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Ryu Susato

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Hume's Nuanced Defense of Luxury

RYU SUSATO

Abstract: The significance of Hume's positive attitude towards luxury might have been overemphasized by his commentators. In fact, arguments in favor of "moderate" luxury had already been entertained before the emergence of Hume's position. Therefore to argue that Hume's argument entailed the defense of moderate luxury is not to identify in it anything particularly unique. Thus, the first aim of this paper is to clarify the nature of Hume's contribution to the ongoing luxury debates. This does not consist merely of an assertion of the compatibility of moral virtue with the enjoyment of luxury, but lies rather in Hume's emphasis on two aspects of the beneficial interaction between morality and luxury. First, the historical process of the introduction of luxury is regarded by Hume as fostering new morals peculiar to the commercial age; and secondly, the enjoyment of luxury is seen as a condition favorable to the maintenance of morals. The second aim of this paper is to shed some new light on an aspect of Hume's thought that, so far, has been relatively neglected, namely, his distinction between "innocent" and "vicious" forms of luxury, as well as his acknowledgement of the possibility of the emergence of the latter, as well as the former, in the modern commercial world. However, this does not necessarily lead us to a more pessimistic interpretation of Hume's view of luxury than those accepted thus far; only to the awareness of how difficult and delicate, in Hume's view, is the maintenance of the balance between the interlinked concepts of industry, knowledge, and humanity.

Introduction

Hume's intention in the essay "Of Refinement in the Arts" was to steer a middle course between "libertine principles" and "severe morals" (E 269),¹ and to offer a more balanced account of luxury than the more sanguine one articulated by Mandeville.² So far, most commentators have concentrated on Hume's notion of luxury, as elaborated in the essay "Of Refinement in the Arts," and analyzed it mainly from the viewpoint of his economic thought. However, Hume's treatment of the topic of luxury in the second *Enquiry*³ and the *History of England*⁴ indicates that it is relevant not only to economic matters, but also to moral, political, and historical themes. Thus, to clarify the difference between Hume's view of luxury and other defenses of "moderate" luxury, we must treat it as a theme relevant to the whole spectrum of social phenomena, rather than concentrating on a single perspective. This paper has two aims. First, we shall discuss the nature of Hume's contribution to the luxury debates. In contrast to Christopher Berry's suggestion that Hume's primary intention was to "de-moralize" luxury,⁵ this paper claims that Hume endeavored to achieve a much more ambitious aim, in that he also tried to present a new morality appropriate to the commercial age. This would partly explain why his ideas provoked such dissatisfaction amongst his contemporaries. Second, we shall try to shed some light on an aspect of Hume's thought that has thus far been relatively neglected, namely his distinction between "innocent" and "vicious" luxury, as well as his acknowledgement of the possibility that the latter, as well as the former, had emerged in the modern commercial world.

What follows is a summary of the ideological context of luxury debates before Hume (section 1) and his defense of luxury, as presented mainly in "Of Refinement in the Arts" (section 2). Based on the above discussion, the focal points of Hume's defense of luxury can be seen to fall into two categories; one is his analysis of historical changes in morals (section 3) and another is the significance of "a sense of honour" (section 4). Finally, we shall deal with Hume's awareness of the problems posed by vicious luxury and examine its plausibility in the contemporary world (sections 5 and 6).

1. Ideological Context: Theories of Luxury before Hume

The individuality of Hume's treatment of, and positive attitude towards, luxury might have been overemphasized by later commentators. In fact, arguments in favor of "moderate" luxury had already been entertained before the emergence of Hume's position. To demonstrate this, I will discuss the figures that can be regarded as having influenced Hume's discussion of the subject.

In the field of economic thought, Jean-François Melon, a French theorist of the early part of the eighteenth century, had already argued that luxury was "the

destroyer of sloth and idleness."⁶ Although Hume criticizes Melon in the *Political Discourses* (E 256, 288, 636), it is clear that his main arguments influenced Hume's own enquiries, particularly those concerned with the notion of luxury. For Abbé le Blanc, the French translator of the *Political Discourses*, it was easy to discern Hume's indebtedness to Melon.⁷ Whilst diverging from Melon's essentially physiocratic philosophy and his financial theory,⁸ Hume adopts his basic idea that the growth of luxury, based on the division of labor between farmers and artisans,⁹ serves to increase the power of the state.

In the *Essays, Moral and Political*, which was first published in 1741, stylistic clues indicate the likelihood that Hume knew and absorbed the Addisonian tone of voice as well as the style of the *Spectator* newspaper, which Joseph Addison co-founded in 1711. In issue 55 of the *Spectator*, Addison introduces an allegorical story suggesting that the opposition between Luxury and Avarice, represented as two competing tyrants, is neither direct, nor a result of their respective qualitative identity, but is instigated by auxiliary forces: Plenty and Poverty, represented allegorically as privy-councilors. Thus, the enmity between the two tyrants ends with the dismissal of their councilors, which transforms the aforementioned rulers into good confederates.¹⁰ Hume's use of what Nicholas Phillipson calls "Addisonian politeness"¹¹ points to another substantial influence of Joseph Addison, as we will see in section 4.

Even in the more academic field of moral philosophy, similar views could be found: Francis Hutcheson remarks that "the utmost improvement of Arts, Manufactures, or Trade, is so far from being necessarily Vicious, that it must rather Argue Good and Virtuous Dispositions."¹² In his *Letters to the Dublin Journal* and *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affectations*, Hutcheson criticizes the extremely rigorous notion of luxury as defined by Mandeville, and vindicates the enjoyment of moderate luxury by virtuous men. As Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger point out, throughout the eighteenth century many commentators made a distinction between the rise of "new" luxury as opposed to "old" luxury. While the latter was regarded as simply wasteful extravagance among the upper classes, the former was thought to have a beneficial effect by increasing and extending the scope of both industry and consumption.¹³ Behind this change in the conception of luxury lies the rise and progress of the middle class in British society. When placed in this context, therefore, it comes as little surprise that Hume, like his predecessors, defended moderate luxury.

However, it is clear that strong opposition to luxury remained deeply rooted among many individuals of the age. As has been repeatedly pointed out, one bulwark of the opposition was constituted by the republican argument that the growth of luxury enervates virtue and public spirit.¹⁴ Nonetheless, Hume's criticism was directed not only towards republican, but also towards militant Christian moralists.¹⁵ In the opening passage of the essay "Of Refinement in the Arts" Hume

cites fanatical asceticism as one of the unduly extreme attitudes towards luxury. It should be stressed again, therefore, that the range of his critique included arguments that automatically linked virtue with religion.¹⁶

We can trace the amalgamation of the concepts of virtue and religion back to the “moral revolution” in 1690s England,¹⁷ at the very latest. As David Hayton points out, the reformation of manners movement was deeply involved with the activities of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the politicians of the Country party.¹⁸ They attributed to luxury the growth of corrupted manners in urban life.¹⁹ One of their major premises was that the process of urbanization results in a confusion of the established hierarchy, fuelled by people’s detachment from one another, leading to the creation of a false sense of superiority based on superficial matters such as quality of attire. Thus, the opponents of luxury alleged that the prevalence of luxurious manners caused confusion in the established social hierarchy.²⁰

It may be worth mentioning that this popular critique of urbanization finds its way, in an oblique manner, into Hume’s writings. This is particularly evident in the following remarks from the *Political Discourses*:

These are men, who have no connexions with the state, who can enjoy their revenue in any part of the globe in which they chuse to reside, who will naturally bury themselves in the capital or in great cities, and who will sink into the lethargy of a stupid and *pampered luxury*, without spirit, ambition, or enjoyment. Adieu to all ideas of nobility, gentry, and family. (E 357–58; my emphasis; see also E 354 and 448)

The passage cited above appears in the essay “Of Public Credit.” These remarks show that Hume was fully aware of the arguments used to attack luxury as the root of contemporary urban ills. Yet, it is also important to note that he does not employ such reasoning in the essay, which is primarily concerned with luxury itself. His strategy in the *Political Discourses* is to divert the common criticism of luxury towards his attack on the dangerous effects of the public credit. Unlike the case of luxury, the argument holds strong against public credit, thereby revealing that the widespread conflation of the arguments against the two misses the mark. In other words, Hume drives a wedge between the two phenomena, otherwise presumed to be similar or even coextensive. At the same time, the sentence cited above suggests that Hume did not unconditionally approve of any kind of luxury. This point leads us to his distinction in the latter half of “Of Refinement in the Arts” between what he calls refinement, the product of innocent luxury, and vicious luxury. However, before entering into a discussion of this distinction, it is necessary to outline Hume’s basic argument in this essay.

2. Hume's Defense of Luxury in "Of Refinement in the Arts"

This section traces Hume's argument concerning luxury, as it appears in the first half of the essay "Of Refinement in the Arts." Like many contemporaries, he begins his discussion by pointing out the ambiguities of the word "luxury." He therefore evolves his own definition of luxury, and on that basis proceeds to criticize two extreme attitudes towards it. This allows him to qualify his own conception of luxury, which he defends in the discussion that follows. Refinement, the form of luxury he is prepared to accept as beneficial, must meet three conditions: 1) it does not require those who enjoy it to neglect other virtues such as benevolence, generosity, or paternal duties; 2) it does not force one to forego the pleasures of conversation with friends; and 3) it does not cause a loss of reputation (E 269; see also E 279; EPM 9.25; SBN 283–84; in this point Hume basically follows Hutcheson²¹). Thus, if luxury is redefined as "refinement," then Hume can safely conclude that "the ages of refinement are both the happiest and most virtuous" (E 269), and that the links between industry, knowledge, and humanity are "peculiar to the more polished, and what are commonly denominated, the more luxurious ages" (E 271).²²

The expression "commonly denominated" plays a central role in the efficacy of Hume's argument. The change of the title of this essay in the edition of 1760 from "Of Luxury" to that which it now bears afforded him the possibility of stating his message without using the word luxury, which brought to the minds of so many of his contemporaries such negative connotations as effeminacy, decline, inequality, and lack of virtue. Etymologically, the word "luxury" (*luxuria* in Latin, from *luxus*) denotes "excess." Therefore, Hume's careful wording allows him to separate what he calls refinement from the negative connotations of the word luxury.²³

Hume explains the influence of the introduction of luxury on the manners of people in both private and public life. In terms of private life, by enjoying new and splendid things, he argues that people achieve "a relish for action and pleasure" (E 270). By engaging in their profession in order to acquire such things, he contends that they also acquire new vigor and spirit, in contrast to the indolence, inactivity, and lethargy that Hume argues had characterized their former ways of life. The objects of luxury are thus not only appreciated by the few who have a taste for them and the ability to acquire them, but also function to stimulate the industriousness of common people who are desirous of luxury. As Hume acknowledges, avarice is universal to human nature (E 113), but luxury is indispensable to unfold it thoroughly.

In terms of public life, once luxury awakens the spirit of industry and promotes commerce, Hume argues that it has a ripple effect, improving not only the knowledge of mechanical arts, but also refinement in the liberal arts. As for international relations, Hume emphasizes a further merit, which luxury brings about: it naturally promotes imitation of prosperous neighboring countries, a phenomenon which

he calls “noble emulation” (E 135; see also E 119). Provided a nation does not aim to become “a monopolizer of wealth,”²⁴ rather attempting to activate the spirit of industriousness in other nations (“[i]f the spirit of industry be preserved” [E 330], or “as long as they all remain industrious and civilized” [E 329]), imitation and emulation will bring out the capacity of each country to the full.²⁵

Moreover, according to Hume’s analysis, we need not fear the enervation of the martial spirit. In the discourse of the age, it was often believed that luxury tended necessarily to make men corrupt and effeminate. This assumption rested upon the classical ideal of the rude but courageous people of the ancient republics. Hume dismisses such worries, and explains that “a sense of honour” (E 274) and discipline, if regulated well, could be an adequate substitute for the martial spirit, and as such is more suitable for “ages of knowledge and refinement” (E 276).²⁶ As is well known, Hume did not conceal his apprehensions about the possible dangers of a standing army in his other writings (in one instance he referred to them as suffering from “mortal distemper” [E 647]). Although Hume’s emphasis upon the development of military discipline and knowledge seems to be more suited to a standing army than to militia, he nevertheless upholds the view that the sense of honor and military discipline are not confined to the former, as he lays out a plan for the latter in the essay “Of Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth.”²⁷

As we saw above, it is true that Hume’s discussion of luxury in the *Political Discourses* is oriented towards its economic implications, but his discussion of the term “refinement” also moves beyond economics. For the following discussion, an appreciation of the difference between Hutcheson and Hume is essential to the task of clarifying the nature of Hume’s contribution to the luxury debates. As mentioned above, both writers suggest that the enjoyment of moderate luxury is compatible with the maintenance of morals. Similarly to Hume, Hutcheson asserts that the enjoyment of moderate luxury by those who are fully virtuous is beneficial rather than harmful. However, Hutcheson merely demonstrates the compatibility of moral virtue with the enjoyment of luxury, unlike Hume who emphasizes two auxiliary phenomena which luxury brings out. The first of the two phenomena of which Hume speaks is the historical process, which produces alterations in people’s manners and fosters new morals peculiar to the commercial age. The second is the process of continuous enjoyment of moderate luxury, which produces conditions favorable to the maintenance of morals. In the next two sections, we shall discuss these two points in turn.

3. Luxury and Morality

In the essay “Of Commerce,” which is placed directly before “Of Refinement in the Arts” in the *Essays*, Hume describes how “the pleasures of luxury and the profits of commerce” awaken in those who already feel their own “delicacy and industry” and

how they can produce “a certain turn of thinking” in a nation (E 264–65). In the *History of England*, Hume repeatedly discussed the historical contingency of how the general “manners of the age” shifted with societal change, giving rise to “[t]he habits of luxury” (H 4:384). Those changes in manners are related to the historical emergence of what Hume refers to as the middling rank of men, “who are the best and firmest basis of public liberty” (E 277) and who “rose by slow degrees to their present importance; and in their progress made arts and commerce, the necessary attendants of liberty and equality, flourish in the kingdom” (H 2:109). According to Hume, this process is bound to occur steadily because “[t]he advantages, which result from opulence, are so solid and real,” while “[t]he distinctions of birth and title” are “more empty and imaginary” (H 5:132).²⁸ Furthermore, when dealing with the Cromwellian era, he related the prevalence of democratic principles to the shift in attitudes meaning “commerce has ever since been more honourable in England than in any other European kingdom” (H 6:148; compare with the following sentence: “Commerce . . . is apt to decay in absolute governments, not because it is there less *secure*, but because it is less *honourable*” [E 93]).

Hume argues that such a change of situation as that which took place in England following the civil war forms and fosters moral virtues peculiar to modern society—namely, industry, diligence, frugality, and honesty—which appear more valuable than courage or military prowess. He emphasizes the importance of commercial virtues in his second *Enquiry*: “What need is there to display the praises of industry . . . ?” (EPM 6.10; SBN 237).²⁹ In contrast, in the earlier *Treatise of Human Nature*, with its catalog of virtues, the commercial values play a less important role (T 3.3.1.24; SBN 587, T 3.3.4.7; SBN 610).³⁰ This suggests that, at this stage, Hume had not yet paid much attention to the full implications of the historical shift in morality.

Hume’s unabashed defense of luxury in social interaction was bound to lead him onto more sensitive ground. In “Of Refinement in the Arts,” he remarks that “[b]oth sexes meet in an easy and sociable manner” (E 271), emphasizing positive aspects of the increase in social interaction between men and women. Here, he must have had in mind the historical connotations of the theme in question. Traditionally, women and luxury had been seen as inextricably connected. Many eighteenth-century moralists and philosophers linked licentiousness and “libertine love” closely to their discussion of the perils of a luxurious way of life, especially in their analyses of the corruptions of urban life.³¹

Hume’s way of defending this type of social intercourse is dextrous. Firstly, he concedes that “libertine love, or even infidelity to the marriage-bed, [are] more frequent in polite ages, when it is often regarded only as a piece of gallantry.” Yet, he immediately goes on to remark, “drunkenness, on the other hand, is much less common” (E 272). For Hume, the increase of infidelity is a kind of necessary evil and relatively less harmful than drunkenness.³² Such a view must have

been provocative to his contemporaries, especially since it appears consistently throughout his essays. In the second *Enquiry*, he contrasts French and Greek gallantry in order to highlight the latter's bad influence on public order and standards of decency. What Hume means by "Greek gallantry" here is homosexuality and the marriage of half-brothers and sisters (EPM A Dialogue 28–29; SBN 334), while the French variety is "that of amours and attachments, not that of complaisance" (EPM A Dialogue 48n93; SBN 340n2). He acknowledges the difficulty in choosing which form is more acceptable, but remarks that French gallantry is "much more natural and agreeable" (EPM A Dialogue 32; SBN 335). Why, then, does Hume consider love between man and woman less pernicious than other passions such as drunkenness? He explains in "Of National Characters" that "the passion for liquor [is] more brutal and debasing than love, which, when properly managed, is *the source of all politeness and refinement*" (E 215; my emphasis). For Hume, the defender of civilization in the modern world, social intercourse between men and women is a means to "softening" people's manners through the formalities of politeness involved in social interaction between the two sexes.

Hume maintains, therefore, not only that luxury can foster a new form of morality in commercial and refined nations, but also that the enjoyment of luxury should be regarded as a condition favorable to the maintenance of morals. Thus what remains to be shown is how a refined nation, through economic improvement, can enjoy conditions favorable to the preservation of morality. This is another reason that Hume's discussion appeared sensational to his contemporaries: his claim that, in the modern age, the virtue of the citizens can surpass that of earlier ages by means of refinement. His theory of social intercourse also plays a central role in this claim.

4. Luxury and "A Sense of Honour"

In "Of Refinement in the Arts," Hume emphasizes the increase in social interaction brought about by urbanization. As people "flock into cities" (E 271), they begin to vie with one another over knowledge, clothes, and polite demeanor. Thus, the modern world becomes simultaneously more urban and urbane. This process makes people increasingly dependent on one another, leading to the general civility of modern society. The question remains, however, as to why such an increase in interaction between people tends to produce refinement and humanity. Hume's answer is that it tends to promote a "spectatorial" basis for honor and reputation; in other words, it increases the number of onlookers evaluating our behavior. The process in question is referred to by Hume as the development of "a sense of honour":

Nor can any thing restrain or regulate the love of money, but a sense of honour and virtue: which, if it be not nearly equal at all times, will naturally abound in ages of knowledge and refinement. (E 276)

This passage refers to the consciousness of another's scrutiny of our actions, upon whose judgment of our conduct depends our reputation. The emergence of this new type of honor is conditioned by refinement, the product of innocent luxury, which Hume argues was most commonly found in commercial societies. This view contrasts with that of Montesquieu, who restricts this sense of honor to aristocrats. In fact, Hume also regards the sense of honor referred to by Montesquieu favorably, as preserving "all ideas of nobility, gentry, family" and stabilizing the existing social order (E 358). Nonetheless, what Hume calls a "sense of honour" in "Of Refinement in the Arts" is quite different from the inherited honor of the landed aristocracy.

A similar notion of a sense of honor appears in the second *Enquiry*. Although Hume does not use the phrase "a sense of honour" in this book, he refers to a notion coextensive with it, namely "the love of fame," which plays a central role in his moral theory (EPM 9.10; SBN 276). "The love of fame" is not intended to signify the wish to acquire wealth or temporal reputation, rather it is pride based upon the perceived praiseworthiness and creditability of one's character. Hume deems absurd and nonsensical the successful acquisition of the "worthless toys and gewgaws" of worldly wealth if it requires sacrificing one's good character. The second *Enquiry* concludes with the following remark:

And in a view to *pleasure*, what comparison between the unbought satisfaction of conversation, society, study, even health and the common beauties of nature, but above all the peaceful reflection on one's own conduct: What comparison, I say, between these, and the feverish, empty amusements of luxury and expense? These natural pleasures, indeed, are really without price; both because they are below all price in their attainment, and above it in their enjoyment. (EPM 9.25; SBN 283–84)³³

On a superficial reading, this passage appears to contradict Hume's vindication of luxury expressed elsewhere. However, as we saw above, it is important to bear in mind Hume's distinction between refinement and the vicious luxury to which he refers here. Hume believes that the tendency to reflect upon one's own behavior, as he does here, is strongest in ages of refinement, because people are more concerned with their behavior towards one another.

Hume's emphasis upon social interaction can be traced back to the *Treatise of Human Nature*, where he states that "the *rules of good-breeding*" (T 3.3.2.10; SBN 597) are requisite in order to prevent selfishness. His positive terms, "decency" and "good breeding," contrast strongly with Mandeville, who describes the same concept as "hypocrisy" while nevertheless acknowledging its merit.³⁴ The development of urban culture, in Hume's mind, provided conditions favorable to acquiring manners with which others can sympathize. The same viewpoint

forms the keynote of his moral philosophy in the second *Enquiry* and the *Political Discourses*. This is why Hume claims that refinement prevents the growth of unnatural appetites and promotes humanity.

We should be well equipped, by this stage, to reconsider the nature of Hume's contribution to the contemporary debates surrounding luxury. As Christopher Berry suggests, throughout the eighteenth century, thinkers from Mandeville to Smith "de-moralized" luxury by highlighting its economic advantages.³⁵ Hume undoubtedly took this argument a step further, emphasizing the overall economic advantages that luxury and refinement in the arts could bring about. However, this does not explain why his essay provoked such displeasure among his contemporaries. It is clear that Hume attempted not only to "de-moralize" luxury in an economic context, but also to argue that the growth of luxury had produced a new morality. Here, Hume's strategy, as we saw above, is two-fold: first, he emphasizes the birth of new "commercial" virtues from social change. Second, he suggests that an increase in social intercourse has a favorable effect on morality, by making individuals more conscious of their public reputations.

On the basis of these arguments, Hume dares to add a moral tone to his vindication of luxury. In the second *Enquiry*, published just before the *Political Discourses*, he states that:

those who prove or attempt to prove, that such refinements rather tend to the encrease of industry, civility, and arts, regulate anew our *moral* as well as *political* sentiments and represent as laudable and innocent what had formerly been regarded as pernicious and blameable. (EPM 2.21; SBN 181)

James Steuart, by contrast, asserted in his *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*, that "[his] subject is different from the doctrine of morals, [he has] no occasion to consider the term *luxury* in any other than a political sense."³⁶ Steuart and Adam Smith are far less provocative than Hume when it comes to the separation of moral and political arguments. Steuart defined luxury in terms of economics,³⁷ trying to avoid entering into moral matters. Smith cautiously mentioned the ambiguities, not of "luxury," but of "the necessaries."³⁸ The very way in which Smith and Steuart discussed the notion indicates how sensitive an issue it was at the time. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Hume's contemporaries attacked his view of luxury for reinstating the moral dimension of the argument. A popular moralist, the Reverend John Brown, who characterized the principles of his times as "*vain, luxurious, and selfish* effeminacy," chastised Hume for being "a modern Writer [who] felicitates the present Times."³⁹ In the same vein, the anonymous essay *The Quintessence of Modern Philosophy, Extracted from Ten Late Essays* . . . mocked Hume's theses by exaggerating his claim "that Luxury is a most innocent Thing, and never ruined any State."⁴⁰

However, Hume's defense of luxury was, in fact, neither as straightforward, nor as unconditional as Brown or the unnamed satirist estimated, as we will see in the following two sections.

5. The Distinction between Vicious Luxury and Refinement

After discussing the positive effects of luxury, Hume goes on to deal with the problems of vicious luxury. Since many contemporaries and scholars have taken Hume to be an ardent advocate of luxury, this part has been little commented on. His assertion that "the more men refine upon pleasure, the less will they indulge in excesses of any kind" (E 271) constitutes a denial that physical pleasures have any natural or intrinsic tendency to produce vice. This standpoint on luxury is consistent with his observation in the *Treatise* that "*prodigality, luxury, irresolution, uncertainty*, are vicious, merely because they draw ruin upon us, and incapacitate us for business and action" (T 3.3.4.7; SBN 611).⁴¹ Refinement does not have to, but can, if taken to extreme, degenerate into morally vicious forms of luxury.

According to Hume, it is when people violate the three conditions set for the moderate and beneficial enjoyment of luxury that it becomes a vicious and harmful force (E 279). Vicious luxury makes individuals disregard the moral standards that they should maintain. If this process remains an individual affair, this does not greatly matter, because it merely results in a single corrupt person. However, if this disregard of moderation becomes collective, Hume warns that political repercussions will follow. The refined man will be restrained, whereas the man who is a slave to luxury will disregard his duties and fall into immorality, resulting finally in a general state of unhappiness. Thus, if a society comes to consist of unrestrained individuals, it will cease to be virtuous, for people will no longer regard one another with the same care or recognize the interdependency holding the society together.

In the last few passages of "Of Refinements in the Arts," Hume proposes an imaginary state in which all people are relieved from suffering, including that produced by the harmful effects of vicious luxury. However, such a theoretical construct serves primarily to highlight the impossibility of such a state in reality. In the real world, Hume considers that, "the magistrates, who aim only at possibilities" can never "free [men] from every species of vice" and are therefore obliged to "cure one vice by another" (E 279–80).⁴² Hence, he alleges that even extreme luxury might be a remedy for "indolence, selfishness, inattention to others" (E 279). Certainly, the growth of manufacture can serve to produce more employment, which cures the ills of "sloth and idleness." However, Hume does not commit himself to the question of whether the advantages produced by luxury could compensate for other deficiencies thus created. He was well aware that the pleasures of consumption could stimulate not only industry but greed, not only

interdependency but exploitation, and not only the search for knowledge but the use of it for evil purposes. That is why Hume acknowledges the impossibility of luxury producing only the positive effects of refinement and economic prosperity. Thus, we should not over-emphasize Hume's optimism regarding the economic advantages of luxury, but keep in mind his own qualifications of his position.

Hume's strategy in "Of Refinements in the Arts" is to advise legislators to choose the courses of action that are the least evil for society overall, rather than attempt to recommend social reformation in a fruitless quest for perfection. In another essay, "Of Money," he replies to the question of which mode of living, the simple or the refined, is the most advantageous to the state or public, as follows: "I should, without much scruple, prefer, the latter, in a view to politics at least" (E 293). The emphasis on politics is because moral individuals who live simply do not develop economies, which give power to great states and may not develop the relations of interdependence, which make for trade and peace among them.

As we saw above, even in the *Political Discourses* Hume did not unconditionally approve of the diffusion of luxury. When we turn our eyes to his other writings, we can see other evidence of his conviction that the vicious form of luxury exerted a bad influence. The following discussion is an attempt at reconstruction; its aim is to demonstrate in more detail Hume's apprehension regarding the vicious form of luxury without limiting itself to his remarks on the subject in the *Political Discourses*.

6. The Process of Degeneracy Caused by the Vicious Form of Luxury

Now let us examine Hume's view of the process of degeneracy caused by the vicious form of luxury. Some light is shed on it by Hume's description of misers. "A griping miser, for instance, praises extremely *industry* and *frugality* even in others, and sets them, in his estimation, above all the other virtues" (EPM 6.3n26; SBN 234n).⁴³ The misers, who repeatedly appear in Hume's texts, are often caricatures (see the essay "Of Avarice"), but the aforementioned comment is based on neither caricature nor exaggeration. As we have seen, Hume believed that when commercial nations flourish, their members acquire characteristics, such as frugality or industry, which further their economic activities. As he shows in "Of Commerce," there is a surplus of misers among merchants, whereas "among the possessors of land, there is the contrary" (E 301). Thus, the virtues of people in a commercial state, if extended beyond their capacity or usefulness, may turn into vices, just as love, if taken beyond a certain level, "renders men jealous, and cuts off the free intercourse between the sexes, on which the politeness of a nation will commonly much depend" (E 215).

Hume does not consider, therefore, that the sense of honor or love produced by the increase of luxury and social intercourse can afford us the certainty of escaping the danger of falling into vice posed by luxury or refinement. Interdependency will succeed only by having "a duly limited object," but may produce

narrow-mindedness in a limited circle (EPM 5.38n22; SBN 225n). The same regard for others which makes for morality also makes for “[p]opular sedition, party zeal, a devoted obedience to factious leaders,” which Hume saw as some “of the most visible, though less laudable effects of this social sympathy in human nature” (EPM 5.35; SBN 224). Moreover, “[h]onour is a great check upon mankind: But where a considerable body of men act together, this check is, in a great measure, removed” (E 43), which may undercut societies’ ability to sustain refinement.⁴⁴ The same considerations apply to economic and political relations among neighboring states. While he advises the legislators to discard the jealousy of trade, Hume acknowledges such jealousy as “reasonable and well grounded” (E 315), because “nature has implanted in every one a superior affection to his own country” (EPM 5.38n22; SBN 225n). Thus, patriotism in a reasonable measure is beneficial to the nation, but nurturing patriotic feelings to an extreme causes, in the long run, a reduction in public luxury, which is unsustainable in societies that are restricting trade, fighting wars with other nations, or being torn apart by civil conflict.

Hume’s arguments against the contemporary concern over the alleged decline in the martial spirit are not unconditional, but indirect and oblique. As we have seen above, he does not subscribe to the view that the increase of luxury necessarily enervates the martial spirit, and, in “Of Refinement in the Arts,” illustrates this by reference to the military strength of France and England. However, it is interesting to note that Hume carefully excludes Italy from what he calls the “refined” countries (E 275). Like many of his contemporaries,⁴⁵ though for different reasons, he considers Italy to be an “effeminate” nation. Whilst others attributed this alleged effeminacy to the indulgence of the Italians in luxury, Hume attributes it to “an ill modelled government” (E 276), which had failed to keep the harmful effect of luxury in check. As we said earlier, an increase in luxury is not necessarily beneficial to either an individual or a nation. It must be carefully controlled, by self-discipline in the first case or by the efforts of the ruler in the second. In the *History of England*, Hume depicts the situation of the Dutch, who were regarded as the most commercial nation in the late seventeenth century, as follows:

By a continued and successful application to commerce, the people were become unwarlike, and confided entirely for their defence in that mercenary army, which they maintained. After the treaty of Westphalia, the States, trusting to their peace with Spain, and their alliance with France, had broken a great part of this army, and did not support with sufficient vigilance the discipline of the troops which remained. (H 6:258)

We find a similar opinion in *A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart*.⁴⁶ In this pamphlet, Hume claims that the surrender of the town in the face of the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 was not Archibald Stewart’s personal fault, but an

inevitable result of general negligence in not maintaining fortifications or keeping proper vigilance and discipline. These passages reveal that Hume does not think that the devotion to commercial activities automatically leads to the cultivation of a martial spirit. Rather, an increase in military knowledge, together with the effective exercise of discipline and honor, could compensate for the lack of martial spirit. That is to say, if a nation ceases to be vigilant, the increase of commerce, far from promoting the martial spirit, can produce its decay. Such a stalemate can only be resolved when industry is accompanied by “[k]nowledge in the government” manifested by “[l]aws, order, police, [and] discipline” (E 273).

That is not to say that Hume believed that, as Mandeville argued, the clash between the needs of an individual and those of a state, or between morality and political effectiveness, must necessarily lead to a paradox. In the essay “Of Commerce,” Hume dismisses the dichotomy of state and individual found in pre-modern societies as “violent, and contrary to the more natural and usual course of things” (E 259) as they exist in modern states. In other words, the ancient state is conceived of as a force restricting the individual in order to appropriate labor or military prowess, while in the modern state, an individual’s private interests and appetites are more free-ranging, and are utilized as such by the state. He certainly admits the truth of the maxim that “[t]he greatness of a state, and the happiness of its subjects” are generally “inseparable with regard to commerce.” Yet, importantly, he also recognizes that this maxim “may possibly admit of exceptions,” and that there are some circumstances that produce quite different or even contrary effects (E 255). How luxury affects particular societies varies, as he notes in “A Dialogue,” found in the second *Enquiry*:

A degree of luxury may be ruinous and pernicious in a native of Switzerland, which only fosters the arts, and encourages industry in a Frenchman or Englishman. We are not, therefore, to expect, either the same sentiments, or the same laws in Berne, which prevail in London or Paris. (EPM A Dialogue 41; SBN 337)

Scottish thinkers have been characterized, not as blind optimists about the possibility of human perfection, but as moderate supporters of gradual progress. Hume was no exception on this point. As we have already noted, Hume not only vindicates the links between industry, knowledge and humanity, but at the same time recognizes their harsh realities.⁴⁷ In 1768, Hume wrote to Turgot who, Hume thought, had “the agreeable and laudable, if not too sanguine hope, that human Society is capable of perpetual Progress towards Perfection,” as follows:

You will say, perhaps, either that all these Evils are Trifles: So perhaps they are; but they tend to great Mischiefs: Or that they proceed from the

still imperfect State of our Knowledge [*sic*]: That is very true; but will Men ever reach a much more perfect State; while the rich have so many more alluring Appetites to gratify than that for Knowledge [*sic*], and the poor are occupied in daily Labour, and Industry. . . . You see, I give you freely my Views of things, in which I wish earnestly to be refuted: The contrary Opinion is much more consolatory, and is an Incitement to every Virtue and laudable Pursuit.⁴⁸

Seen in the light of Hume's realistic, or even skeptical, view of luxury, these words are neither complaints nor a series of contradictions, but represent a balanced and pluralistic view of the possible results produced by the evolution of modern society.

Conclusion

This paper's aim is two-fold. First, it presents Hume's contribution to the luxury debates as having two major points: one is his well-grounded belief that an advantageous change in morals occurs in commercial society; the other is his emphasis on the introduction of luxury as a process that establishes conditions favorable to the maintenance of morality, namely by encouraging the prevalence of "a sense of honour." These points are Hume's main contribution to the luxury debates, aside from his economic arguments. Second, the paper elucidates Hume's distinction between what he calls "refinement" and the vicious form of luxury, placing it alongside his acknowledgment that the former can degenerate into the latter. The points made here do not necessarily lead us to a more pessimistic interpretation of Hume's view of luxury than has previously been accepted, but to the realization that, as with most topics in his social thinking, his views varied according to context and evolved over time. This tendency towards instability is characteristic of Hume's philosophy, especially since, as he observed, human nature is vulnerable when pushed to extremes. Consequently, he attempts to reach a moderate solution, arguing that, however difficult, it is essential to realize and preserve the links between industry, knowledge, and humanity. On the whole, therefore, Hume's view of luxury should be regarded as part of his defense of modern civilization against extreme notions of its evils derived from both "libertine principles" and "severe morals" (E 269).

NOTES

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1 David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller, rev. ed. (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1987). Hereafter referred to as “E” with page numbers inserted parenthetically in the text.

2 For example, see Eugene Rotwein, Introduction to *David Hume: Writings on Economics* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), civ. As for the impact Mandeville gave to the Scottish thinkers, see M. M. Goldsmith, “Regulating Anew the Moral and Political Sentiments of Mankind: Bernard Mandeville and the Scottish Enlightenment,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49.4 (1988): 587–606.

3 Hume, *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals: A Critical Edition*, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999); and *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and the Principles of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch, 3rd ed. (1777; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). Hereafter referred to as “EPM” with the page numbers of the section and paragraph numbers of Beauchamp’s edition inserted parenthetically in the text, followed by the page numbers of the Selby-Bigge edition.

4 Hume, *History of England: from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to The Revolution in 1688*, 6 vols. (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1983). Hereafter referred to as “H” with volume and page numbers inserted parenthetically in the text.

5 Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), chap. 5 and 6. For an overview of the evolution of the idea of luxury, see also John Sekora, *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

6 Jean-François Melon, *Essai Politique sur le Commerce, Nouvelle édition augmentée de sept chapitres, & où les lacunes des éditions précédentes sont remplies* (1736), 109. I used the following English translation: David Bindon, trans., *A Political Essay upon Commerce, Written in French by Monsieur M*** Translated, with some annotations and remarks* (Dublin: Printed for Philip Crampton, 1738), 174.

7 See Hume, *Discours politiques de Monsieur Hume, traduits de l’anglois par Monsieur l’abbé Le Blanc*, 2 vols. (A Dresde: Chez Michel, 1755), esp. 1:13 [*Préface*] and the translator’s note in *Discours II. Du Luxe*). John Robertson suggests “it can be shown that these [Hume’s] essays were written as a systematic response to contemporary French political economy, and particularly to Jean-François Melon’s *Essai politique sur le commerce*.” “The Scottish Contribution to the Enlightenment,” in *The Scottish Enlightenment: Essays in Reinterpretation*, ed. Paul Wood (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2000), 37–62, 51. See also Peter Groenewegen, *Eighteenth-Century Economics: Turgot, Beccaria and Smith and Their Contemporaries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), chap. 6.

8 Melon argues that national power was based on corn and bread, which should therefore be prioritized by the legislator (chap. 1). He also claims that a policy that encourages credit and luxury is key to economic progress. In contrast, Hume maintains that the driving force of economic growth is the rise of manufacturing, spurred on by the introduction of novel foreign products (E 263–64). Furthermore, although

accepting his argument on the subject of luxury, Hume is critical of Melon's support for a policy of easy access to credit (See "Of Public Credit").

9 "It is of Use, that the Surplus, should employ themselves in works of Luxury" (Melon, 108; Bindon, 175).

10 Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, ed. Donald Frederic Bond, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 1:235–36 (May 3, 1711).

11 Nicholas Phillipson, "Politics, Politeness and Anglicisation of early Eighteenth-Century Scottish Culture," in *Scotland and England: 1286–1815*, ed. R. A. Mason (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1987).

12 I am indebted to Professor Wennerlind for bringing to my attention the works cited here. Francis Hutcheson, *Letters to the Dublin Journal*, February 4, 1726, reprinted in *Private Vices, Publick benefits? The Contemporary Reception of Bernard Mandeville*, by J. Martin Stafford (Solihull: Ismeron, 1997), 394. See also Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affectations* (London, 1728), reprinted in volume 2 of the *Collected Works of Francis Hutcheson*, facsimile edition prepared by Bernhard Fabian, 7 vols. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1990), 10; *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (London, 1725), reprinted in volume 1 of the *Collected Works of Francis Hutcheson*, 227–28.

13 Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, "The Rise and Fall of the Luxury Debates," in *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 7–27, 9–10.

14 For example, see John G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), chap. 13.

15 J. Martin Stafford, "Hume on Luxury: A Response to John Dennis?" *History of Political Thought* 20.4 (1999): 646–48, pointed out that what Hume called the "monkish" view might refer to John Dennis, *Vice and Luxury, Public Mischiefs* (London: W. Mears, 1724; Ann Arbor: UMI Books on Demand, 2002).

16 John Robertson, Introduction to *Political Works*, by Andrew Fletcher, ed. John Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), xxvii.

17 Dudley W. R. Bahlman, *The Moral Revolution of 1688* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1968). For the contemporary record of the activities of these societies, see Josiah Woodward, *An Account of the Progress of the Reformation of Manners, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and other parts of Europe and America: With Reasons and Directions for Our engaging in This Glorious Work . . .* (Downing, 1706).

18 David Hayton, "Moral Reform and Country Politics in the late Seventeenth-Century House of Commons," *Past and Present* 128 (1990): 48–91.

19 For example, see Samuel Fawconer, *An Essay on Modern Luxury: or, An Attempt to Delineate its Nature, Causes, and Effects* (London: printed for James Fletcher and J. Robson, 1765), 6–7; Erasmus Jones, *Luxury, Pride and Vanity, the Bane of the British Nation . . .*, 2nd ed. (London: printed for E. Withers and G. Woodfall, 1750), 2; Robert Wallace, *A Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind, in Ancient and Modern Times* (Edinburgh:

Archibald Constable & Co., 1809; New York: A. M. Kelley, 1969), 23. Citation is to the 1969 edition. See also Fletcher, *Political Works*, 179.

20 Jones, *Luxury, Pride and Vanity*, 10–12. For the ambivalent attitudes of contemporaries to the urban life, see Arthur J. Weitzman, “Eighteenth-Century London: Urban Paradise or Fallen City?” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36.3 (1975): 469–80.

21 See Stafford, *Private Vices, Publick Benefits?*, 619.

22 We should note that Hume does not refer to “humanity” as necessarily involving religious sensibilities (although they are not necessarily lacking), as did some of his contemporaries. Brown, a critic of Hume, identified two types of humanity. The one, which arises from “Courage tempered by pure Religion,” is “regular, extensive, and consistent.” The other, which arises from “Effeminacy,” is “partial, irrational, and confined.” It is clear which of these Brown thinks superior. John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, 6th ed. (London: Printed for L. Davis and C. Reymers, 1757), 40.

23 See, for other examples, the following: “If these superfluous hands apply themselves to the finer arts, which are commonly denominated the arts of luxury . . .” (E 256); “And it must be acknowledged, in spite of those who declaim so violently against refinement in the arts, or what they are pleased to call luxury . . .” (H 3:76).

24 Hume, Letter to Lord Kames, March 4, 1758, in *The Letters of David Hume*, ed. J. Y. T. Greig, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 1:272.

25 John F. Berdell, “Innovation and Trade: David Hume and the Case for Freer Trade,” *History of Political Economy* 28.1 (1996): 107–27.

26 In *A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart, Esq.*, Hume depicted the uncultivated highlanders as “ignorant of Discipline as the Low-Country Ploughman” and as having little knowledge of “the Nature of Encampments, Marches, Ranks, Evolutions, Firing, and all the other Parts of military Exercise, which preserves Order in an Army, and render it so formidable.” Hume, *A True Account of the Behaviour and Conduct of Archibald Stewart, Esq; Late Lord Provost of Edinburgh, In a Letter to a Friend* (London, 1748), reproduced in M. A. Box, David Harvey, and Michael Silverthorne, “A Diplomatic Transcription of Hume’s ‘volunteer pamphlet’ for Archibald Stewart: Political Whigs, Religious Whigs, and Jacobites,” *Hume Studies* 29.2 (2003): 223–66, 236 [para. 6].

27 Andrew Fletcher has already pointed out the significance of military discipline for militias (Fletcher, 24–29). For further discussion of this issue and of Hume’s apprehensions regarding the standing army, see John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1985). Hume (H 2:230), like Smith, observed that improvement in military knowledge and weapons contributed to reducing the misery of soldiers in the field. See Christopher J. Berry, *The Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 147–48. Hume’s view stands in a marked contrast to Adam Smith’s later claims that a standing army is superior in terms of exercise and discipline to a militia (see Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, ed. R. H. Campbell and A. S. Skinner, *Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, vol. 2 [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975; Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1981], 699–700).

28 In this book, Hume cites the historical changes recorded by Raphael Hollingshed, the Elizabethan chronicler. Hollingshed pointed out the increase in the number of chimneys, the changes in building materials, and the fact that people were able to stay up later at night (H 3:464 and 480–82nU). Tatsuya Sakamoto attributes much weight to Hume's idea of manners as the "fundamental motivating force for economic development and civilization." Sakamoto, "Hume's Political Economy as a System of Manners," in *The Rise of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Tatsuya Sakamoto and Hideo Tanaka (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 86–102, 99. See also H 4:383.

29 For this sentence, see Beauchamp's edition of the second *Enquiry*, which follows the original text. In Selby-Bigge's edition, the word "INDUSTRY" is transcribed as "industry," a change which deprives us of the emphasis which Hume probably intended. R. G. Frey examines the ethics of economic activities as portrayed in Hume's *Political Discourses* and second *Enquiry*, chiefly from the viewpoint of moral and economic motivation. "Virtue, Commerce, and Self-Love," *Hume Studies* 21.2 (1995): 275–87.

30 Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), henceforth abbreviated "T" and followed by numbers for Book, part, and chapter; Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, revised by P. H. Nidditch, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), henceforth abbreviated "SBN."

31 Berry, *Idea of Luxury*, 76–77.

32 Drunkenness is one of the themes relevant to the luxury debates. See Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees, or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, ed. F. B. Kaye (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1988), Remark (G), esp. 89–92.

33 See also the similar discussion in "Of Delicacy of Taste and Passion." Here Hume recommends delicacy of taste to his readers, because "[w]hen a man is possessed of that talent, he is more happy by what pleases his taste, than by what gratifies his appetites, and receives more enjoyment from a poem or a piece of reasoning than the most expensive luxury can afford" (E 5).

34 Edward Hundert, *The Enlightenment's Fable: Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 180–81.

35 Berry, *Idea of Luxury*, chap. 5.

36 James Steuart, *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*, ed. Andrew S. Skinner with Noboru Kobayashi and Hiroshi Mizuta, 4 vols. (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1998), 1:50n. See also Anthony Brewer, "An Eighteenth-Century View of Economic Development: Hume and Steuart," *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 4.1 (1997): 1–22.

37 Steuart, *Principles of Political Economy*, 1:326.

38 Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, 869–71.

39 Brown, *Estimate of Manners*, 29, 83.

40 Anon., *The Quintessence of Modern Philosophy Extracted from Ten Late Essays, and Intended to Show . . .* (Edinburgh? Microfilm, 1755?). This document is entered

as “[a]pparently a satire on David Hume’s ‘Political discourses’” in the *English Short Title Catalogue, 1473–1800 on CD-ROM in association with the British Library*, 3rd ed. (Farmington Hills: Gale, 2003).

41 Andrew S. Cunningham emphasized that in the *Treatise*, Hume appears to disapprove of luxury on moral grounds while recognizing the utility of the possession of luxury goods. “David Hume’s Account of Luxury,” *Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 27.3 (2005): esp. 231–50.

42 For Hume’s critical attitude toward Utopian perfectionism in economic matters, see Tom Velk & A. R. Riggs, “David Hume’s Practical Economics,” Anniversary Issue, *Hume Studies* 11 (1985): 154–65. John W. Danford rightly paid attention to Hume’s concluding comments in “Of Refinement in the Arts.” “Hume’s History and the Parameters of Economic Development,” in *Liberty in Hume’s History of England*, ed. Nicholas Capaldi and Donald W. Livingston (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990), 155–94, esp. 186–92.

43 For an accurate rendition of this sentence see Beauchamp’s edition. Selby-Bigge’s version does not italicize the words “industry” or “frugality.”

44 For Hume’s characterisation of the double-edged nature of sympathy, see Jennifer A. Herdt, *Religion and Faction in Hume’s Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). However, Herdt neglects to discuss Hume’s application of this problem to international political and economic relations.

45 For an example of contemporary views regarding the effeminacy of the Italians, see Dennis, *Essay upon Publick Spirit: Being a Satyr in Prose upon the Manners and Luxury of the Times, the Chief Sources of our Present Parties and Divisions* (London: Bernard Lintott, 1711), 18–25; Brown, *Estimate of Manners*, 42.

46 “When Men have fallen into a more civilized Life, and have been allowed to addict themselves entirely to the Cultivation of Arts and Manufactures, the Habit of their Mind, still more than that of their Body, soon renders them entirely unfit for the Use of Arms, and gives a different Direction to their Ambition. . . . But the barbarous Highlander, living chiefly by Pasturage, has Leisure to cultivate the Ideas of military Honour” (Hume, *True Account*, 236 [para. 7]).

47 Hume recognized that Switzerland was a rather more agricultural country than the commercial nations. In “Of Populousness of Ancient Nations,” he describes it as “a remarkable instance; where we find, at once, the most skilful husbandmen, and the most bungling tradesmen, that are to be met with in Europe” (E 419).

48 Hume, Letter to Turgot, June 16, 1768, in *Letters of David Hume*, 2:181.