatus diaboli* (“*the Infidel*”). Surprisingly few scholars have paid attention to the role played by the gentleman, an ill-disguised agent for a Hobbesian (and Lockean) perception of nature and society. Still, the benefit of reflecting on this hiatus in Theocles’s and Philocles’s winding conversation is, as we will see, crucial for recognizing Shaftesbury’s view of self-interest and idea of society as part of the beauty of nature as a whole.

Thus, having forgotten that Philocles is, as is stated in the opening of Section 4, merely playing a role, the gentleman accuses him of having vindicated an amoral Hobbesian anthropology when making his remarks about man being unjustly treated by nature. Wittily, Philocles is blamed for dressing up as Hobbes himself by claiming “that *the State of Nature* [is] a *State of War*” (198 [310]). However, at this point in the

dialogue, Philocles begins to find his feet, and he decides to make mischief.⁵³ He persuades the gentleman to agree that the state of nature is neither a “*State of Government*, [n]or *publick Rule*.” Instead, the exit from nature and the emergence of society ought, stresses the gentleman, to be preceded by a “Compact.” It is simply in man’s own strong self-interest to leave nature because of “some particular *Circumstances*” (200 [311]). At this point, the gentleman’s remark that the state of nature cannot be “absolutely intolerable” (198 [310]) is a weak excuse for the flawed image he sketches. The gap between nature’s perfect beauty and something only just bearable is unbridgeable. What *circumstances* could possibly master perfect beauty? Thus, the gentleman adopts Philocles’s initial role (from the first rhetorical stage) by presenting unjustified opinions about nature. Having turned the tables, Philocles brings home his point:

HIS *Nature* then, said I [Philocles], was not so very good, it seems; since having no *natural Affection*, or *friendly Inclination* belonging to him, he was forc’d into a social State, *against his Will*: And this, not from any Necessity in respect of outward Things (for you have allow’d him a tolerable Subsistence) but from such Inconveniencies as arose chiefly from himself, and his own malignant Temper and Principles. And indeed ’twas no wonder that Creatures who were *naturally* thus unsociable, shou’d be as naturally mischievous and troublesom. If, *according to their Nature*, they cou’d live out of Society, with so little Affection for one another’s Company, ’tis not likely that upon occasion they wou’d spare one another’s Persons. If they were so sullen as not to meet *for Love*, ’tis more than probable they wou’d fight *for Interest*. And thus from your own Reasoning it appears, “That the *State of Nature* must in all likelihood have been little different from a *State of WAR*.”

(200 [311–312])

Even the slightest mistrust of the perfection of nature relativizes Shaftesbury’s claims about natural (social) affections and God. The idea that Providence has equipped man with a strong self-interest to free himself from the beauty of God’s nature is absurd to Shaftesbury. The Stoic vision of Marcus Aurelius that there is either an order of things or a maze is a fundamental issue that allows no wavering for proper philosophers.⁵⁴ Evil and chaos are only facts to the extent that they distract man from recognizing how they are related to the beauty of the whole. Shaftesbury’s theodicy relies on the Aurelian trust that “all that befalls befalleth justly.”⁵⁵ The lack of morality and the inability to move in a disinterested fashion towards God consists precisely in not recognizing that the whole might also contain seemingly destructive parts that nevertheless serve the good and beauty of the whole.

In line with classical beliefs, Shaftesbury thinks that time, history, and society are changing in cyclical patterns. A constant behind such patterns is the principle of the beauty and moral perfection of nature, which appears, by the stand attributed to the gentleman, and indeed to Hobbes, merely subjective and relative. The fact that it seems to be in man's own self-interest to leave nature suggests that nature is an insufficient source (as Philocles suggested in his critique of Theocles) and an imperfect cause of beauty and morality.

As the dispute between Philocles and the gentleman dies away, Theocles comfortably takes Philocles's place and explains that the mischief involved allowing the gentleman to accept that "the State of Nature and that of Society were perfectly distinct" (202 [312]). We can neither, argues Theocles, refer to an "imperfect rude Condition of Mankind" as "*a State*" since it is of no "continuance," nor recognize such a "pretended *State of Nature*" without compromising the idea of eternity. Accepting that Providence confers by chance implies either that human existence appeared "*all at once*" or that existence emerged "*by degrees*" (204 [314]). In the first case, in which Theocles supposes that man accidentally "sprang, as the old Poets feign'd, from a *big-belly'd Oak*" (204 [315]), nature merely acts, with "no Intention at all" (206 [315]). In the second case, man must have emerged by constantly changing through innumerable states, with "each Change" as "*natural*" as "another" (206 [316]). But how, asks Theocles, could she "maintain and propagate the Species, such as it now is, without Fellowship or Community" (208 [316])? It is more rational to accept the fact that "Nature was *perfect*, and her Growth *compleat*" (208 [316]), and thus recognize that man must have existed from eternity. Nature, concludes Theocles, is the state of beauty that "we see at present before our eyes" (204 [314]), and "out of Society and Community" man "never *did*, or ever *can* subsist" (210 [319]).

Conclusion

The perfect moral beauty of nature relates, as we have seen in *The Moralists*, to inner human nature as well as the physical beauty of external nature. Nature is a rational and productive *whole* from which nothing can be excluded. The classical triad of truth, goodness and beauty, is, to Shaftesbury, unbroken. In his own words (echoing Socrates and Diotima):

Will it not be found in this respect, above all, That what is BEAUTIFUL is *Harmonious* and *Proportionable*: What is Harmonious and Proportionable, is TRUE; and what is at once both *Beautiful* and *True*, is, of consequence, *Agreeable* and GOOD?

(*Miscellaneous* 222/224 [182–183])⁵⁶

As we have seen, Shaftesbury's perception of society is integral to the beauty of nature. Thus, society is not a necessary evil to restrain excessive Hobbesian selfishness, rather society is the outcome of a perfect natural disposition. To participate in society is furthermore to recognize a *relatedness* to the whole. Thus, it makes perfect sense to bring together society and beauty itself by asking, as Shaftesbury does in *Askêmata*, "What is there in the World y^f has more of Beauty, or y^f gives y^e Idea of the τὸ καλόν [beauty itself] more perfect & sensible, than y^e View of an equal Commonwealth, or City" (*Askêmata* 331).

Notes

- 1 This established account of modern aesthetic disinterestedness was introduced by Jerome Stolnitz, "On the Origins of 'Aesthetic Disinterestedness,'" *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20, no. 2 (1961): 131–143; Stolnitz, "On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory," *Philosophical Quarterly* 11, no. 43 (1961): 97–113. For recent attempts to challenge the established account, see Jorge V. Arregui and Pablo Arnau, "Shaftesbury: Father or Critic of Modern Aesthetics?" *British Journal of Aesthetics* 34, no. 4 (1994): 350–362; Preben Mortensen, *Art in the Social Order: The Making of the Modern Conception of Art* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Miles Rind, "The Concept of Disinterestedness in Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 40, no. 1 (2002): 67–87; Paul Guyer, *Values of Beauty: Historical Essays in Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), e.g. 10; Karl Axelsson, *Political Aesthetics: Addison and Shaftesbury on Taste, Morals, and Society* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 177–199.
- 2 See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, Or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill*, Vol. 2, ed. Noel Malcolm, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 194.
- 3 Elisabeth Ellis, "The Received Hobbes," in *Leviathan: Or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill*, ed. Ian Shapiro (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 493. About Hobbes's psychological egoism, see C. D. Meyers, "Hobbes and the Rationality of Self-Preservation: Grounding Morality on the Desires We Should Have," *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms* 18, no. 3 (2013): 269–286 (esp. 272–275).
- 4 The extent of rights relinquished remains ambiguous, see A. P. Martinich, *Hobbes: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 232–233.
- 5 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Vol. 2, 16.
- 6 A. P. Martinich, *A Hobbes Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 293.
- 7 Thomas Hobbes, *De Cive*, The English Version, ed. Howard Warrender (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 42. See also Aristotle, *Politics*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, The Revised Oxford Translation, Vol. 2, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), esp. 1253a1–3. For further comments on Hobbes's view of Aristotle's *Politics*, see J. Laird, "Hobbes on Aristotle's *Politics*," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 43 (1942): 1–20. Hobbes's anti-Aristotelianism has recently

- been problematized, see Sophie Smith, "Democracy and the Body Politic from Aristotle to Hobbes," *Political Theory* 46, no. 2 (2018): 167–196.
- 8 Hobbes, *De Cive*, 42.
 - 9 Tom Sorell, "Hobbes, Locke and the State of Nature," in *Studies on Locke: Sources, Contemporaries, and Legacy*, ed. Sarah Hutton and Paul Schuurman (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 29.
 - 10 Perez Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 32.
 - 11 About the connection between Hobbes's materialism and his political philosophy, see Nicholas Dungey, "Thomas Hobbes's Materialism, Language, and the Possibility of Politics," *The Review of Politics* 70, no. 2 (2008): 190–220. Dungey gives emphasis to the connection but argues that Hobbes's materialism "frustrates the very purpose for which it is conceived" (190), i.e., to allow men to find a common (linguistic) ground to establish a social contract.
 - 12 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Vol. 2, 78.
 - 13 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Vol. 2, 80.
 - 14 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Vol. 2, 80 and 82.
 - 15 See also Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 47–48. For an alternative reading, with a stress on *projectivism* rather than *subjectivism*, see Stephen Darwall, "Normativity and Projection in Hobbes's *Leviathan*," *The Philosophical Review* 109, no. 3 (2000): 313–347.
 - 16 D. D. Raphael, *Hobbes: Morals and Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 42. On Hobbes and individual and cultural moral relativism, see Stephen J. Finn, *Hobbes: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2007), 63–64.
 - 17 Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste*, 47.
 - 18 See Carolyn Korsmeyer, "Relativism and Hutcheson's Aesthetic Theory," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36, no. 2 (1975): 319–330.
 - 19 Shane D. Courtland, "Hobbesian Justification for Animal Rights," *Environmental Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (2011): 25.
 - 20 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Vol. 2, 202.
 - 21 Louise Hickman, *Eighteenth-Century Dissent and Cambridge Platonism: Reconceiving the Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 5.
 - 22 Stephen Darwall, "Norm and Normativity," in *Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Philosophy*, Vol. 2, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 991.
 - 23 For further discussion, see Michael B. Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), esp. 20–23.
 - 24 See also T. H. Irwin, "Later Christian Ethics," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*, ed. Roger Crisp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 190; Darwall, "Norm and Normativity," 992. One of Shaftesbury's champions, Leibniz, encapsulates the political relevance of the argument when he states that "[o]ur end is to banish from men the false ideas that represent God to them as an absolute prince employing a despotic power, unfitted to be loved and unworthy of being loved." See G. W. Leibniz, *Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*, ed. Austin Farrer, trans. E. M. Huggard (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), 127 (Part I, sec. 6).
 - 25 T. H. Irwin, "Shaftesbury's Place in the History of Moral Realism," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 172, no. 4 (2015): 881.

- 26 Yves Charles Zarka, "First Philosophy and the Foundation of Knowledge," in *Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, ed. Tom Sorell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 79.
- 27 See also *Inquiry* (108 [55]):
- IF . . . there be a Belief or Conception of a DEITY, who is consider'd only as *powerful* over his Creature, and inforcing Obedience to his *absolute Will* by particular Rewards and Punishments; and if on this account, thro Hope merely of *Reward*, or Fear of *Punishment*, the Creature be incited to do the Good he hates, or restrain'd from doing the Ill to which he is not otherwise in the least degree averse; there is in this Case . . . no Virtue or Goodness whatsoever.
- 28 See also Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*, Vol. 2: *From Suarez to Rousseau* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 361–365.
- 29 Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, 9.
- 30 For further discussion, see Daniel Carey, "Locke, Shaftesbury, and Innateness," *Locke Studies* 4 (2004): 21–27; also in Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson: Contesting Diversity in the Enlightenment and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 112–116.
- 31 See Epictetus, *Discourses*, trans. W. A. Oldfather, Loeb Classical Library 131 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 1.22. Epictetus's *Discourses* were documented by his disciple Arrian. Shaftesbury states the heading of 1.22: *Περὶ τῶν προλήψεων*. For further discussion on *prolēpseis/prolepsis*, see Carey, "Locke, Shaftesbury, and Innateness," 21–27; *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson*, 110–116. For discussion on *Askēmata* and Stoicism, see Laurent Jaffro, "Les Exercices de Shaftesbury: un stoïcisme crépusculaire," in *Le stoïcisme au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle: Le retour des philosophies antiques à l'âge classique*, ed. Pierre-François Moreau (Paris: Albin Michel, 1999), 340–354.
- 32 On anticipation and *εμφύτους ἐννοίας*, see apparatus criticus to *Miscellaneous Reflections* (see *Printed Notes* 200 [214]). On similar concepts, see "preconceptions," in *The Moralists* (342 [412]); "instinct," in *The Moralists* (340 [411]); "natural anticipation," in *Miscellaneous Reflections* (258 [214]). A further modification is made in a letter to Michael Ainsworth (June 3, 1709). There, Shaftesbury speaks of innate as "a Word [John Locke] poorly plays upon," identifying as the "right word, tho less usd," the term "*connatural*," which he found in Benjamin Whichcote's sermons (*Ainsworth Correspondence* 403). About the impact of Whichcote's argument on Shaftesbury, see Friedrich A. Uehlein, "Whichcote, Shaftesbury and Locke: Shaftesbury's Critique of Locke's Epistemology and Moral Philosophy," *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 25, no. 5 (2017): 1031–1048.
- 33 Martin T. Harvey, "Hobbes's Voluntarist Theory of Morals," *Hobbes Studies* 22, no. 1 (2009): 56.
- 34 Harvey, "Hobbes's Voluntarist Theory of Morals," 56.
- 35 Peter Kivy, "Recent Scholarship and the British Tradition: A Logic of Taste—The First Fifty Years," in *Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology*, ed. George Dickie, Richard Sclafani, and Ronald Roblin, 2nd ed. (New York: St Martin's Press, 1989), 259.
- 36 For Addison's praise of Hobbes's understanding of nature, see *The Spectator*, Vol. 1, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), 200. For the remarks about "Men who profess a State of Neutrality," see

- Addison's propagandistic essays in *The Freeholder* (published between 1715 and 1716), ed. James Leheny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 96–97.
- 37 J. B. Schneewind, "Voluntarism and the Foundations of Ethics," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 70, no. 2 (1996): 27.
- 38 Harvey, "Hobbes's Voluntarist Theory of Morals," 57. See also Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Vol. 2, 254.
- 39 Gill, *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics*, 1:
- Are human beings naturally good or evil? Are we naturally drawn to virtue or to vice? Is it natural for us to do the right thing, or must we resist something in our nature in order to do what is right? Call this the Human Nature Question.
- 40 Johann Joachim Spalding, who introduced Shaftesbury's writings to a German public, is illustrative of the general reception. In his *Lebensbeschreibung* (1804), Spalding states that reading Shaftesbury and learning about moral feeling (*moralisches Gefühl*) and disinterested virtue (*uneigennütze Tugend*) moved his soul deeply (see Johann Joachim Spalding, *Lebensbeschreibung*, in *Kleinere Schriften 2: Briefe an Gleim, Lebensbeschreibung*, ed. Albrecht Beutel and Tobias Jersak, Vol. 6 of *Kritische Ausgabe: Schriften* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002], 124). Shaftesbury's philosophy was firmly integrated in the German debate on *innere Bildung*. About this, see Rebekka Horlacher, "Bildung—A Construction of a History of Philosophy of Education," *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 23, no. 5–6 (2004): 409. Shaftesbury's concept of "inward form" was, in Spalding's translation of *The Moralists*, published in 1745 and, in a translation by Friedrich Christoph Oetinger (1702–1782), translated into *innere Bildung*; "formation of a genteel character" and "good breeding" was translated into *Bildung* and *Selbstbildung*. See Susan L. Cocalis, "The Transformation of *Bildung* from an Image to an Ideal," *Monatshefte* 70, no. 4 (1978): 401.
- 41 Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace, and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England, 1660–1780*, Vol. 2: *Shaftesbury to Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 140.
- 42 Referring to this passage in *The Moralists* is common. See Paul Guyer, *A History of Modern Aesthetics*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 35–36. As Guyer correctly observes, the "passage is readily interpreted as introducing the idea of the disinterestedness of judgments of beauty as the basis for a solution to the problem of taste."
- 43 Shaftesbury completed *A Notion of the Historical Draught or Tablature of the Judgment of Hercules* in the last months of his life in Chiaia near Naples (from November 20, 1711, to February 15, 1713).
- 44 Here, Shaftesbury is also influenced by Marcus Aurelius's account of the universe as a living organism. See Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, ed. and trans. C. R. Haines, Loeb Classical Library 58 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), 4.40.
- 45 See Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1459a19–21. Malcolm Heath draws attention to the fact that Plato seems to have anticipated the Aristotelian question of the plot-structure; see Malcolm Heath, *Ancient Philosophical Poetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 84. See Plato, *Phaedrus*, in *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, trans. Harold North Fowler, Loeb Classical Library 36 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 264c.

- 46 See Plato, *Protagoras*, in *Laches, Protagoras, Meno, Euthydemus*, trans. W. R. M. Lamb, Loeb Classical Library 165 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 321a.
- 47 Plato, *Protagoras*, 320d.
- 48 Plato, *Protagoras*, 321c.
- 49 Plato, *Protagoras*, 322c.
- 50 See also Robert Voitle, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury 1671–1713* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 141.
- 51 See *Soliloquy*, where “Searchers of *Modes* and *Substances*” that are “inrich’d with Science” merely produce “pretended Knowledge of the Machine of *this World*” and “introduce Impertinence and Conceit with the best Countenance of Authority” (*Soliloquy* 210/212 [291]). Shaftesbury’s doubts about the alleged advancement of modern science (or natural philosophy) appear at an early stage (see *Correspondence* 201 and 204).
- 52 *Askêmata*, 335. See also Epictetus, *Discourses*, 1.16.1.
- 53 See also Paul Sagar, *The Opinion of Mankind: Sociability and the Theory of the State from Hobbes to Smith* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 82.
- 54 Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 4.27. See also 6.10.
- 55 Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 4.10.
- 56 Cf. Plato, *Symposium*, in *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, trans. W. R. M. Lamb, Loeb Classical Library 166 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 210a–212b. See also Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, in *Memorabilia, Oeconomicus, Symposium, Apology*, trans. E. C. Marchant and O. J. Todd, Loeb Classical Library 168 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 3.8.

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