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## FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Liberal Arts and Humanities



BACHELOR THESIS

Fénelon, Cheyne, and Mandeville:  
Luxury Debate in Moral Philosophy of the Early Enlightenment

Branislav Salkay

Supervisor: PhDr. Tomáš Kunca, Ph.D.

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Department of Philosophy

***Declaration:***

I hereby declare that the thesis is an original work written by myself, except where due references are made in the text. The thesis was not used too obtain any other title, degree, or diploma.

Date:.....

Signature:.....

***Acknowledgment:***

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, PhDr. Tomáš Kunca, Ph.D., who gave me the opportunity to pursue my own academic interests by introducing me to Fénelon's philosophy, which sparked the interest that became this thesis. I would not have been able to complete this thesis without his guidance and encouragement. I would also like to thank my mother for always supporting me throughout my entire studies.

**Abstract:**

The debate on luxury experienced its peak during the 18th century Enlightenment Europe, with the most prominent works on this topic being published during the beginning of the century. For this reason, this thesis aims to explore, investigate, and discuss the most prominent voices of that time. This is systematically done by discussing three thinkers, Fénelon, Cheyne, and Mandeville and their respective ideas on the topic and subsequently comparing their thoughts in order to highlight the main similarities and differences, along with answering the luxury question with arguments of each respective thinker. This is done systematically in five chapters. The first chapter focuses on the French thinker Fénelon and his most prominent work, *The Adventures of Telemachus*, which serves as a reformatory plan for France, which criticises luxury. The second one deals with the thought of the 18th century doctor of medicine, Cheyne, whose ideas are in some instances remarkably similar to Fénelon with the only exception that Cheyne applied the issues stemming from luxury to the human body and the many diseases it may suffer under, while Fénelon applied them to the nation and its existence. The last discussed thinker is Mandeville, who became the most notorious figure in the 18th century luxury debate with his defence of the English way of life, which served as a defence of luxury, in which he used his arguments to ridicule the examples laid down by Fénelon. The fourth chapter deals with comparing the thought of these three aforementioned thinkers, and results in some remarkable conclusions being made. The last chapter concludes the thesis along with presenting the most interesting findings of the comparison.

**Keywords:** Moral philosophy, Early Enlightenment, Luxury, Fénelon, Mandeville, Cheyne

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## ***Introduction***

The topic of luxury and the enormous debate it sparked in the early enlightenment is among the biggest and longest academic discussions led by many thinkers of the western world. The debate became the most prominent on the opposing sides of The English Channel for one simple reason. The socio-economic status of both England and France allowed for a unique set of opportunities to be available to the inhabitants. The wealth, sophistication, and quick development of these nations allowed them to dabble in unprecedented opulence, which gave rise to many different sets of thoughts and discussions on the topic. Never before has the western world seen so many great thinkers fully participate and indulge in a seemingly easily answerable debate, which consisted of two main questions. The first one being the attempt to investigate and answer what actually is luxury, and the second one was meant to answer what role luxury plays in a society. Again, even though these two questions seem to be easily answerable, as we came to find out, this was not the case as there actually isn't a simple answer to neither of those questions. Everyone seemingly knowledgeable on the topics of morality, politics, and economics wanted to concretely answer the lingering questions once and for all and prove their thought to be the right one. Given the unprecedented amount of thinkers fully engaged in the debate, it took almost an entire century for the discourse to slow down, however the questions remained unanswered. The debate didn't stop with the end of the enlightenment period, it just drastically slowed down, which only allowed the thoughts to culminate by being discussed and dissected by the newer generation of thinkers. The debate never returned to its original, enlightenment scope and notoriety and remains to this day unanswered, waiting to return to its former glory and be answered once and for all.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis is not meant as a philosophical contribution to the luxury debate. Its main focus is to discuss and compare the views and arguments of the participants from the early enlightenment while answering the luxury questions from their perspective, just as they thought. This work deals with three great thinkers and their thoughts, two of whom represent the two opposite poles of the luxury debate, Fénelon, and Mandeville. The duo were responsible for the most prominent works published during the enlightenment

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<sup>1</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 126-141. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

debate. One criticised the French way of life, and the other one defended the English way of life.<sup>2</sup> The third discussed thinker is Dr. Cheyne, whose contribution to the debate was in the form of various medical essays depicting the effects of luxurious life on the human body and mind. All of the three chosen thinkers are connected in one way or the other. Fénelon's ideological connection with Cheyne is undeniable by the presence of the fact that both thinkers shared similar, in some instances same ideas on the issue, the only difference being that one was applied to a nation and the other one to the body with the same results, corruption. The other ideological connection is between Mandeville and Fénelon where it can be argued that Mandeville's most famous work *The Fable of the Bees* was written against Fénelon's *Adventures of the Telemachus* with the former ridiculing the examples of the latter.<sup>3</sup> This thesis divides the thought of the three thinkers into respective chapters, in which every thinker is comprehensively investigated and discussed while their arguments are scrutinised in all aspects connected to the topic of luxury. The fourth chapter serves to compare the different thoughts for their similarities and differences while concluding each comparison in its respective part of the chapter instead of providing a discussion on the findings at the usual end of the chapter. This is done for a simple reason, each comparison holds significant value for the understanding of the next one.

The method of investigation I have chosen for the purposes of this thesis differs slightly with each discussed thinker as I wanted to retain as most of the original meaning and continuity of the text as possible. This will be evident shortly with Fénelon as the method of investigation of his most prominent work *Adventures of Telemachus* is appropriated to the structure of the text, which follows a duo of protagonists on their fictional journey throughout the world in the form of the greek tradition. The entirety of the text is investigated in a manner, in which I focus on the narrative and continuity of the text while allowing the method to follow the duo throughout the entire work. The second chapter on Cheyne moves from the moralistic and political tradition to the effects of luxurious life on the human body in terms of nervous distempers, discussing two of Cheyne's works, *The essay on Health and Long Life*, accompanied by *The English Malady*. The method of investigation was again appropriated to the investigated text and being that Cheyne's

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 382-383.

<sup>3</sup> Tolonen, Mikko. *Mandeville and Hume: Anatomists of Civil Society*, p. 49. Oxford, England: Voltaire Foundation, 2013.; and *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, p. 128. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2006.



essays are medical works and not fictional stories, the discussion is based on a more factual basis. The last thinker discussed is Mandeville and his most prominent work, *The Fable of The Bees*, in which luxury plays a prominent and important role for the proper functioning of a nation. The method is again appropriated to the text, and being that Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* is indeed a fable consisting of verses and their associated remarks, in which the author further clarifies and expands his thought, the text has no continuity that can be followed. Therefore a general issue is presented, investigated and discussed using the verses of the Fable along with the appropriate remarks. After all thinkers are comprehensively discussed and their arguments compared, the thesis moves to its final, concluding chapter, in which a general conclusion of the thesis is presented, which holds and reiterates information with the most significance along with presenting the most important findings of the comparison.

### ***Notes on scope and limitations***

At this point, it is necessary to establish the scope of this thesis along with the limitations I have been met with during the writing process of this thesis. Firstly, and most importantly it needs to be pointed out again that this thesis' main point is not to definitely answer the long lingering question of the debate on luxury. This thesis works with three authors and their respective works and proceeds to present different views and arguments on the topic which I subsequently compare and highlight the differences and similarities. The entirety of the thesis is grounded in primary literature while using secondary literature to further elaborate on some topics where necessary. The luxury question is answered in every chapter as a byproduct of the investigation and serves only to present the view of the discussed thinker without proceeding to choose the 'right' one. Furthermore the scope of this thesis is solely limited to the topic of luxury and its associated topics on which luxury can have an impact. As it is argued further in the thesis, a complete comparison between Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* and Fénelon's *Adventures of Telemachus* is possible, however this comparison deals among luxury with countless different topics not connected to luxury, even though the main issue is luxury. This is an interesting area for subsequent investigation which can either prove or disprove Dr. Hont's hypothesis that the *Fable of the Bees* was written against Fénelon's *Adventures of Telemachus*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The main limitation of this thesis is the interdisciplinary nature of the topic of luxury. If all aspects of luxury of the 18th century are to be investigated, then just philosophical investigation is not sufficient. The topic would also need to be approached from perspectives of economics, sociology, history, psychology and anthropology as the luxury debate breaches every one of these academic disciplines. The second set of limitations is centred around the sheer amount of works that were published on the topic. A work using all of the literature that touched upon the topic of luxury, even if discussing only selected thinkers is beyond the scope of a bachelor's thesis and is more suited for a dissertation.

### ***Notes on style***

Before proceeding to the first Chapter of this thesis, some notes on the writing style are necessary to be mentioned. Apart from the comparison of Fénelon and Mandeville in terms of trade where original verses from *The Fable of the Bees* are used to oppose Fénelon's arguments I have decided to translate some parts of the 18th century English to contemporary English for the purposes of simplicity and ease of understanding without changing or in any way altering the original meaning.

# Chapter I: Fénelon on luxury in the Adventures of Telemachus

The debate on luxury of the early enlightenment has acquired notoriety on both sides of The English Channel, however no work that criticises luxury is more widely known, and has brought more responses than the famous book *Adventures of Telemachus*<sup>5</sup> by Francois de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon. This book became a staple in the debate immediately after its release by becoming the second most read book in the eighteenth century France right after the Bible.<sup>6</sup> *Adventures of Telemachus* follows a fictional pair of travellers: Mentor, the wise man, who as we later learn is the goddess Minerva in disguise who took Telemachus, the son of Ulysses under her wings on his journey to find his long lost father, teaching him political and moral knowledge necessary for his role of a ruler in the future along the way. The pair travels to many corners of the world visiting many cities along their journey. These cities serve as basis of knowledge for the young Telemachus where he sees with his own eyes both the good and the bad sides of ruling, existence, morality, and politics. *Adventures* provides us with plethora of necessary ideas on how a ruler should rule, starting from ideas on education all the way to a debate on war and justice and many more in between, however only the central idea, that of luxury and its interconnectivity with other topics portrayed by Fénelon will be examined for the purposes of this thesis. Fénelon's ideas about luxury are provided by accounts either personal or shared of the different places described in the work, most prominently of the state of Boetica and the city of Salentum. This part will be divided into two sections based on the different places visited by the duo given the broad spectrum of ideas on luxury provided in the *Adventures*.

## **1.1 Boetica and The Golden Age**

This chapter begins with one of the crucial elements of *Adventures*, the state of Boetica which is meant to be a representation of the Golden Age of existence and shows the ideal

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<sup>5</sup> I will be using the term *Adventures* referring to *The Adventures of Telemachus* from now on.

<sup>6</sup> Albert Chérel, *Fénelon au XVIIIe siècle en France (1715-1820): Son prestige—son influence*, Paris: Hachette, 1917

state for living in the author's mind.<sup>7</sup> Fénelon knew that however attractive the state of existence in Boetica may be, the notion of The Golden Age and the complete disinterest was just an ideal that is unobtainable in the real world, however this chapter of *Adventures* holds significant knowledge and value needed to understand Fénelon's thought. The value and utility that the Boetica chapter holds is in the help which clarifies what Fénelon means by true natural needs and it also helps us to measure the distance we have come from the original state of living in The Golden Age.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.1.2 Necessities and superfluities**

Boetica in the exact form as described in the *Adventures* most likely never existed and this is supported by the fact that it is the only place in the entire book that is given an account of by someone else other than the main characters and is never actually visited by them. We only get second hand knowledge from Adoam, who accompanies the duo for a short moment on a ship that brings them into Salentum. Adoam aboard a Phoenician ship gives Telemachus the account of his journey to Boetica:

*Boeticians carried on no foreign trade, they had no need of money. They were, almost all, either shepherds or husbandmen. As they suffered no arts to be exercised among them, but such as tended immediately to answer the necessities of life, the number of artificers was consequently small. A greater part even of those that live by husbandry, or keeping of sheep, are skilful in the exercise of such arts as are necessary to manners so simple and frugal.<sup>910</sup>*

This part of the dialogue is the first account we get about how The Golden Age was, as well as the supposed starting point of all nations. Fénelon simply wants to show us the

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<sup>7</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick. Essay. In *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 84. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick. Essay. In *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 52. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe-, Hawkesworth, John., Lamartine, Alphonse de., Wight, Orlando Williams. *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 290. United Kingdom: Houghton, Mifflin, 1887.

<sup>10</sup> This argument leads us to believe that Fénelon didn't consider money nor commerce to be important for the existence of a nation, however this is not true and may be a bit misleading. Fénelon argues in a later chapter on reformed Salentum for the need of foreign trade as well as the need for money, which naturally results from foreign trade.

difference between necessities and superfluities, and that of true needs and voluptuous needs. My statement is further supported by Patrick Hanley by stating that: *“his intention here is to clarify the difference between those economic activities that do and do not satisfy what are called the true needs of men. In the state of natural abundance, foreign commerce and money are unnecessary to satisfy true needs.”*<sup>11</sup> The true needs of Boeticians are easily supplied by their own doing as they live a simple and frugal life that doesn't require luxuries to satisfy them. Being that they do not engage in foreign commerce and make everything they need themselves, they do not see money as an important factor needed for their existence. Adoam than further explains to Telemachus how these people live and create everything they need:

*The women are employed in spinning the wool, and manufacturing it into stuffs that are remarkably fine and white; they also make the bread and dress the food, which costs them very little trouble, for they live chiefly upon fruits and milk, animal food being seldom eaten among them. The men cultivate the ground and manage their flocks; and the other arts which they practise are those only of forming wood and iron into necessary utensils.*<sup>12</sup>

We can clearly see that the Boeticians were indeed completely self sufficient and required no further help from foreigners. At this point we are already able to distinguish true needs from superfluous needs. True needs consist of clothing, shelter and food and their means of acquiring. Superfluous needs are therefore everything that isn't included in the aforementioned goods themselves or in obtaining them. Hanley very cleverly summed up and explained the difference between true needs and superfluities. *“The key difference between these is that where the former are defined by the needs of the body, the latter are defined by the desires of the imagination.”*<sup>13</sup> This paragraph also emphasises the different gender roles present in Boetica and how all the inhabitants have their prescribed roles. We can also already start to see what are the needed arts and what are these superfluous arts that Fénelon has in mind. Needed or necessary arts are those that provide means of acquiring for these three true needs, namely: clothing, shelter, and food. The superfluous arts include everything else that isn't directly needed for satisfying true needs and everything that is created by the means of superfluous arts can only serve to further fuel

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<sup>11</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 54.

<sup>12</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 290-291.

<sup>13</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 55.

the fire, as *“These superfluities effeminate, intoxicate, and torment those who possess them. They tempt those who do not possess them, to acquire them by fraud or violence.”*<sup>14</sup>

This is also one of the reasons why the Boetians do not wage wars neither with other states nor between themselves as:

*These people are, indeed, wholly free from pride and ambition. They do no injury, they violate no compact, they covet no territory. Their neighbours, therefore, having nothing to fear from them, nor any hope making themselves feared by them, give them no disturbance. They would sooner abandon their country, or die upon the spot, than submit to a state of slavery; so that the same qualities which render them incapable of subjugating others, render it almost impossible for others of subjugating them. For these reasons, there is always a profound peace between them and their neighbours.*<sup>15</sup>

Having no pride and ambition allowed the Boetians to have no private property and as a result of this no inequality among themselves as they have all property in common,<sup>16</sup> which resulted in no crime and no attempts of it as there were no incentives for doing so. The Boetians would bring this idea as far as to their housing. By having no private property they also do not have a fixed place of abode and rather than having a house they would use tents which could be moved to another place once they have exhausted the pasturage and consumed all the fruit of a part of the paradise they inhabit.<sup>17</sup> By prohibiting permanent housing, Boetia hoped to prevent urbanisation which is one of the leading factors for the establishment of luxury.<sup>18</sup> Therefore they have no need of the art of architecture and also of the other arts that are not connected to agriculture or manufacture of instruments of true needs. *“As to the other arts, which are so highly esteemed in Greece, in Egypt and in all other nations that have admitted the innumerable wants of polished life, they hold them in the greatest detestation, as the inventions of vanity and voluptuousness.”*<sup>19</sup> The discourse on which arts are considered as needed and

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<sup>14</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 291.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 294-295.

<sup>16</sup> Schuurman, Paul. “Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the *Telemachus*.” *History of European Ideas*, August 2011, p. 181–183. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.histeuroideas.2011.07.013>.

<sup>17</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 292.

<sup>18</sup> *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, p. 384.

<sup>19</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 291.

which as superfluous continues with Adoam giving an account of what the Boeticians think of nations which delve in excess and luxury:

*When they are told of nations who have the art of erecting superb buildings, and making splendid furniture of silver and gold, stuffs adorned with embroidery and jewels, exquisite perfumes, delicious meats, and instruments of music, they reply that the people of such nations are extremely unhappy in employing so much ingenuity and labour to render themselves corrupt and wretched.<sup>20</sup>*

Pursuing these arts regarded by Fénelon as superfluous only serves to satisfy the passions of envy, fear, avarice, and ambition and in the process compromise both our physical health as well as psychological health. The pursuit of these arts of superfluity as well as pursuit of superfluous goods not only corrupts our natural state, “*but precludes all hope of pursuing those goods that represent an improvement on our natural state: freedom, tranquility, and unity are invoked here, and in time these goods will be supplemented by brotherly love, peace, and equality.*”<sup>21</sup> - According to Dr. Hanley. Given that not only superfluous arts, but also superfluity of goods corrupt a person, the Boeticians have devised a plan for how to protect their people from the corruption caused by the excess.

*The inhabitants of that happy country were astonished when they first saw the waves bringing strangers from a distant region to their coast. They received us, however, with great benevolence, and gave us part of whatever they had, without asking or expecting a return. They suffered us to establish a colony on the island of Gadira, and offered us whatever should remain of their wool, after their own necessities were supplied - sending us, at the same time, a considerable quantity of it as a present; for they have great pleasure in bestowing their superfluities upon strangers. As to their mines they made no use of them; and therefore, without reluctance, left them entirely to us.<sup>22</sup>*

This paragraph begins with informing us how do the Boeticians deal with the imminent danger of corruption of man by excess. Everything that the Boeticians hold in superfluous

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 56.

<sup>22</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 295.

quantity they bestow on the foreign travellers only keeping the amount necessary to supplement their true and natural needs. By engaging in this sort of trade in which they expect nothing in return for it does not only mitigate the issue of excess, but also in the process prevents a possible war in which the foreigners would want to usurp the possessions of these people and their land. As far as giving the strangers their land to establish colonies, the Boetians will gladly give up parts of their land to other people as long as there is enough for them to sustain their frugal life and fulfil their true, natural needs. As it was already said, the Boetians use iron only to make it into utensils needed for the cultivation of land. Therefore they did not have an issue allowing the foreigners into their mines and leaving them in full control of the foreigners. Given their stance on the usefulness of gold and silver Adoam tells us the other reason why Boetians allow the foreigners to take possession of their natural resources:

*Men, they thought, were not over-wise who, with so much labour, searched in the bowels of the earth for that which could give no true happiness, nor satisfy any natural want. They admonished us not to dig in the earth too deep. 'Content yourself' said they, 'with ploughing it, and it will yield you real benefits in return; it will yield those things to which gold and silver owe all their value; for gold and silver are valuable only as a means of procuring the necessaries of life'.<sup>23</sup>*

The Boetians knew that precious metals would not bring them any happiness. Being that gold and silver only supplement the voluptuous lifestyle of the foreigners and not their natural needs, they urged them to work the land rather than dig up the land in search of precious metals. Here the idea of agriculture is presented as a solution to the issues that the foreigners have brought with them. Agriculture will become a crucial part of the reformatory policy later in the text as a necessary tool of a nation. But being corrupted, it can be argued, by their ways of life, the foreigners could not without a reform that will be discussed later in the text change their way of life to reject excess and to only focus on natural needs, which they truly need. This statement is further supported by a concluding speech on the Boetians where Adoam contemplates about his and their ways of life. *"We are so accustomed to the follies that have depraved us that we can scarcely believe this simplicity - though it is, indeed, the simplicity of nature - to be real. We consider the manners of these people as a splendid fiction, and they must regard ours as a*

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.



*preposterous dream.*"<sup>24</sup> This simplicity is something the Boeticians want to preserve in their land as seen with them not allowing their children to travel to Phoenicia with the foreign travellers:

*If our children were to go with you, 'said they', their wants would soon be as numerous as yours. The nameless variety of things which you have made necessary, would become necessary to them; they would be restless till these artificial wants were supplied and they would renounce their virtue, by the practice of dishonest arts to supply them. They would soon resemble a man of good limbs and a sound constitution, who having by long inactivity forgotten how to walk, is under the necessity of being carried like a cripple.*<sup>25</sup>

It can be argued based on the evidence that the Boeticians do not want to send their children to foreign countries plagued with luxury because they worry about the children returning to Boetica and destroying the simple, frugal way of life they have. This statement can be supported by István Hont's argumentation based around Fénelon's ideas on luxury. "*Under the yoke of luxury, the whole nation goes to wreck; all ranks are confounded, all live above their rank and income, some from vanity and ostentation, and to display their wealth; others from false shame, and to hide their poverty. It was [living in luxury] a diseased condition of society in which even those who are poor will affect to appear wealthy, and spend as if they really were so.*"<sup>26</sup> And this is what I meant by arguing that the Boeticians would be afraid of the return of their children who would inevitably bring the 'disease' with them and in turn destroy the frugal life of Boetica.

### **1.1.3 Conclusion and real life application**

As I have shown, the representation of The Golden Age in the ideas discussed in the chapter of Boetica can be seen as a critique of the regime Fénelon lived under. The absence of luxury, commerce, and violence form the interconnected elements that stabilise and maintain a society that is the precise opposite of the France of Louis XIV.<sup>27</sup> This can most notably be observed in Fénelon's political works, and letters where he

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 295-296.

<sup>26</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 383-384.

<sup>27</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 183.

either directly or indirectly criticises France and the rule of Louis XIV in particular. The inverted connection of France to Boetica can most notably be seen in a part of Fénelon's notorious letter to The Sun King, Louis XIV:

*No longer were the state or the rules spoken of. One spoke only of the king and his good pleasure. Your revenues and your expenses have been pushed to the extreme. You have been raised to the heavens in order to have outshone, it was said, the greatness of all your predecessors together, that is to say, in order to have impoverished the whole of France so as to introduce a monstrous and incurable luxury to the court.<sup>28</sup>*

Here we can see the existing country on which most of Fénelon's work was based on while being critical of the ruler of France and the way of life of its people in his works. Other ideas of Fénelon pointing at the same issue can be investigated in the *Adventures* and also in his other works such as the fable *The Bees*, and the *Dialogues of the dead*.

### **1.2 Salentum, the corrupted city and the reformation of a nation**

If Boetica is supposed to represent the natural, uncorrupted state of The Golden Age from which every nation begins, than Salentum is the true opposite and unlike Boetica, which represents the precise opposite of Louis XIV's France, Salentum is the precise depiction of it. The undeniable presence of luxury, war, and overall voluptuous pomp mirrors the state of which it is modelled after. The pomp, splendour and other excesses have thrown men of Salentum into a violent state that tempts them to break the law in order to satisfy their inordinate desires.<sup>29</sup> All of the mentioned works on the principle of the snowball effect. Starting small at the top of the mountain and becoming larger, more present, and more dangerous the further it has come from the top destroying and absorbing everything that crosses its path, which in turn only makes the present issues stemming from it more present and more serious, which if not stopped by a reformatory policy and a surgical correction of luxury would lead to absolute corruption and eventual destruction of the nation. This chapter of *Adventures* further elaborates on the ideas presented in the opening chapter about Boetica and brings the opposites of such said ideas into play. It needs to be said at the beginning of this chapter that "*neither Mentor's plans for the*

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<sup>28</sup>Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 108.

<sup>29</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the *Telemachus*.", p. 184.

*reform of Salentum nor Fénelon's plans for the reform of France can be understood as an attempt to recreate The Golden Age. Rather, these economic reforms sought to refocus existing economic policies and institutions on providing for true needs by generating a sufficient abundance of necessities rather than superfluities.*"<sup>30</sup>

### **1.2.1 City of corruption and vice, and the enervation of a nation**

Salentum, unlike Boetica, which is only a representation of Fénelon's ideas and recreation of The Golden age, is a real place located in Italy.<sup>31</sup> This is further supported by the fact that this place is physically visited by the protagonists of *Adventures*, Mentor, and Telemachus. Here we get first hand account of everything that is happening in the city either from the protagonists or the king of Salentum, Idomeneus. The chapter on Salentum begins on the same Phoenician ship that served its purpose for providing Telemachus with the knowledge about Boetica and begins immediately with the ship approaching the coast of Salentum depicting what we know from the previous chapter as being wrong with a nation.

*Telemachus looked upon that rising city with admiration. As a young plant that has been watered with the dews of the night feels the glow of the morning sun, grows under the genial influence, opens its buds, unfolds its leaves, spreads out its odoriferous flowers, variegated with a thousand dyes, and discloses every moment some fresh beauty; so flourished this infant city of Idomeneus on the borders of the deep. It rose into greater magnificence every hour, and discovery in a distant prospect, to the strangers that approached it by sea, now ornaments of architecture that seemed to reach the clouds. The whole coast resounded with the voices of workmen and the strokes of the hammer, and huge stones were seen suspended from pulleys in the air. As soon as the morning dawned, the people were animated to their labour by their chiefs; and Idomeneus himself being present to dispense orders, the works were carried on with incredible expedition.*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 67.

<sup>31</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 183.

<sup>32</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 304.

Idomeneus, the king of this new city, as we come to find out, established it after fleeing Crete with the hope to impress the world with what he has built. We are told that visitors of this city could not help but be dazzled by the magnificent buildings and other displays of opulence everywhere on display when it was first build.<sup>33</sup> We come to understand why this is so, as we get our first account of the city once Mentor and Telemachus get off the ship while being welcomed by the king who cannot wait to show them the city. *“In the meantime, they [Telemachus, Mentor, and Idomeneus] arrived at the temple of Jupiter, which Idomeneus, who was descended from the god, had adorned with the utmost magnificence. It was surrounded with a double range of columns of variegated marble, the capitals of which were silver.”*<sup>34</sup> The first issue among many that are mentioned is that all of this magnificence was being built at the same time as the city is at war with one of its neighbours, the barbarians, which left the city without any allies. Idomeneus mentions that this is because *“the magnificent appearance of our city, while it is yet rising from its foundations, has alarmed them”*<sup>35</sup> and made them not wanting to join forces with Salentum against the barbarians as they are afraid of what would happen to them after the barbarians are subdued. As Idomeneus continues speaking, he gives us the reason why the neighbours are unwilling to join forces with him:

*Greeks, as well as the rest of our neighbours are apprehensive that we have designs upon their liberty. They imagine that after having subdued the barbarians of the mountains, we shall push our ambition further. Those even who do not openly attack us, secretly want to see us humbled; and jealousy has left us without a single ally.*<sup>36</sup>

Here we can start making connections between luxurious life and war and it can be argued that an ambition to live a life full of luxury and voluptuousness will make the nation ambitious for more because of their insatiable thirst for what somebody else possesses. All of this can all be summed up and traced back to ambition and jealousy, both being a precursor for conflict based on personal possessions and the will to usurp, or defend them. The evidence for my argument can be found throughout *Adventures*, however it is most prominently evident in the Boetica chapter where it is said that: *“These superfluities*

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<sup>33</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 67.

<sup>34</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 306-307.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

*effeminate, intoxicate, and torment those who possess them. They tempt those who do not possess them, to acquire them by fraud or violence.*"<sup>37</sup> And the violence and fraud is not limited to international war as these same underlying issues need to be present in an internal conflict and this gives way to a destruction of a nation by one's own doing. The city however also has other issues, which only the Mentor is able to see, one of these being crucial for the king. Mentor sees that the city is not as it appears and that its glittering interior, however magnificent it may be, is indeed hollow to the core. Mentor, ignorant of nothing necessary to render a state flourishing, understands that the powers of the king could not be so great as they appear. And he, unlike Idomeneus can distinguish false wealth from true wealth. Mentor can also understand that the king's confusion of true and false wealth is the result of his inability to distinguish between true needs and false needs, along with true glory from false glory, therefore Mentor explains the difference between true glory and false glory to the king: *"Let ambitious royalty no more pretend that war is to be desired as the means of glory. Nothing can be glorious that is inhuman. He that would acquire glory at the expense of humanity, is a monster, and not a man. True glory cannot be thus acquired; glory is nothing more than the radiance of virtue, and the virtue of a prince is moderation and benevolence."*<sup>38</sup> As for the true needs and false needs, Mentor explains that it is not the king's kingdom's well being but his hopes and dreams for his magnificent buildings that caused him to lose sleep at night, and indeed doing so preoccupied him with the neglect to cultivate the countryside and relieve his people.<sup>39</sup> This is supported by Mentor's account of what is happening in the city, telling the king: *"While you are surrounded with enemies, and yet a foreigner in the country, you dream only of adorning your new city with magnificent buildings. To this end, as you have confessed to me, you have sacrificed your repose and exhausted your wealth. You have thought neither of augmenting your people, nor of cultivating the country."*<sup>40</sup> As a result of this, Mentor takes the impending war under his command and makes peace with the barbarians in order to help Idomeneus with his kingdom and transfer it into a simple frugal society that is not corrupted by luxury, excess, and voluptuousness and therefore not engaging in useless and unjust wars which as Mentor mentions can never make someone happy, as: *"happy is the prince who loves his people, and is beloved by*

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 291.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 336-337.

<sup>39</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 68.

<sup>40</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 341.

*them; who has confidence in his neighbours, and whose neighbours have confidence in him; who is so far from making war against them, that he prevents their making war against each other; and who can excite envy in foreign states only by the happiness which he diffuses through his own.*"<sup>41</sup>

### **1.3 Reformation of a corrupted nation**

This is the point where the actual reformation of Salentum starts taking place. After Idomeneus accepted that what he has been doing and how he and his people are living does not help them, but only corrupts them, he is ready to be a reformed king of a reformed city. However, before the reform of the city can come to fruition, a few necessary steps have to be taken first. Starting with what I have previously mentioned regarding the end of the war, as in order to allow the new city to flourish, it cannot be engaged in a war, let alone an unjust war. The outcome of war on the population has the tendency to bring the number of inhabitants down as people are lost during a war and this is directly in conflict with Mentor's principles for erecting a successful city and a kingdom, as during the first stage of building a city, the king has to be thinking of ways to increase the number of inhabitants inhabiting his city rather than thinking of ways to bring the numbers of inhabitants down by engaging in war. This statement is supported by Mentor's explanation of what needs to happen in Salentum first when thinking about a reform along with other principles that will be discussed later.

*A long peace is necessary, at the first establishment of a state, for increasing the people. You ought, at present, to think of nothing but agriculture and legislation. You have been hurried, by a vain ambition, to the brink of a precipice. To gain the appearance of being great, you have sapped the foundation of substantial grandeur. Let these errors be corrected without delay; suspend all these works of idle magnificence; renounce the pomp that will reduce your new city to ruins; release your people from fatigue, and endeavour to facilitate marriage by procuring them plenty. Remember that you are a king only in proportion as you have subjects to govern, and that the measure of your power is not the extent of your dominions, but the number of your inhabitants.*<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 337.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 341-342.

Now it is easily understandable why Mentor was so eager on ending the war as not only was the war unjust to start with, but it also breached one of the principles of building a successful kingdom, which is increasing the number of inhabitants as Mentor says: *“It is necessary to increase the number of your people during peace”*<sup>43</sup> and this is further supported by rewarding and facilitating marriages, which has the tendency to bring more children to the kingdom. All the magnificence of the city is now taken into consideration in order to find a suitable but still effective way of removing luxury and voluptuousness from the lives of its inhabitants, which also includes the king. As it has already been stated, according to Fénelon, luxury effeminates and corrupts people<sup>44</sup> and in order to revert the people to their uncorrupted state, drastic, even surgical matters have to be undertaken. Not only does the aforementioned paragraph inform us of what has to happen in order to clear a way for the reform, it also reveals an important aspect of Fénelon’s ideology. It informs us of what is true power and what needs to be done in order to obtain true power. The drastic measures needed to clear a way for the reform can come into play as soon as the principles of Fénelon’s reformatory ideology, which informs us of the need for a country to be in a state of peace, not war as war has the tendency to bring the number of inhabitants down as opposed to a state of peace, which can increase the number of inhabitants; has been successfully implemented. So after the war has finally been brought to an end by Mentor’s actions, the way for the beginning of the reform has been cleared.

### **1.3.1 Trade and the removal of luxury**

First of all, Mentor vigorously proceeds with a massive assault on luxury and all its perceived concomitant evils in order to restore the kingdom to a noble simplicity and frugality<sup>45</sup> by *“prohibiting the sale of all foreign commodities that might introduce luxury or effeminacy”*<sup>46</sup> and banning every art which can only gratify pride and create luxurious goods.<sup>47</sup> After this has been successfully implemented there is now a surplus of superfluities and luxurious goods, which as Mentor says to Idomeneus are to be exchanged with the neighbouring Phoenicians for livestock as luxurious goods are no

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 344.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 291

<sup>45</sup> Schuurman, Paul. “Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.”, p. 184.

<sup>46</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, Adventures of Telemachus, p. 353.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 354.

longer tolerated in Salentum. This suggests that trade should be used as means to remove luxurious goods from society, which is at odds with other participants in the eighteenth century luxury debate, as the majority of the participants have regarded trade and luxury to be a mutually reinforcing phenomena.<sup>48</sup> This brings us to the next step in implementing new policies for the purposes of the reform of Salentum, which include commerce. The simple fact that Mentor's plan even involves commerce serves as evidence to a claim made at the beginning of the thesis regarding Boetica as it is said that Fénelon is not trying to reconstruct and bring back the Golden Age in his reformation plans, as it can be misleadingly thought based on reading the *Adventures*. The beginning of the implementation includes building Idomeneus' trading fleet, which will encourage merchants of Salentum, as well as attract foreign traders along with bringing back the foreign merchants that have left Salentum due to excessive impost taxes.<sup>49</sup> How commerce should be regulated and undertaken in order to keep foreign merchants from leaving is explained in a part where Mentor instructs Telemachus about trade, which also guides the reformation of Salentum:

*Receive all foreigners well and easily. Make them find security, convenience, and total freedom in your ports. Never allow yourself to succumb to avarice or pride. The true means of winning much is never wanting to win too much, and knowing how to lose as appropriate. Make yourself loved by all foreigners. Be tolerant of their small faults; be afraid of exciting their jealousy by your haughtiness. Be consistent in the regulation of commerce, ensure that the regulations are short and simple, accustom your peoples to follow them inviolably, punish severely both fraud and the negligence or sumptuousness of the merchants that ruins commerce by ruining men engaged in it. Above all make sure never to hinder commerce in order to turn it to your interests. It is necessary that the prince does not mix himself up in commerce, for fear of hindering it, and that he leaves all the profits to his subjects who have taken the pains of it. Otherwise he will discourage them. He will draw from it sufficient advantages by the great riches that will enter into his states.<sup>50</sup>*

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<sup>48</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 189.

<sup>49</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 69.

<sup>50</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 75-76.



Mentor's guide of the rules of commerce informs us how and what does the reform need to do in order for it to be successful. Given that this is a step that is very unusual for Fénelon, it requires to be investigated further. Mentor's guide basically informs the reader that of the benefits of cosmopolitan trust and openness, guaranteed security of property, non arbitrary regulations, and restrictions on the government's ability to intervene in commerce.<sup>51</sup> The highest form of allowed governmental intervention in commerce is the ability to punish people severely for their mistakes. Here we can see that all mistakes and actions that would hinder with the well being of commerce are severely punished and not punished based on the type of mistake or offence. Basically, according to Fénelon all, even small mistakes have to be punished severely and punishing adequately is not enough. This statement is further supported by Hont in his essay on luxury<sup>52</sup> where it is mentioned that absolute power was needed during the transition from unreformed Salentum to Reformed Salentum as it initially requires draconian use of arbitrary power in order to be able to keep the reformation efforts alive.<sup>53</sup> After explaining how trade should be carried out, the next step that naturally follows is to trace what is to be traded given that at this point, all the luxurious goods were prohibited and exchanged for cattle with the city's neighbours, the Phoenicians and all also as all foreign merchandise that could introduce luxury and softness is strictly forbidden.<sup>54</sup>

### **1.3.2 Trading goods**

To answer the question what is to be traded, Mentor has a very specific sort of commerce in mind, which seems a lot like what the Boeticians were doing with their superfluities.

*Let us see how many people you [Idomeneus] have in the city and in the neighbouring countryside. Let us make a count of them. Let us examine also how many labourers there are among these men. Let us see how much your lands produce, in middling years, of grain, wine, oil, and other useful things. We will know by this study if the land supplies*

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<sup>51</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 69.

<sup>52</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 386.

<sup>54</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 188.

*enough to feed all its inhabitants, and if it also produces enough to sustain a useful commerce of its superfluities with foreign countries.*<sup>55</sup>

Mentor begins the paragraph with assessing the true strength of Idomeneus and his kingdom, which is measured in the number of inhabitants a kingdom has. As I have previously mentioned marriages are facilitated and rewarded in order to support birth of new inhabitants, which in result only adds to the true power of the kingdom. At this point it is also revealed what is considered useful and necessary in the case of Salentum. This useful and necessary thing is agriculture, a very important part of Fénelon's reformatory ideology and also his ideology on morals and politics overall, which will be precisely discussed later in the thesis. But before agriculture can be discussed, there is still a lot of information regarding commerce to be revealed and investigated. Now as this has been explained, we can move further to what Mentor has to say about commerce. It is said that the only commerce in which Salentum and its inhabitants will partake in is that of superfluities. Salentum will only trade superfluities of their own true needs after its inhabitant's needs have been met. Basically if there is an excess of grain or other commodity stemming from agriculture, it will be used to partake in foreign trade. In this case superfluities are not just given to foreigners for free as in the case of Boetica, but are traded for money. Money in Fénelon's view is merely an artificial form of wealth that diverts people from real work and enables them to indulge in dubious pleasures,<sup>56</sup> therefore it is only to be used for the purposes of buying necessary goods that cannot be obtained within the borders of Salentum and also used to pay for inevitable wars that must be waged abroad.<sup>57</sup>

### **1.3.3 Results of the reformatory policy on trade**

So after it has been discussed and investigated how trade should be carried out and what should be traded, we can move to the results of these policies, which Mentor created.

*Freedom of commerce was absolute. So far from impeding it by taxes, a reward was promised to all merchants who could attract to Salentum the commerce of some new*

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<sup>55</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 91.

<sup>56</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 188.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

*nation. Thus peoples soon hurried there in droves from all parts. The commerce of this city was similar to the ebbing and flowing of the sea. Treasures entered there like waves coming one after the other. Everything was carried there and everything left there freely. All that entered was useful. All that exited left other riches in its place. Strict justice presided in the port amid all these visiting nations. Frankness, good faith, and candour seemed, from the highest of these magnificent towers, to call merchants from the most distant lands. All of these merchants, whether they came from the east, where the sun emerges each day from the depths of the sea, or from this great sea where the sun, finishing its course, goes to extinguish its fires, lived as peacefully and securely in Salentum as in their fatherland.*<sup>58</sup>

As it has already been established, commerce of Salentum relies heavily upon abundance in necessities with which the merchants of the city can trade with. Everything that has been said about Mentor's/Fénelon's policy of trade can be summed up with a few points. The first being using trade to remove luxuries and unnecessary and voluptuous goods from the country. The second point being prohibiting "*all foreign merchandise that could introduce luxury and softness*"<sup>59</sup> back into the country, along with eliminating a prodigious number of merchants who traded in exotic fabrics and furnishings and foodstuffs.<sup>60</sup> As will be discussed later, even food and furnishings had to be regulated as not to be inviting of voluptuousness and unnecessary abundance. And lastly, giving the traders the absolute freedom of commerce by imposing rules that if broken carried a serious punishment, and if abided brought unprecedented justness.

#### **1.4 Surgical removal of luxury and superfluities from daily life**

After the implementation of the reformatory policy in commerce has been successful, Mentor continues his battle with luxury in the inner city by regulating even the most necessary things by bringing them to their most basic form. He starts with regulating "*the dress and the provisions of the inhabitants of every rank, and the furniture, the size, and the ornaments of their houses.*"<sup>61</sup> No matter the rank or status of the inhabitants,

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<sup>58</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 91-92.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>61</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 353.

everyone had to live in the upmost frugality and the only distinction between people was made by each of the seven fixed social classes having their own distinctive dress.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, Mentor regulated the provisions of everyone, not only of the slaves, but those of the highest order as well<sup>63</sup>. As for the reason, Mentor said that:

*What a shame it is, that men of exalted stations should place their superiority in eating such food as effeminate the mind, and subverts the constitution! They ought to value themselves for the regulation of their own desires, for their power of dispensing good to others, and for the reputation, which the exercise of private and public virtue will necessarily procure. To the sober and temperate the simplest food is always pleasant; and the simplest food only can produce the most vigorous health, and give at once capacity and disposition for the purest and the highest enjoyments. Your meal should consist of the best food; but it should always be plainly dressed. The art of cookery is the art of poisoning mankind, by rendering the appetite still importunate, when the wants of nature are supplied.*<sup>64</sup>

Fénelon's view on meals and their regulation was quite interesting given his fascination with the preparation of it. Even such an essential thing as food could be luxurious and excessive in the way it was prepared. As we can see, Fénelon's issue is not with what we are eating, stating that we should only eat the best food, but his issue stems from the ways of how food is served except one specific case in which the food is an issue, this being "*high-seasoned meats, that stimulate appetite after nature is sufficed.*"<sup>65</sup> According to Fénelon's account we are led to believe that this is due to the meats being "*rather poison than food*"<sup>66</sup> however this is an ambiguous argument made by Fénelon as he does not specify what kind of poison it is. My proposition to this issue is that what is the problem is not the food per se, but the amount consumed, again returning to excess. We know from the aforementioned paragraph that the art of cookery is poisoning mankind but for a different reason than these high-seasoned meats as the preparation of them does not necessarily include cookery. After further investigation of this issue, I would like

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<sup>62</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 184.

<sup>63</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, Adventures of Telemachus, p. 344-345.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 435.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

to propose my theory for why high-seasoned meats are an issue in Fénelon's work.: People do not need high-season meats in order to satisfy their needs of hunger. Plain food is plenty enough for satisfying the basic needs and people usually do not gorge themselves on plain food, however the stance changes when delicacies are introduced which further introduces excess and even after hunger has been satisfied, people are prone to gluttony if the food is delicate enough, and given Fénelon's position in the church of 18th century France it can be argued that Fénelon's issue isn't with the food or the type of food per se, but specifically with gluttony and therefore with food that makes people prone to it. The next thing to investigate is how to get the people to eat such plain food as this policy of plain, frugal food is one of the more intrusive policies implemented by Mentor who again has a solution for this issue. By making Idomeneus wary of the fact that:

*He had done wrong in suffering the inhabitants of this new city to corrupt and effeminate their manners by violating the sumptuary laws of Minos; but Mentor further convinced him that the revival of those laws would procure little effect, if the king did not give them force by his example. He therefore immediately regulated his own table, where he admitted only plain food, such as he had eaten with other Grecian princes at the siege of Troy, with the finest bread, and a small quantity of the wine of the country, which was generous and well flavoured. No man dared to murmur at a regulation, which the king imposed upon himself and the profusion and false delicacy of the table were given up without a struggle.<sup>67</sup>*

What Mentor argues for is that if the sumptuary laws are to be implemented successfully, the king must be a role model for all his citizens. This however is not the only instance where this applies. Mentor has argued throughout *Adventures* that if the reform is to be successful, it must apply to everyone including the king. So it can be argued that the position of a role model must be established in all aspects in which the reform is to bring a change to something, with which the inhabitants had been used to. Such as giving up luxurious goods and all other things that 'effeminate' and corrupt the population. Among all these things that the people of Salentum had to give up due to their corrupting nature, we can also find certain types of music. Mentor prohibited all types of music, which by its effeminate nature corrupts the soul and brings about desire, and only allowed sacred

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 355-356.

forms of music, which are only to be performed at the temples of gods.<sup>68</sup> Next in line of intrusive policies lays Mentor's policy of housing. He prescribed the houses to be only as big as it is absolutely necessary for a family living there. This policy also shares its central idea with most of Fénelon's ideas about reformation and living a 'happy' simple life and prescribes people to only have as much as it is absolutely necessary for them to sustain a simple, frugal life. Mentor's housing policy has a set set of rules for living. The houses need to be elegant but simple, convenient, have a low cost of maintenance, and most importantly they need to preserve decency<sup>69</sup> as well as having furniture that is plain and substantial, so as not soon to wear out.<sup>70</sup> As for what this policy prohibits, under severe penalties is *"the superfluous number and magnificence of apartments that ostentation and luxury had introduced."*<sup>71</sup> This prohibition is further secured by the banishment of every art that can only gratify pride,<sup>72</sup> which also includes architecture - to an extent. There is an exception to the banishment of the art of architecture. It is only to be used for the building of temples of gods and in sheer necessity in building of necessary projects because without the art of architecture, there wouldn't be anyone capable of building new necessary projects and restoring them.<sup>73</sup> An exception to the banishment of certain fine arts such as architecture, painting and sculpting<sup>74</sup> can be made for *"those who have a true genius for their cultivation."*<sup>75</sup> As for all the other performers of arts which only gratify pride, *"which are now employed so much to the disadvantage of their country will betake themselves to such arts as are useful, which are few, or to commerce or agriculture."*<sup>76</sup>

### **1.5 Agriculture**

As a direct result of Mentor's policies *"the people of Salentum, who had been used to complain of being poor, began to perceive that they abounded in superfluous riches, but*

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 357.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 355-356.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 354.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 355-356.

<sup>74</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 94.

<sup>75</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 512.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 354.

*that this superfluity was of a deceitful kind; that they were poor in proportion as they possessed it, and that only in proportion as they relinquished it, could they be rich. To become truly rich, said they, is to despise such riches as exhausting the state, and to lessen the number of our wants by reducing them to the necessities of nature.*”<sup>77</sup> The concluding sentence of this argument brings us to the most useful tool in satisfying true and natural needs of an individual and the state, which is agriculture. To sum up all that has up to this point been said about agriculture and its importance along with how the people should be and act, I will use a response of Mentor to Telemachus who asks what a good king must do on one of their many adventures:

*He uproots sumptuousness, softness, and all the arts that serve only to flatter the vices. He makes the arts flourish that are useful to the true needs of life. Above all he applies his subjects to agriculture. By this, he ensures them of an abundance of necessary things. This hard-working people—simple in its morals, accustomed to living on little, winning its life easily by the cultivation of the land—multiplies itself endlessly. One finds in his realm an innumerable people, who are yet healthy, vigorous, and robust, who are not weakened by pleasures, who are practiced in virtue, who are not attached to the sweetness of a cowardly and pleasure-filled life, who know to despise death, and who would sooner die than lose the freedom it enjoys under a wise king who dedicates himself to making reason alone reign.*<sup>78</sup>

Agriculture is therefore the most important factor of satisfying the true and natural needs of an individual, and its aim is to create an abundance of necessities in order to keep commerce flourishing in order to be able to get necessary things into the city that cannot be otherwise obtained by the work of the inhabitants of Salentum. Agriculture plays a crucial role in Fénelon’s reformatory ideas which are meant to secure the fundamental end of material based economy in favour of an agrarian based economy and society.<sup>79</sup> In order to make this transition, two things need to be done. Firstly, people need to inhabit the countryside and secondly, they need to cultivate the country. If this is not done than “a great city, full of artificers, who are employed only to effeminate the manners, by furnishing the superfluities of luxury, surrounded by a poor or uncultivated country,

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 357.

<sup>78</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 82-83.

<sup>79</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 73.

*resembles a monster with a head of enormous size, and a withered, enervated body, without beauty, vigour, or proportion.*"<sup>80</sup> The question that naturally arises is how and who would do this. Who would populate and cultivate the countryside? This issue is investigated and answered by Mentor during a conversation with Idomeneus, the king of Salentum:

*This country, said he [Mentor] to the king, [fertile country outside of the city] is ready to enrich its inhabitants, but the inhabitants are not sufficient to cultivate the country. Let us, then, remove the superfluous artificers from the city, whose professions serve only to corrupt the manners of the people, and let us employ them in fertilising those plains and hills. It is a misfortune that these men, having been employed in arts, which require a sedentary life, are unused to labour; but we will try to remedy this evil; we will divide these uncultivated lands into lots among men, and call in the neighbouring people to their assistance, who will gladly undertake the most laborious part of the work, upon condition that they should receive a certain portion of the produce of the lands they clear.<sup>81</sup> They could even, in time, possess a part of them and be thus incorporated into your people.<sup>82</sup>*

As Mentor has prohibited the practice of most superfluous arts, there are now people in the city without an occupation who need to be employed in arts that serve the city and foremost serve themselves by creating an abundance of necessities. All of these people are 'transplanted' to the countryside<sup>83</sup> where they will serve this greater purpose. These proposals of Mentor are, however unfeasible without a steady influx of people, of which as it can be seen, many are called from the neighbouring countries under the promise of receiving citizenship and a plot of land of their own. Mentor is not however, advocating for a plan to disintegrate the urban dwellers of the city. Those that are employed in the practice of useful arts, and those that have a particular genius in practicing these arts considered superfluous are to remain in the city to continue the practice of their arts as before. Only the people considered superfluous in the city and the foreigners are to partake in this cultivation of land. The reason why the foreigners should immigrate into Salentum is because of attractive and advantageous incentives, and not because of force

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<sup>80</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 512.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 357-358.

<sup>82</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 95-96.

<sup>83</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the *Telemachus*.", p. 184.



or duress.<sup>84</sup> It has already been said that a king's true power is in the number of inhabitants his country has and as marriages are to be facilitated<sup>85</sup> an influx of children is to be expected and not only is the king's power measured in the number of his inhabitants, but also the power of the inhabitants, especially the farmers themselves depends on the number of people in their family as "*husbandman are always rich in proportion to the number of their children*"<sup>86</sup> and this further powers Mentor's plan of inhabiting the countryside as these newly born children will soon be participating in the work. "*If, in a long course of years, the people should be so much increased that land cannot be found for them at home, they may be sent to form colonies abroad, which will be a new advantage to the mother country*"<sup>87</sup> as these newly created colonies will work and live under the same rules and laws established in their motherland.

### **1.5.1 Counter-revolution**

At this point Idomeneus validly comes up with a possible issue in Mentor's agricultural policy regarding a possible case of a coup where the inhabitants would get corrupted and turn against their ruler. Idomeneus is afraid that after the people are settled in peace and abundance of necessities, they will turn against the king the power that was given to them. Mentor immediately turns to the king and replies with a solution:

*Do not fear, said Mentor, this inconvenience ... The laws that we come to establish for agriculture will render their lives laborious, and, in their abundance, they will have only that which is necessary, because we will remove all the arts that furnish the superfluous. This abundance itself will be diminished by the ease of marriage and by the great multiplication of families. Each family being numerous and having little land, will need to cultivate it through constant work. It is softness and laziness that renders people insolent and rebellious. The truth is that they will have bread, and easily; but they will have only bread and the fruits of their own land won by the sweat of their brow.*<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 74.

<sup>85</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 341-342.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 359.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 361-362.

<sup>88</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 98.

In this answer we learn an important fact about the dual purpose of agriculture, which is not mentioned anywhere else in Fénelon's works. Not only does it serve as the only true source of wealth, but is also a source of social stability, which is all so important in order to keep the kingdom flourishing after the removal of the biggest corruptor of people and morals, luxury as constant toil deflects the inhabitants from attempting to subvert the existing social order and stability.<sup>89</sup> What Fénelon means with the aforementioned answer to the king is that people will have just enough to come by, but will not have the means nor the power to attempt to subvert the existing order due to the laws and policies imposed on them by the king. Another issue that might happen after a long time of peace and life of abundance in necessities, in which people are allowed to cultivate their lands is that *"the spectre of luxury might again raise its head, but all superfluous arts, which divert the poor from the culture of lands for the supply of real needs, and corrupt the rich by introducing among them luxury and softness have been banished."*<sup>90</sup> By banishing the superfluous arts (with some exceptions) Mentor has completely taken the ability of the people to relapse back into voluptuousness and luxury away, therefore solving an issue before it even became one.

### **1.5.2 Conclusion on agriculture**

With this I have reached a concluding point of investigating one of the most important aspects of Fénelon's reformatory policy on luxury, agriculture. Serving both as a mean of removing luxury from the state, and sustaining the city with necessary abundance, which will in turn provide the state with goods that cannot be obtained within the state itself by the means of commerce, further powering the perpetual model of self subsistence created by Fénelon.

### **1.6 War**

There still is, however a lingering issue that needs to be investigated and addressed. Given Mentor's stance to peace and peacekeeping, and all his other policies, which place the people where there are needed and staying there, there is not a lot of space in Salentum for military training in case a war is to break out. Therefore Mentor has devised

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<sup>89</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p. 184.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

a method to remedy this issue, which is further connected to Fénelon's relationship of war and luxury. Since Fénelon argues that luxury and voluptuousness effeminate and corrupt people, it can be argued that it also mitigates the ability of a nation to wage war and wage it successfully as Fénelon associates luxury with cowardliness.<sup>91</sup> But first I am going to present the issue in its original form, with which the remedy deals.

*If the youth were suffered to languish in perpetual peace, without bringing their courage to the test, or requiring experience in the field, the nation, said he [Mentor], will be insensibly enfeebled; courage will relax into effeminate softness; a general depravity, the necessary effect of uninterrupted abundance and tranquility, will render them an easy prey to any warlike nation that shall attack them, and, aiming to avoid the miseries of war, they will incur the most deplorable slavery.<sup>92</sup>*

This argument further validates the claim by Dr. Shuurman, which I presented before, that luxury is directly connected with cowardliness and therefore with the ability of a nation to wage war. As I have discussed many times before, luxury is presented as corrupting to people and their morals, as well as their ability to rule over others. Here we can see that the possible corruption is not solely isolated to people's morality but can even cause a destruction of an entire nation if not remedied. The remedy comes in the form of an unusual preposition made by Mentor.

*When any of your allies shall be engaged in war, the flower of your youth, particularly those who appear to have a military genius, and will profit most by experience, should be sent as auxiliaries into service. You will thus stand high in the estimation of the states with which you are connected; your friendship will be sought, and your displeasure dreaded; without being engaged in war in your own country and at your own expense, you will always have a youth trained to war and courage.<sup>93</sup>*

Here we can see the complexity of Mentor's preposition. This solution not only remedies the fact that perpetual peace enfeebles a nation, but also helps with international relations. This solution is frankly quite genius. Sending inhabitants of Salentum to fight in

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 393.

<sup>93</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 394.

foreign conflicts not only trains them to be ready for war, but also improves their military genius in addition to providing support for allies, which brings the value of an international relationship much higher. This can be considered a win win situation in which the only downside is the possible loss of life. The youth are trained in the art of war, and relations improved without the need for a conflict in one's own country. It can also be argued that if a war is to start in Salentum, the allies are more prone to send their own troops to help in the fight as if the same service wasn't provided to them. This is yet another of Fénelon's propositions, which are meant to elevate the status of France in the eyes of the world.

### ***1.7 Conclusion of Chapter I***

The opening chapter of this thesis has presented a not so widely known French thinker who played a pivotal role in the early enlightenment luxury debate. The chapter began with presenting Fénelon and his method of treating the luxury issue, which is as far as considering published works unique in the fact that all the arguments are presented in a form of a story, which follows the Greek tradition. After presenting the author and his thought the focus turned on discussing the land of Boetica, which as the author argued represented the notion of The Golden Age, the supposed beginning of all nations, in which the inhabitants are absolutely devoted to frugality, simplicity, and true needs without the slightest need for superfluities, under which almost every thing that makes the life more comfortable or easier is considered just that, a superfluity and a luxury, therefore not needed in a life of an individual. This part has also revealed what is to be considered under necessities and superfluities, what is the difference between true needs and voluptuous needs, and finally the conclusion to the first part has applied this theory to a real life situation, that is France under the rule of The Sun King. After investigating the basic issues of Fénelon's philosophy, the focus has turned to the city corrupted by luxury —Salentum, which mirrored the current situation of France. This model is used to highlight all the wrongdoings a ruler can do and hopes to teach the protagonist who in reality is The Sun King's grandchild, The Duke of Burgundy how he should lead a nation into collective and absolute frugality using all the means available to a ruler of a great nation, who is expected by Fénelon to correct all the wrongdoings of the grandfather of the young Duke. Salentum also doubles as a model for a reformation, which the young duke is expected to bring to fruition in France. The reformatory process uses different tools of the nation to rid itself of the corruption along with the use of arbitrary power. The focus was placed on many different aspects of the reformatory process, which includes

foremost using trade and commerce to rid the nation of luxurious goods as well as showing the corrupting and enervating effects luxury has. Big emphasis was placed on the entire reformation process, which includes, as previously mentioned trade and the removal of luxurious goods using trade as well as the surgical removal of luxury from the lives of all inhabitants and the destruction of almost all superfluous arts of whose result was the implementation of agriculture, which employed all the inhabitants who were considered superfluous as well as many foreigners. After the reformatory process and its impact have been discussed the focus turned to the discussion of war and the enervating effects luxurious lifestyle has on the ability of a nation to wage war and to wage it successfully. There is still a lot to discuss and investigate in *Adventures* on many different connections of morality to politics, from war to courage, education, justice, love, and many others, however everything included in Fénelon's most prominent work *Adventures of Telemachus* that includes the topic and issue of luxury has been thoroughly investigated using secondary literature to further validate both my claims, and relevant claims of others academically interested in the topic and debate on luxury of the early enlightenment; and to provide proof to other people's claims by using primary literature, and most importantly tracing the ever present idea of luxury throughout Fénelon's work, which is meant as a blueprint for the reformation of Louis XIV's France. After a comprehensive investigation of Fénelon's thought has been performed, it is time to move to the next chapter, which deals with the English physician Dr. Cheyne, who as it will be argued shared some parts of Fénelon's thought and implemented Fénelon's ideas to the human body and the many disorders under which it can suffer.

## Chapter II: Cheyne, the land of the sick and the remedy for luxury

After having discussed the topic of luxury from Fénelon's perspective, it is time to look at the other side of The English Channel and the perspectives on luxury which it offers. This chapter will be based on the writings by Dr. George Cheyne, an 18th century doctor of medicine who also contributed to the development of British psychiatry of his time.<sup>94</sup> Along with being a doctor of medicine Cheyne was a philosopher who based his observation of diseases on the principles of natural philosophy and Newtonianism. His role in the debate on luxury is not so well known or glorified as for example Mandeville or Fénelon due to his works' focus on the individual human being and luxury's impact on it, rather than politics. Needless to say, he is still a large contributor in shaping the debate on luxury in his own terms. Cheyne's relevancy to this thesis is based on a nexus with Fénelon's ideas where it can be seen and argued that Cheyne was influenced, or at least inspired by Fénelon's view on luxury and excess by taking Fénelon's view on luxury and its debilitating impact on societies and implementing it to the human body. The assumed ideological connection between Cheyne and Fénelon will be discussed in the comparison chapter of this thesis after the main arguments have been investigated and highlighted. The topic of luxury and its impact on the human being will be traced throughout various works by Cheyne, namely his essays *The Essay of Health and Long Life*, which became his best selling essay,<sup>95</sup> and *The English Malady*, in which Cheyne implied a rather unsettling fact that "to be truly fashionable, it was necessary to display at least a little mental abnormality or emotional anxiety."<sup>96</sup> The factor of lifestyle responsible for these issues is therefore what will be investigated in this part of the thesis. In regards to Cheyne's works on lifestyle there are two things tightly associated with luxury which translate to the aforementioned conditions weighing down the inhabitants of England. These things are: nourishment, and labour or exercise.<sup>97</sup> The ideas and arguments

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<sup>94</sup> Cheyne, George, and Roy Porter. *The English malady*, p. XIV. London, England: Tavistock/Routledge, 1991.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>96</sup> P. Bourdieu, *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984).

<sup>97</sup> Cheyne, George. *An essay of health and long life*, p. 2. London, England: Printed for George Strahan and, J. Leake, 1745.

regarding food and drink will be investigated first as they prove to be the most crucial factors in the matter.

## **2.1 Nourishment**

What Cheyne viewed as the most important factor in keeping a body healthy, and remedying diseases of the discussed sort is the quantity and quality of the food and beverages consumed. In order to live a healthy and long life free from acute and chronic distempers, the quality and quantity of what we consume must be precisely adjusted to our concoctive powers.<sup>98</sup> It is believed that if there is little to no moderation present in regards to eating and drinking in a person's life disorders will become present, and in those with a predisposition to these conditions exacerbated. The reason why overindulgence and luxuries are damaging to the body is because of:

*“The friction and collision that necessarily follows upon the impenetrability of matter, the communication of motion, and the impressions of the bodies that surround us, must necessarily rub off, and wear out some parts from our bodily machine. The necessary collisions that are made in our juices, in breaking and subtilising their parts, to render them fit for the animal functions: the various secretions of what is not proper to be retained, or what is necessary for the preservation of the individual, make a continual waste of substance. To supply all which, it was absolutely necessary, that a due and equal proportion of proper nourishment should be designed us. There is also established by the rules of the animal economy, a balance between the force or elasticity of the solids, or the moving organs and channels, and the resistance of the fluids moved in them. And whenever any of these rules are line and notably transgressed by either taking down more than the supplies of action and living require in quantity, or things stronger in nature, and of a greater resilience in quality, so that the active and concoctive powers of the solids, are not sufficient for them, the individual must suffer diseases, pains, and miseries, in proportion to the greatness of their over balance.”<sup>99</sup>*

Cheyne's argumentation is first of all very Newtonian and mechanical in nature, which can be observed throughout all of his works. He uses mechanical principles to understand the

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>99</sup> Cheyne, George. *The English malady*, p. 29-30. London, England : Printed for G. Strahan, 1735.

body, which supposedly works on principles of hydraulics, friction, and elasticity. Cheyne's reasoning informs us of the fact that overindulgence both in quality and quantity physically wears out the human 'machine' and cripples its internal parts with its composition which is the core cause of the disorders. Quantity of foods and drinks depends largely on the person in mind and can be different for everyone as every person is of different constitution and occupation and *"the valetudinary, and those employed in sedentary professions, or intellectual studies, must lessen this quantity, if they would preserve their health, and the freedom of their spirits long."*<sup>100</sup> Indeed, it can be seen that everyone is different and needs a diet that is tailored to their bodies and the activity of their occupation as *"our bodies require only a determinate quantity there of, to supply the expanses of living"*<sup>101</sup> and everything consumed after the needs of our bodies have been satisfied is considered over indulgence and therefore damaging to the body. People who work manually and indulge in a lot of activities can and need to eat more than people employed in occupations where exercise is a part of the occupation. Quality of our food is another important factor contributing to either bad or good health as *"vegetables and animals of a strong poignant, aromatic and hot tase, are harder to digest than those of a milder, softer and more insipid taste. High relish comes from abundance of salts ... which will at last inflame the fluids and burn up the solids."*<sup>102</sup> Quality of beverages was just as important as that of food, therefore Cheyne recommended to only drink plain beverages and if liquors are to be drunk, then it is to be purified only by the means of fermentation, without the 'torture' of the fire, and without distillation.<sup>103</sup> What is considered to be a luxury of the table is everything that is excessive in quantity and qualitatively is not soft and tender, light and easily digested, and affording of a mild and balsamic chyle along with being prepared without the use of cookery, or any means by which food is made to be more luscious and palatable while being the simplest and most uncompounded in nature consisting of fewest materials being used and received into the same meal.<sup>104</sup> As for cookery, which includes made dishes, rich soups, high sauces, baking, smoking, salting, and pickling; it is only an invention of luxury, which forces an unnatural appetite,

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<sup>100</sup> Cheyne, George. An essay of health and long life, p. 34.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>103</sup> Cheyne, George. The English malady, p. 4-5.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 159.



which only increases the load on the human body and worsens the conditions<sup>105</sup> and can render a natural good appetite incapable of knowing when it has enough.<sup>106</sup>

Therefore, As it was shown, it is evident that luxuries of the dinner table filled with rich foods, which not all inhabitants could afford are to be blamed for their part in the creation and exacerbation of nervous distempers. As the tables of the rich are *“furnished with provisions of delicacy, number, and plenty, sufficient to provoke, and even gorge the most large and voluptuous appetite.”*<sup>107</sup>

## **2.2 The ‘better’ sort**

Not all inhabitants could afford to eat luxuriously and live a luxurious lifestyle, these people therefore would not be burdened with these disorders to such an extent as the people of wealthy conditions. These conditions would be associated only with the ‘better sort’ prospering from English wealth and success, which allowed them to ‘ransack’ all the parts of the globe to bring together materials for riot, luxury, and provoke excess<sup>108</sup> on their dinner tables and in their lives.

## **2.3 Creation of diseases, and the Golden Age**

The set of nervous distempers associated with the name *English Malady* is considered to be a disease of aristocracy and the upper class with which luxury is mostly associated and Cheyne vigorously stresses the fact that these diseases, indeed all diseases have something in common and stem from the same set of issues.

*“For, I think, it is plain to a demonstration, that all diseases whatsoever, by whatever names or titles dignified or distinguished, so far as they are natural and internal distempers, and not caused by accident, must in the main proceed (if we suppose, as we*

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<sup>105</sup> Cheyne, George. An essay of health and long life, p. 30.

<sup>106</sup> Cheyne, George. The English malady, p. 51.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 49-51.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.; Guerinni, Anita. Obesity and Depression in the Enlightenment: The Life and Times of George Cheyne, p. 144. Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.

*must, that mankind at first, were healthy and sound) from intemperance, or some error in the quantity or quality of their food, and laziness or neglect due to exercise.”<sup>109</sup>*

Cheyne assumes that at one point in the history of mankind it used to be uncorrupted by our own inventions of lavishness and it is only our own doing that has brought us so far from the point of natural frugality and simplicity, The Golden Age, which has caused the corruption of people. In relation to this, Cheyne investigates an issue, which is deeply intertwined with the uncorrupted ‘natural’ state and concludes that *“the ancient greeks, while they lived in their simplicity and virtue were healthy, strong, and valiant. But afterwards ... they sunk into effeminacy, luxury, and diseases, and began to study physick, to remedy those evils which their luxury and laziness had brought upon them.”<sup>110</sup>* The beginning of the art of medicine could therefore be traced to the moment when humanity became corrupted by their own wrongdoings and all of the ‘tortures’ caused by these distempers are therefore the creations of our own madness and folly, and a product of our own inventions,<sup>111</sup> which gave rise to medicine as people tried to alleviate their symptoms and ‘tortures’. Cheyne didn’t think that these diseases stemming from the corruption of people, called ‘the diseases of civilisation’ were inevitable. He believed that sensible regime would prevent them or at least diminish them. Cheyne hoped to civilise aristocratic consumption habits, and concluded that the rich need to work on being healthy.<sup>112</sup>

## **2.4 Exercise**

As Cheyne said: *“It is easier to preserve health than to recover it, and to prevent diseases than to cure them.”<sup>113</sup>* Therefore we cannot forget to discuss the second most important factor in the cause, prevention, and cure of diseases, which is exercise and lack of it. Cheyne’s view on exercise is just as critical as it is on food. The amount of exercise same as with nourishment depended on what a person’s occupation and stature was. A man with a sedentary, intellectual occupation associated with luxurious lifestyle needed more

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<sup>109</sup> Cheyne, George. The English malady, p. 59.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>112</sup>Roy Porter, ‘Reforming the Patient: Thomas Beddoes and Medical Practice’, in R. French and A. Wear ( eds), British Medicine in the Age of Reform (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

<sup>113</sup> Cheyne, George. An essay of health and long life, p. 2.

exercise than a person whose job it was to work manually, with their hands and who wasn't dwelling in luxury . As for the importance of exercise Cheyne argues that: *"There is not any one thing, more approved and recommended by all physicians, and the experience of those who have suffered under nervous distempers than exercise, of one kind or another; and this without the least exception or limitation, but so far as the strength can admit."*<sup>114</sup> Every person that wants to keep their health in a good state along with sick people trying to get cured should do as much exercise as is fit for their body. Here once again both the quality and the quantity of exercise is important and what needs to happen is for people to find a mean, a golden rule in the amount and type of exercise they do. A luxurious life in itself has the tendency to bring ineptitude and cause disgust for exercise as the people dwelling in luxury do not physically have the need to exercise or do anything manually. Even things which belong to everyday life are made to be more comfortable and more luxurious for people living this type of lifestyle. Cheyne argues that this is done by things such as the improvement of coaches with springs, and horses being taught to pace and amble for the comfort of the rich. This is done so that the rich do not need to feel any inconveniences of everyday life<sup>115</sup> and to only live a life of comfort. This is yet another reason for the downfall of exercise in the country as exercise is not necessarily an activity that brings comfort by itself as it is the opposite of idleness and this alongside laziness is what the rich naturally get and also want in a way as the outcome of luxurious life of many is the ability to do nothing and just relax. Cheyne further argues that there is a direct connection between the improvement of life and the quality of it and the increase in people of condition: *"Is it any wonder then, that the diseases that proceed from idleness and fulness of bread, should increase in proportion, and keep equal pace with those improvements of the matter and cause of diseases?"*<sup>116</sup> This argument is meant to imply that things will only get worse in the future as improvements of life, which make it more comfortable and which support idleness and sedentary life progress and are brought to perfection. Now I would like to once again highlight Cheyne's idea of the 'natural' uncorrupted Golden State discussed a few pages back, which only further validates the fact that mankind has brought these disease on them by their own doing and wrongdoing.

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<sup>114</sup> Cheyne, George. The English malady, p. 172.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

*“When mankind was simple, plain, honest, and frugal, there were few or no diseases. Temperance, exercise, hunting, labour, and industry kept the juices sweet, and the solids braced. ... Labour and exercise were observed to beget firmness, strength, and activity for these purposes ... but luxury and intemperance having gained ground, through peace, security, ease, and plenty, diseases sprang up and multiplied.”<sup>117</sup>*

## **2.5 Treatment of nervous distempers**

As I have shown, luxury and intemperance which is greatly connected to it are the primal causes of nervous distempers. These distempers are, as proven caused by our own wrongdoings in our actions and it is only by removing these malignant parts from our lives that we can prevent disorders or cure them. Therefore I would like to discuss the cure of nervous distempers next. There is one rule for the cure of both intemperance and luxury of nourishment, and lack of exercise. As Cheyne says: *“There is no surer or more general maxim in physick, than that diseases are cured by the contrary or opposite methods to that which produced them. If nervous disorders are the diseases of the wealthy, the voluptuous, and the lazy, and are mostly produced, and always aggravated and increased, by luxury and intemperance there needs no great depth of penetration to find out that temperance and abstinence is necessary towards their cure.”<sup>118</sup>* Therefore if the cause of the imbalance is the quantity of foods and drinks, then the amount needs to be lowered and/or made appropriate for the person being cured with due attention to their particular type of occupation and body type with attention to what they drink, as it is advised that a person should drink more water and less wine.<sup>119</sup> If the issue stems from the quality of the nourishment, meaning that the food is too rich in one way or the other, or difficult to digest due to the exotic ingredients used or the method of preparation of it is not good, then a change needs to be made so that the food is soft, tender, light, easy of digestion, and that the materials from which it is prepared be of the ‘good kind’ and fitted for use, without the use of cookery.<sup>120</sup> As for the quality of drinks, mostly water should be drunk, but if liquors are to be drunk then only those that are *“purified by fermentation only,*

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 158-159.

<sup>119</sup> Guerinni, Anita. Obesity and Depression in the Enlightenment: The Life and Times of George Cheyne, p. 112.

<sup>120</sup> Cheyne, George. The English malady, p. 159.

*without the torture of fire, or without being turned into spirits.*"<sup>121</sup> If the issues are caused by exercise, precisely lack of, then exercising more is the only remedy. As for what sort of exercise, it does not really matter provided it be bodily exercise, however as Cheyne says: *"certainly riding on horseback is the best of all."*<sup>122</sup> His advocacy of exercise however included an interesting exception. Along with what people usually imagine when exercise is mentioned, he also included things such as coach riding, cold baths, and the use of a flesh brush, all of which let to the same desired effect of increased circulation and perspiration. *"This sort of exercise, which involved the body's being moved rather than moving itself, could appeal only to a class that could afford servants to do the moving. Such a regimen would keep the hydraulic machine of the body in operation, the pipes flexible and free of obstructions, while avoiding the coarsening effects of vigorous exercise."*<sup>123</sup> So basically, provided that a person had servants he could get around the undesired effects of physical exercise and could enjoy all the benefits of it without losing the comfort that the luxurious lifestyle provided. All of the aforementioned things, namely nourishment and exercise need to be appropriated for a given person. If the person only eats healthy and does not exercise then it is enough only to increase the amount of exercise to remedy his issues without changing his diet, and the other way around. However most people suffering under the condition of nervous distempers need to change their entire regiment including both nourishment and exercise in order to find a golden mean in all their activities.<sup>124</sup>

## **2.6 Conclusion of Chapter II**

This chapter has introduced and presented the ideas of a not so widely known English thinker who also contributed to the debate with his view and criticism of luxury, which is very unique in the luxury discourse of the early enlightenment because of what luxury and excess does and what it means for his thought. His ideas and arguments stem from observing the human body, whereas his contemporaries were mainly focused on the effects of luxury and excess on the society from the standpoint of politics and morality. Even though Cheyne never wrote an essay on economics or politics directly, his ideas on

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 4-5.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. 180.

<sup>123</sup> Guerinni, Anita. Obesity and Depression in the Enlightenment: The Life and Times of George Cheyne, p. 121.

<sup>124</sup> Cheyne, George. An essay of health and long life, p. 231.

luxury made by observing the human body can be implemented to the wider society as a factor that is just as damaging to the society and morality as it is to the human body. What Cheyne is mostly interested in are nervous disorders and how a lifestyle of overindulgence, luxury, and excess contributes to the creation and exacerbation of them, which in turn weighs and wears down the entire society. The extent to which these nervous distempers are weighing down the inhabitants of England is far greater than it can be expected as it is said that nervous distempers compute to make almost one third of the complaints of people of condition inhabiting England. This fact alone made the foreigners and neighbours of the nation come up with the name for these nervous distempers, which is *The English Malady*. The mocking nickname for the set of distempers weighing down England is derived from the fact that these distempers seem only to trouble the natives living on the island. The reason why this is the case according to Dr. Cheyne is due to the conditions only seemingly present within the borders of England, which include among many, but most importantly the heaviness of the food, wealth and abundance of the inhabitants, and the inactivity and sedentary occupations of the 'better sort'. These conditions combined have brought a type of distempers "*with atrocious and frightful syndromes, scarce known to our ancestors, and never rising to such fatal heights, nor afflicting such numbers in any other known nation.*"<sup>125</sup> Summed up, speaking of a disorder as English according to Dr. Porter "*was to imply that it stemmed not from purely natural factors ... but from the distinctive historical, social and cultural configuration of the English way of life. Abandoning the simplicity of uncorrupted nature, England was fast becoming one of the richest, most highly civilised, quickest developing nations in Europe. But success in socio-economic achievement - opulence, sophistication, intellectual éclat, a glittering, competitive beau monde - sapped the nation's health. High living in high society took its toll in lowness of spirits, indeed, in the gamut of nervous disorders.*"<sup>126</sup> After the issue of lifestyle has been discussed and investigated, the focus turned to Cheyne's view of The Golden Age, which was the uncorrupted state of human existence where there were no diseases which would trouble the human being, as all of his bodily needs were taken care of thanks to the frugality and simplicity of the era, which required the people's lifestyle to be just that, simple and frugal. The discussion of The Golden Age has also revealed how, according to Cheyne the art of medicine was created from the need to treat disorders that people brought on themselves

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<sup>125</sup> Cheyne, George. *The English malady*, p. 1-2.

<sup>126</sup> R. Porter, 'The Rage of Party: A Glorious Revolution in English Psychiatry?', *Medical History* 29 (1983): 35-50; and R. Porter, *Mind Forg'd Manacles* (London: Athlone Press, 1987), ch. 2.

by departing from The Golden Age and indulging in excess and luxury and its associated vices. The treatment of these disorders is based, as shown, on the exact opposite of what caused them, therefore if the issue is a lack of exercise than exercising more is the only remedy, same general idea goes for nourishment as it depends on both the quality and quantity of food and beverages to be in harmony. If a person's disorder is stemming, or is exacerbated by the quality or quantity of nourishment than it needs to be appropriated for his needs, maintaining and achieving the golden mean both in nourishment as well as in exercise. This conclusion marks the end of the investigation of Cheyne's thought on luxury and with this we can move to the third chapter of this thesis which deals with Mandeville and his defence of the luxurious English way of life.

### Chapter III: Mandeville, the advocator of luxury

After discussing the topic of luxury from both French and English perspectives we have seen that they have something in common. They both criticise luxury for one thing or another, albeit both of their views on luxury are negative and both Fénelon and Cheyne see it as a source of issues both from the standpoint of society and politics, and the human body. This is where the thesis will depart from criticising luxury and will turn to investigate Dr. Mandeville, the most notorious and known advocator of luxury in the 18th century luxury debate. Mandeville was first of all, just as Cheyne, a physician, however where he mostly differs from Cheyne is that along with writing works on the human body such as the *Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases*, he also wrote pieces on politics, economics, and morality, and these are the works that will be discussed mostly. So far I have only shown the negative effects of luxury, and it may be supposed that living a luxurious lifestyle doesn't have any advantages. This couldn't be further from truth and as we will see, this part will argue for the usefulness of luxury in in everyday life and even the necessity of it in maintaining a well functioning and flourishing society. It is argued by Dr. Hont that Mandeville's most known work, *The Fable of the Bees*<sup>127</sup> was written against Fénelon's view of the political society as presented in the *Adventures of Telemachus* with the main issue for Mandeville being the presented reformation process of Salentum, and the association with luxury.<sup>128</sup> Mandeville along with Fénelon were the

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<sup>127</sup> In some instances I will refer to *The Fable of the Bees* by 'The Fable' for the sake of simplicity

<sup>128</sup> Tolonen, Mikko. *Mandeville and Hume: Anatomists of Civil Society*, p. 49.; and *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, p. 128.

two poles of the early enlightenment luxury ‘controversy’<sup>129</sup> and therefore the relevance of Mandeville for the purposes of this thesis is self-explanatory. This chapter will begin with investigating the arguments provided in *The Fable* and highlighting the main ones. The topic of luxury and its impact on the society will be traced throughout various verses of the *Fable* and its respective remarks. After the basic understanding of Mandeville is established, the focus will turn to explaining and highlighting the dualism shown in Mandeville’s various works regarding luxury, in which it is argued that luxury is both needed and useful, but also compromising and enervating.<sup>130</sup>

### **3.1 Mandeville and the luxurious life**

The year is 1705 and a Dutch immigrant by the name of Bernard Mandeville just published a satirical pamphlet in London containing 423 lines of doggerel verse under the title *The Grumbling Hive: Or, Knaves Turn’d Honest*, later republished with a substantial commentary and a change of the title to the name *The Fable of the Bees*. Being that the entire work is satirical in nature, the name *The Fable of the Bees* had a deeper—satirical meaning. The name under it was republished represents how the author ridiculed the example of virtuous and frugal bees. Making a ‘beehive’ of England, he claimed, was to lead to catastrophic unemployment and a sharp contradiction in economic activity,<sup>131</sup> the exact opposite of what Fénelon’s view was. As it was already said, Mandeville presents his ideas in the form of a fable, whose verses each convey a different message, and under verses with a comprehensive meaning, a remark is used to further expand and/or validate the idea and meaning. Therefore the style of investigating the arguments and ideas must be different from the previous chapters. As we have seen in the previous two chapters but most importantly in the first chapter on Fénelon, the text follows a narrative or a story, in which the arguments are presented with an emphasis on continuity and development of the ideas. The same general idea also applies to the second chapter on Cheyne, in which the investigated sources are written in a form of an essay, which also places emphasis on developing ideas throughout the text as well as retaining continuity. This is where Mandeville’s *Fable* differs. *The Fable of the Bees* is in its most simple form exactly what the name implies, a fable. Therefore the previously used method of

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<sup>129</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 382-383.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p.387-388.



investigation is not applicable to *The Fable* as it does not develop nor keep continuity in its arguments and remarks. The general idea is presented in *The Fable* and is investigated and explained by the author in the many Remarks to *The Fable* itself without retaining continuity or developing the ideas further—as seen in the previous two chapters. Where other authors present an idea and provide argumentation to support it while slowly developing the idea throughout the text, Mandeville in *The Fable* supposes that a general idea of understanding is present in the readers and does not see the need to elaborate or validate some of his ideas and arguments. Therefore, unlike the first two chapters where this thesis follows the continuity of the investigated texts, the third chapter will not do so, as it is simply impossible to find continuity in a text that wasn't written with this purpose in mind. Therefore the preferred method of investigation I have chosen for the purposes of this chapter is to present a general idea such as 'enervation of a nation', 'necessities and superfluities', and 'war' and provide all the necessary arguments relevant to the idea using the verses of *The Fable* along with its corresponding Remarks in order to investigate the idea with maintaining the original intended meaning without changing it for the purposes of continuity. The different general ideas will be placed in chapters in an order starting from one which develops and explains the idea, all the way to the last one which will require the knowledge of the previously mentioned arguments.

### **3.2 Necessities and superfluities**

In order to understand the meaning of luxury as it is understood and presented by Mandeville and to grasp the idea we must first look at the basic definitions and ideas surrounding the topic. In order to investigate the idea of what is necessary and what is superfluous for a human being, three verses alongside their respective remarks of *The Fable* will be used. These verses are: "*While Luxury Employ'd a Million of the Poor,*"<sup>132</sup> which will be used to show what is and what isn't considered luxurious; "*And odious Pride a Million more,*"<sup>133</sup> which explains the need for luxury; and "*The very Poor Liv'd better than the Rich before,*"<sup>134</sup> which explains how people became luxurious and presents the idea that what was once called luxurious became with time a necessity for even the poorest of people.

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<sup>132</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 25.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

To make a clear distinction between what Mandeville considers necessary and superfluous is not as straightforward as with the previous two philosophers discussed as Mandeville considers this topic to be ambiguous, and in order to grasp the concept I will begin with investigating his argumentation, which is based on Mandeville's depiction of the early man who walked the earth among the first living creatures. Mandeville depicted this early man as an animal that *"fed on the fruits of the earth, without any previous preparation, and reposed himself naked like other animals on the lap of their common parent"*<sup>135</sup> with his only basic instincts being to avoid pain and seek pleasure and once his human needs were satisfied, man fell into inertness as there was nothing else for him to seek along satisfying his basic human needs. Based on this theory it can be thought that the man wouldn't want nothing more in life besides taking care of his basic needs, but as a man is also programmed to avoid pain and seek pleasure, he would want to make his life more comfortable and easier, as making improvements in his life will not only bring him closer to pleasures, but also further from danger and pain. As Mandeville argues:

*"Whatever has contributed since to make life more comfortable, as it must have been the result of thought, experience, and some labour ... deserves the name luxury, the more or less trouble it required and deviated from the primitive simplicity"*<sup>136</sup>

Based on this argumentation we can see that once the early man started to make improvements in his life, which required some ingenuity in order to make his life more comfortable we can say that even the simplest and most savage people of the earth were luxurious in a way for *"it is not probable that there are any but what by this time have made some improvements upon their former manner of living, and either in the preparation their eatables, the ordering of their huts, or otherwise added something to what once sufficed them."*<sup>137</sup> Therefore every little change a man has made which was aimed at making life easier and more comfortable could be understood as luxurious, therefore it can be assumed that everything a man does is to be considered superfluous and every object stemming from it a superfluity, as it is something more than what a man needs in his basic 'primitive and savage' state to survive. If we are to use this definition

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

we would call everything luxury as it is something more than a person truly needs and basically everything a contemporary human being does is superfluous. On the other hand, the wants of men are innumerable, therefore what ought to supply them has no bounds. This is the reason for the aforementioned ambiguity in Mandeville's thought as "*once we depart from calling everything luxury that is not absolutely necessary to keep a man alive, then there is no luxury at all ... and we would only ever see the constant mutation of the superfluous into the necessary.*"<sup>138</sup> What Mandeville means is that nothing is completely superfluous, even if some objects were regarded as necessary by kings only.<sup>139</sup> What is meant by this statement is that what is called superfluous to some people, will be absolutely necessary to people on a higher position in society and "*neither the world nor the skill of man can produce any thing so curious or extravagant, but some most gracious sovereign or other, if it either eases or diverts him, will reckon it among the necessaries of life, not meaning everybody's life, but that of his sacred person.*"<sup>140</sup> The argument that what is superfluous to some is necessary to others works in both ways. One of them I have just mentioned, and the other one, Mandeville concludes "*many things, which were once looked upon as the invention of luxury are now allowed even to the that are so miserably poor as to become objects of public charity, nay counted so necessary, that we think no human creature ought want them.*"<sup>141</sup>

It can be argued that at one level Mandeville's argument is definitional. As it was presented, luxury is everything not immediately necessary to make a man subsist.<sup>142</sup> However, Mandeville immediately follows up this definition as he agrees with the criticism that this definition is 'too rigorous' since it implies that nothing but luxury is to be found in the world because as I have mentioned, everyone in search of a more comfortable and easier life makes improvements upon their way of life. This allows Mandeville to claim that everything in the world is luxury, and also equally that nothing is a luxury. This definition removes any point from which to precisely judge whether something is luxurious or not. Even though Mandeville knows that this definition is defective in nature it is so 'faute de mieux' because any other alternative is even worse and as he argues: "*if we abate one*

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 391-392.

<sup>140</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, Vol. 1, p. 107-108.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

*inch of this severity I am afraid we shan't know where to stop*".<sup>143</sup> He makes this fact even more present by implying that what is considered superfluous by one group in a society is looked upon as a necessity by another group.<sup>144</sup>

### **3.3 Necessity of luxury**

The next step in determining what is superfluous and what is necessary is to look at luxury from the perspective of the society and seek to uncover the pivotal role luxury plays in it. Even though Mandeville, based on the moralistic tradition regards luxury as a vice, not a virtue, as he openly admits the connection of luxury to avarice, fraud, envy, and vanity, he nevertheless sees and points out the connection of luxury with public benefits,<sup>145</sup> as he claims:

*"If we had no vices, I cannot see why any man should ever make more suits than he has occasions for, tho' he was never so desirous of promoting the good of the nation. For tho' in the wearing of a well wrought silk, rather than a slight stuff, and the preferring curious fine cloth to coarse, he had no other view but the setting of more people to work, and consequently the public welfare, yet he could consider clothes no otherwise than lovers of their country do taxes now."*<sup>146</sup>

Mandeville sees the importance of having these vices associated with luxury present in the society as he believes that it is the only incentive to keep a nation flourishing and promoting the national good. The main promoter of it would undeniably be the vice of envy and pride as these would serve as incentives for people to work as they would want to be able to achieve and get the same things as another, more successful person. Based on this, a chain with many links would form, which in turn would employ more people to work as people would want nicer things, which requires more people to work. All of this is associated with a common good on both sides of the table. The working people would be able to get and afford more, and the nation and public welfare would profit and prosper

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<sup>143</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 129.; and Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, Vol. 1, p. 107.

<sup>144</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 129.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>146</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, Vol. 1, p. 126.

from them, both of them working in harmony. A society that is “a frugal and honest society, that is, one bereft of vices, would be unable to support a large population.”<sup>147</sup> as it would simply lack the incentives to improve their condition and if everyone only made enough product to suffice himself with bare necessities than the nation will be unable to sustain its growing population as well as the growth of the nation as there wouldn't be any benefits for which the people would work. Therefore the necessity of luxury and more so the vices associated with it is undeniable as it serves to give an incentive to the population to work for a goal, which in turn helps the nation. This is also the source of Mandeville's notoriety as it broke the links of the accepted casual chain as it was universally accepted that beneficial effects must have worthy causes, while bad causes produce injurious outcomes,<sup>148</sup> which Mandeville's argument called for this to be false. It is easy to suppose that what Mandeville meant is that the greater the amount of vices of luxury in a society, the greater the benefit for it. This is however not completely true, as Mandeville also understood that if there were only luxurious vices in the society then it would bring on a whole new set of issues. Based on the *Essay on Charity* we know that Mandeville fully acknowledged that there are too many people in the English society living and benefiting off of these vices as:

*“The proportion of the society is spoiled, and the bulk of the nation, which should everywhere consist of the labouring poor, that are unacquainted with everything but their work, is too little for the other parts. In all business where downright labour is shunned or overpaid, there is plenty of people. To one merchant you have ten bookkeepers, or at least pretenders, and everywhere in the country the farmer wants hands.”*<sup>149</sup>

Therefore it is not completely true what the complete title of the *Fable—Private vices, Public Benefits* implies. On one hand the benefits of vices are undeniable, but on the other hand, as shown, absolute pursuit of these vices has also its crippling downsides on the society as because of these vices there aren't enough people to hold an occupation in the lower grade, lower paying jobs, which mostly require hard manual labour. Using the example Mandeville provided, there aren't enough farmers to feed the society as the vision of a farming job is not as lucrative as being a businessman. Mandeville emphasises

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., p. 184-185.

<sup>148</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 128.

<sup>149</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, Vol. 1, p. 301-302.

the fact that agriculture and fishery is not being taken care of and this is because “we have hardly poor enough to do what is necessary to make us subsist”<sup>150</sup> and if these two sectors were taken care of, meaning that they would employ more people then it would be in the power of people to “have a greater plenty than we enjoy”<sup>151</sup> currently. This also implies that if these crucial sectors are completely abandoned and forgotten about, then it is possible for the entire society to collapse, as there isn’t going to be anyone who can feed the nation, no matter how rich the society is, it would not be able to sufficiently provide for its people.

As it was shown, a flourishing society would not be able to support its people if everyone was virtuous and lived a vice free life as it is these vices that are the incentives for people to work, and work harder, which in turn supports the entire nation. However the malignant effect of these vices of luxury, which has the power to bring a nation to the brink of collapse was also shown and therefore it can be implied that in order for a flourishing nation to keep on flourishing and growing, there needs to be a golden mean between people. If everyone wanted to be a businessman, then there wouldn’t be anyone who would grow the food that feeds the people. Therefore what I would like to imply at the of this part of the chapter is that it is not the vices that are responsible for a flourishing nation, it is the golden mean in occupation that serves as the pillar that holds the society together which makes the nation flourish.

### **3.4 Enervation of a nation**

After I have shown what was Mandeville’s reasoning behind necessities and superfluities along with showing the necessity of luxury in a society, it is time to look at the charges that have been made against luxury and its concomitant vices by Mandeville’s contemporaries and Mandeville’s argumentation against them. This part will deal with these issues and will use two verses along with their respective Remarks to provide the argumentation. These verses are: “*While Luxury Employ’d a Million of the Poor,*”<sup>152</sup> which will show Mandeville’s counter-argument to the charges laid against luxury and its enervating and crippling effects along with the real cause of these issues; and “*No Limner*

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

*for his Art is fam'd, Stone-cutters, Carvers are not nam'd,"*<sup>153</sup> which informs us about what would happen if a nation is to become virtuous and frugal. The sub-part of this chapter will discuss War and the effeminate effects luxury supposedly has on the ability of a nation to wage a war, for the investigation of which I will use the first verse mentioned in this chapter, which informs us of the connection between war and luxury, along with: *"To make a Great and Honest Hive"*<sup>154</sup> to see what effect frugality has to the ability to wage a war and be a warlike nation, and their respective remarks.

As I have previously mentioned, Mandeville's notoriety stems from his view on luxury, which emphasises the benefits which it brings into society and serves therefore as a general benefit. Along with the previously discussed Fénelon, there have been many who didn't share Mandeville's enthusiasm about luxury and have seen it rather as a factor that corrupts and enervates the individual as well as the entire nation and its society. As for one of these many critiques there is one that stands out, one which sees luxury and its accompanying vices as the sole reason for corruption and enervation of a nation to which Mandeville argues:

*"What is laid to the charge of luxury besides, is, that it increases avarice and rapine. And where there are reigning vices, offices of the greater trust are bought and sold, the ministers that should serve the public, both great and small, corrupted, and the countries every moment in danger of being betrayed to the highest bidders. And lastly, that it effeminates and enervates the people, by which the nations become an easy prey to the first invaders. These are indeed terrible things, but what is put to the account of luxury belongs to male-administration, and is the fault of bad politics."*<sup>155</sup>

I have already discussed in the previous part of this chapter that Mandeville fully acknowledges the possible undesirable effects of the vices connected with luxury. Nonetheless he also sees the benefits of them. This is where Mandeville serves as an advocate of luxury against people who only see luxury as something that will cripple a nation and places the blame for the current state of England, which is thought to be caused by the luxurious lifestyle of its inhabitants on the government and sees it primarily

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 223.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., p. 115-116.

as a fault of bad politics and not luxury as “every government ought to be thoroughly acquainted with, and steadfastly to pursue the interest of the country”<sup>156</sup> and not their own which creates the notion that luxury is to be blamed for the current state of England. As Dr. Hont argues, “instead of being a slippery slope of corruption, ‘luxury’ was the ascent of mankind from animal-like poverty to modern welfare.”<sup>157</sup>

Most of the contemporary critics of Mandeville believed that what England and truly and nation that was trying to flourish had to accomplish was national honesty and virtuous frugality in order to prosper, which is again in direct contradiction with Mandeville’s thought, therefore what follows shows the effects of such policies that prefer virtue and frugality over national material prosperity.

*“It is without doubt, that among the consequences of a national honesty and frugality, it would be one not to build any houses, or use new materials as long as there were old ones enough to serve. By this three parts in four of masons, carpenters, bricklayers, &c. would want employment, and the building trade being once destroyed, what would become of limning, carving, and other arts the are ministering to luxury, and have been carefully forbid by these lawgiver that preferred a good and honest, to a great and wealthy society, and endeavoured to render their subjects rather virtuous than rich.”<sup>158</sup>*

If the people whose main fear is luxury and who prefer frugality and honesty were to prevail than their policies would bring on horrible unemployment as nothing would be done as long as the old thing served its intended purpose. It is not only the arts that are connected to luxury that would be diminished and eventually destroyed by these policies, in fact as *The Fable* argues, it was impossible “to have both frugality and the arts and sciences at the same time.”<sup>159</sup> So it is not only the people employed in arts serving to luxury who would suffer under these policies, it concerns everyone who is employed in both sciences and arts. This is yet another point in which Mandeville goes against his contemporaries who claim—as we have seen with Fénelon, that a person is truly happy only if he lives a life of virtue and absolute frugality, to which Mandeville replies that “the

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 392.

<sup>158</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 223.

<sup>159</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 392.



*great art then to make a nation happy and what we call flourishing, consists in giving everybody an opportunity of being employed.*"<sup>160</sup> There is one instance however, in which luxury and the lifestyle associated with it are able to completely destroy a person's life and under specific circumstances even an entire nation. This is the desire to live a lifestyle of a superior rank, one in which a person lives above the means of his income. Here Mandeville simply claims that luxury is not to be blamed but a folly of a person is, as "*whoever lives above his income is a fool*"<sup>161</sup> and a person should only live as extravagant as his income allows it just as a nation can import any amount of goods as long as exports overbalance it.<sup>162</sup>

As it was shown, it is not the fault of luxury that a nation is not flourishing and is having internal issues, it is a sole fault of bad politics that a nation is corrupted. The luxurious lifestyle of the inhabitants not only does not corrupt the nation, it helps it flourish, it helps the economy, which makes it possible to exist and which allows the inhabitants to live a relatively comfortable life not having to worry about catastrophic unemployment and economic downfall. The policies stemming from national honesty and frugality would not only bring about horrible unemployment, they would also cause all the arts and sciences to diminish if not destroy them straightaway, which would in turn cripple the nation even more with its undesirable effects which were meant to help.

### **3.4.1 War**

The next part in which luxury is often being accused of having enervating and effeminating properties is war, and the ability of a nation to wage a war. As luxury is often being accused of this by Mandeville's contemporaries, he also presents a few counter-arguments on why this is not the case, or at least why this is not such a big issue as people think. Mandeville provides an argument, that is directly aimed at Fénelon's idea of luxury's corrupting effects on a nation's ability to wage a war and ridicules it. This will be further discussed and compared in the next chapter, in which I will provide examples for both arguments, however first it is necessary to shortly discuss Mandeville and his ideas on war.

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<sup>160</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 197.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 249.

<sup>162</sup> *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, p. 134.

Mandeville does not emphasise the connection of luxury with effeminacy and cowardliness in the terms of war, as he claims that *“hence in Spain and Flanders the ‘embroider’d Beaux with the fine lac’d shirts and powder’d wigs’ have stood up as well under fire as any ‘stinking slovens’”*<sup>163</sup> This implies that no matter the lifestyle—in terms of luxury of course, of a person, it does not compromise his ability to withstand the attempts of enemy advancements and even if soft living renders men ‘too soft’ for battle then those affected will be of the higher social class with excess of wealth, which makes them contribute to the military by a different method, taxation. So even if this is the case and they are for some reason too soft to fight, then their contribution to the cause is in financial terms.<sup>164</sup> The people who are actually fighting on the battlefield are the *“meanest indigent part of the nation, the working slaving people”*<sup>165</sup> as no matter how luxurious a nation is, there will always be enough people who do and endure the hard work. People whose life is arduous and of the physical sort from which they will not suffer any enervation, which is the supposed ailment of the luxurious.<sup>166</sup> Then the only people who are capable of suffering from these conditions brought on by a life of luxury are the officers as they are usually of high birth and possess the means to live a luxurious life. However, as Mandeville claims:

*“The officers are all of them in their several stations obliged to lay out so large a share of their pay in fine clothes, accoutrements, and other things by the luxury of the times called necessary, that they can spare but little money for debauches.”*<sup>167</sup>

Even if their salary is to increase, than that means that they have moved to a higher rank, which in turn requires the officers to increase their expenses on things considered necessary for such said position as everything must be proportionate to their quality. In this case luxury serves more as a way to heighten pride and vanity than anything else.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 122-123.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.; and *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, p. 133.

<sup>165</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 119.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.; and *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, p. 133.

<sup>167</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 121.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

Mandeville finishes his argumentation with stating that even if none of what was mentioned about the officers applies, “*robustness is the least thing required in an officer*”<sup>169</sup> as their primary function consist of knowledge “*of martial affairs and intrepidity to keep him calm in the midst of danger.*”<sup>170</sup>

### **3.5 Conclusion of Chapter III**

As was shown and discussed, Mandeville’s view of luxury is indeed ambiguous, on one hand serving the public benefits, and on the other having the ability to enervate an individual and in some instances the entire nation. However even though this is the case, the benefits of luxury are undeniable, as is the fact that without luxury the society would greatly suffer. The discussion on necessities and superfluities has shown us that everything can be considered luxury, just as nothing can be, followed by the discussion on the necessity of luxury, which informs us of the need of luxury in a flourishing, and well functioning society. The next part regarding enervation has revealed that almost everything that luxury is being blamed for can be traced back to bad governing as the source of these issues, and finally the part regarding war has shown us that a luxurious lifestyle does not diminish a nation’s ability to wage a war and wage it successfully. The only group of people in the army who could be in any way ‘touched’ by the effects of luxury are the officers, to which Mandeville has a plethora of arguments to assure people why there is no danger to national safety even if the officers were by any means influenced by the luxurious lifestyle that is associated with people of higher ranks. One part of the discussion was deliberately left out of this chapter, which is that of trade. Even though there is a connection between trade and luxury Mandeville does not discuss the issue of trade in a philosophical sense, but in an economic one with the central issue regarding luxury being the import of luxurious goods, which is based in its entirety on economic thought. Furthermore, Mandeville’s thoughts on trade in the *Fable* are presented as a direct ridicule of Fénelon’s system of trade and commerce, and therefore the issue of trade will only be discussed in the comparison chapter of this thesis.

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 120.

## Chapter IV: Comparison

The last chapter of this thesis focuses on comparing ideas on luxury of the previously discussed thinkers of whose ideas have been discussed and investigated in the previous three chapters. The comparison is based on primary literature and will use only topics discussed and investigated in this thesis with one exception. This exception is the concept of trade in Mandeville, which was only mentioned in the concluding part to Mandeville, as the topic is discussed by Mandeville in *The Fable* as a direct ridicule of Fénelon's ideas on trade. The comparison begins with comparing Mandeville and Fénelon and their respective stances on luxury, and concludes with the comparison between Fénelon and Cheyne. The comparison between Mandeville and Cheyne is deliberately left out as the only possible comparison between the duo is strictly in medical terms, not philosophical. The comparison will be based on the same logic and method of investigation as used in the previous chapter on Mandeville, in which a general term will be presented and arguments of both thinkers will be used and compared in their respective terms followed by an individual conclusion, which will replace the usual method of presenting findings of comparison at the end of the chapter.

### **4.1 Mandeville and Fénelon**

Mandeville was as much of a critic of Fénelon's ideas on luxury as any of his contemporaries, however, Fénelon and Mandeville represented the two poles of the luxury debate of the early enlightenment as Mandeville was the first critic of the idea of honest modernity. Nevertheless Mandeville did not initiate the arguments as the line of causation ran from Fénelon to Mandeville, and not the other way around. The entire 18th century debate began with Fénelon's presentation of how the luxury of Europe could be destroyed and replaced with a incorruptible economy and a virtuous and frugal society, of which Mandeville was the most notorious and biggest critic.<sup>171</sup>

#### **4.1.2 Necessities and superfluities**

In order for Fénelon to present his vision for a reformation as shown in the respective chapter, he first needed to establish the difference between superfluities and necessities.

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<sup>171</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 382-383, 128.

Based on the argumentation provided by Fénelon, which is to be considered definitional we can concretely deduce, as it is not explicitly stated that necessities or as Fénelon calls them 'true needs' consist of clothing, shelter, food, and their means of acquiring, whereas superfluities consist of everything that isn't considered true needs and their means of acquiring<sup>172</sup>, therefore we can conclude that superfluities are everything that is not necessary to make a man subsist in his current, simple situation, however only in terms of his bodily needs as all superfluities are defined by the desires of the imagination<sup>173</sup> and do not serve as a mean to satisfy the basic human needs, which in Fénelon's understanding consist only of the needs of the body.

Mandeville's argumentation, even though is very different reveals the same results in one aspect. He begins by investigating the basic condition of the 'first man' whose only desire was to avoid pain and seek pleasure, and concludes that this is the only condition under which a being lives a life of only taking care of his necessities, and therefore argues that superfluity is "*everything not immediately necessary to make a man subsist as he is a living creature,*"<sup>174</sup> however the line between what is necessary and what is not starts to get blurry right after the first man has made an improvement upon his life as every improvement a man has made is to be considered superfluous as it is something that is not necessary for his most simple survival and therefore everything could be called a superfluity, just as nothing can be called a superfluity as long as it serves the role of a necessity by even one person.<sup>175</sup>

#### **4.1.2.1 Conclusion of necessities and superfluities**

We can see that under the most basic conditions both authors regard what is superfluous in the same way. It is everything that is not necessary to make a man subsist, however where their thoughts differ is in categorising what is considered necessary. Fénelon claims that what is necessary is what tends "*immediately to answer the necessities of life*"<sup>176</sup> and as I have shown, these necessities are clothing, shelter, food, and everything

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<sup>172</sup> See page 6-11 of this thesis.

<sup>173</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick. Essay. In *The Political Philosophy of Fénelon*, p. 55.

<sup>174</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 107.

<sup>175</sup> See page P43-44 of this thesis.

<sup>176</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 290.

that is needed to obtain them in the most simple and frugal way. However here we can see that Mandeville's idea of what is necessary is not that straightforward as he claims that a thing that is considered necessary by one group is looked upon as a superfluity by other<sup>177</sup> and therefore nothing can be called necessary as long as something is called a superfluity. As I have stated in the introduction to the comparisons the line of causation ran from Fénelon to Mandeville and therefore it can be argued that Mandeville agrees with Fénelon's definition of superfluities as long as a distinction between nature and culture is made and their thoughts depart only on the topic of the definition of necessities with Fénelon's concrete definition and Mandeville's ambiguous definition.

#### **4.1.3 Luxury, society, and the enervation of a nation**

The concept and connection of luxury and society is very important for Fénelon's thought given what power luxury and its associated vices possess. The arguments presenting Fénelon's view of these issues are presented throughout all of the *Adventures of Telemachus* and the general idea is that "*superfluities effeminate, intoxicate, and torment those who possess them*"<sup>178</sup> without serving any greater or smaller benefits. Luxury and its debilitating effects on nations and individuals can be observed in Fénelon's ideas regarding the corrupted city of Salentum, in which fraud, violence, envy, and pride—the evils and vices of luxury rendered the nation unable to flourish and have destined it to its inevitable destruction either by themselves or some other nation thanks to the effects luxury has. It is the general idea of all works of Fénelon that luxury corrupts and enervates nations, just as it corrupts individuals and the only way to have a flourishing nation in which virtues prevail over vices is to have a honest and frugal society, which promotes excess in true bodily necessities and needs along with increasing the number of inhabitants.<sup>179</sup> Fénelon with his reformatory ideas calls for almost all arts, which are rendered superfluous, i.e. they are not necessary to make a man subsist to be forbidden and the people employed in these are to be 'transplanted' to the countryside where they will be employed in agriculture as their previous occupation only served further in corrupting the nation. Only arts that are necessary for the people and the nation are to be

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<sup>177</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 129.; Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 107.; and see page 44.

<sup>178</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 291.

<sup>179</sup> See page 12-16 of this thesis.

kept existing<sup>180</sup> as they serve a purpose that is aimed at satisfying true needs of the nation.<sup>181</sup>

As I have shown and argued in the third chapter on Mandeville, there is a direct connection between luxury and the vices associated with public benefits as *“if we had no vices, I cannot see why any man should ever make more suits than he has occasions for.”*<sup>182</sup> Therefore it is the result of luxury and these vices that a nation is flourishing by giving the inhabitants an incentive that makes them both willingly and unwillingly work for a common good, which is the national good along with accomplishing their own personal goals. Mandeville sees the importance of having luxury and vices present in a society, even though he acknowledges the undesirable effects of luxury and the ability of vices to corrupt people and in some instances even the entire nation. Nevertheless, the benefits that this brings to the nation in the form of general benefits exceed the undesirable effects by a big margin<sup>183</sup> and as long as there aren't vices present in a society it cannot flourish, and a society that is *“bereft of vices, would be unable to support a large population.”*<sup>184</sup> The same goes for arts, if arts are to be restricted and controlled than the nation cannot flourish. Mandeville, unlike Fénelon sees the importance of all arts no matter what they create, every one serves a unique purpose and therefore is able to provide its services to any person, no matter what he wants.<sup>185</sup> Mandeville believes and argues that luxury and its associated vices are not the cause of corruption and enervation of a nation. The sole reason for this corruption for which luxury is blamed is the fault of bad politics along with the male-administration that doesn't pursue the interest of the country, but only their own.<sup>186</sup> The luxurious lifestyle that is blamed not only does not corrupt the nation, it is the incentive from which flourishing of a nation is possible which allows most of the inhabitants to live a comfortable life, in which they don't have to worry about

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<sup>180</sup> With the mentioned exception.

<sup>181</sup> See page 7-8.; Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 354.; and Schuurman, Paul. “Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the *Telemachus*.”, p.184.

<sup>182</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 126.

<sup>183</sup> See page 46-47 of this thesis.

<sup>184</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 184-185.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>186</sup> See page 48-49 of this thesis.

unemployment, unlike in a society that is honest and frugal where there is no need to make anything as long as the old thing serves its purpose.<sup>187</sup>

#### **4.1.3.1 Conclusion of luxury, society, and the enervation of a nation**

The question of what role luxury serves in a society and what actually enervates a nation is in the centre of the early enlightenment luxury debate. Comparing the thoughts of Mandeville and Fénelon on this topic reveals concrete arguments from both thinkers, and it can be seen that even though their arguments were somewhat similar regarding necessities and superfluities, here their arguments are completely different and aimed against each other with Mandeville providing the counterargument. Mandeville sees luxury and its associated vices as a necessary tool of a nation, which, as argued, provides an incentive for the inhabitants to work, and work for a common goal, therefore providing employment for almost everyone who is willing to work, which in result helps the nation flourish. All of which makes it possible for the inhabitants to live a relatively comfortable life. Fénelon's idea of a flourishing society is completely different as he claims that the only thing that luxury does is that it effeminates and corrupts people and nations and serves as the biggest mean of enervation. The vices associated with luxury make it unable for a nation to flourish, and in order to change this and have a truly flourishing nation is to have a frugal and honest society, which promotes excess in true needs by the means of a reformation. Where Fénelon blames luxury and its associated vices for the enervation of a nation, Mandeville argues for the problem to be an issue with politics and the male-administration that doesn't pursue the interests of the country, rather than being the fault of luxury. Both thinkers also discuss the concept of different arts, in which according to Fénelon only the necessary arts that serve the true necessities of the nation are to be preserved and all other considered superfluous forbidden, whereas Mandeville sees the necessity of all arts to be present in a society in order to be able to satisfy every need of the people, and further argues that what Fénelon presented is indeed unable to work as "*to have both frugality and the arts and sciences at the same time*"<sup>188</sup> is not possible.

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<sup>187</sup> See page 49 of this thesis.

<sup>188</sup> The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought, p. 392.



#### 4.1.4 War

As was shown before with Fénelon, he blames luxury for effeminacy and corruption, which in relation with war causes people to become cowardly and 'soft', therefore mitigating their ability to wage a war, and most importantly wage it successfully. Fénelon makes this point even more present in his Dialogues of the dead, where a negative relation between luxury and military prowess is made.<sup>189</sup> Therefore an argument can be made, that luxury and war are a mutually negatively reinforcing phenomena in Fénelon's thought, and that luxury needs to be eradicated before a nation becomes capable to defend it self as well as attack its enemies successfully.<sup>190</sup>

Mandeville directly ridicules the relationship between luxury, effeminacy and cowardliness as Fénelon presented it and argues that *"in Spain and Flanders the 'embroider'd Beaux with the fine lac'd shirts and powder'd wigs' have stood up as well under fire as any 'stinking slovens'"*<sup>191</sup> and shatters the supposed connection presented by Fénelon with factual real life situation by claiming that no amount of luxury has ever presented an issue for a warring nation. Mandeville's argument can be understood as definite, however he still provides some additional arguments for an instance where luxury might present an issue with rendering people soft for battle. He argues that the only people in the nation who could be rendered too soft by living a luxurious life are the people in the higher social class, and these people contribute differently to the cause, not by directly fighting but by paying the taxes. The people directly fighting in the conflict are the *"meanest indigent part of the nation, the working slaving people"*<sup>192</sup> and the amount of people belonging to groups that are unaffected by luxury is high enough in every nation, to fulfil any needs in terms of personnel that the army may have. Mandeville acknowledges that there might after all be a group that may suffer under the softness luxury causes. This group consists of officers whose status is high enough to be able to afford luxurious living and therefore be softened by the lifestyle, however Mandeville also acknowledges that luxurious lifestyle belongs to and is a part of the position of an officer and even if an officer is softened up by his lifestyle, he claims that *"robustness is the least*

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<sup>189</sup> Schuurman, Paul. "Fénelon on Luxury, War and Trade in the Telemachus.", p.184-185.

<sup>190</sup> See page 28-29 of this thesis.

<sup>191</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, Vol. 1, p. 122-123.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

thing required in an officer”<sup>193</sup> as his main job is to have the knowledge of martial affairs and intrepidity to keep him calm.<sup>194</sup>

#### **4.1.4.1. Conclusion of war**

The lingering question what effects luxury has on the ability to wage a war successfully is an ever present one in the discussion. We have seen that Fénelon argues for a negative connection between war and luxury, and supposes that a nation is unable to wage a war successfully if luxury has corrupted the army as the soldiers would become cowardly and soft. Mandeville argument is directly aimed at Fénelon as he claims and proves that there is no such connection between luxury and all the things Fénelon accuses it of with one exception however. The exception comes in the form of softness. We have seen that Mandeville acknowledges that such connection is possible, however he provides enough arguments to prove that this possible supposed connection will not play any role in the ability of a nation to wage a war successfully.

#### **4.1.5 Trade<sup>195</sup>**

Fénelon regards trade as a useful tool of a country, but most importantly he sees trade as a tool which aids his reformatory policy. By prohibiting all commodities that might introduce luxury or effeminacy there is now a surplus of luxurious goods in the country along with superfluities and people who were occupied in arts that created them<sup>196</sup>. Fénelon uses this surplus to his advantage by establishing a trading relationship with the

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 120-123.; and see page 51-52 of this thesis.

<sup>195</sup> In terms of trade I will depart from the established method of comparison as the issue of trade in Mandeville in terms of luxury is not discussed and elaborated on in the Remarks to *The Fable*, but is only included in a few verses in *The Fable* itself where it serves as a ridicule of Fénelon’s ideas on trade. This is the main reason why trade was deliberately left out of the chapter on Mandeville as the issue is not discussed broadly enough from the perspective of luxury from Mandeville’s side and is only discussed from the standpoint of economics, which is irrelevant for the purposes of this thesis, the general conclusion of his economic thought on trade is that luxury is economically desirable and apart from that it is not possible to make concrete and comprehensive assumptions that are supported by primary literature. Therefore this part of the comparison is based on comparing Mandeville’s verses connected to trade with Fénelon’s well established and discussed ideas on the topic.

<sup>196</sup> Most of the people in mind were ‘transplanted’ to the countryside to practice in the art of agriculture and are not further necessary for Fénelon’s arguments regarding trade, however these people that would be removed are an important group in Mandeville’s thought, therefore it is necessary to include them here.

neighbouring country and uses this to exchange all luxurious goods for livestock, which will further aid his plan of reformation. After this has successfully been done and all luxuries have been removed the only form of trade in which Fénelon's reformed nation will partake in is that of superfluities of true needs. This means that after the true needs of the inhabitants have been sufficed, the rest will be used in trade, and be traded for money, which will only be used to buy necessary goods, which the inhabitants cannot create themselves along with paying for wars.<sup>197</sup> What was Fénelon's goal all along regarding trade was to show that a nation could attain wealth without the need for luxury and without depending on it.<sup>198</sup> Fénelon's trading policy also touched upon the issue of the state or in the case of the *Adventures*, the prince engaging and interfering with trade of what the result is that "*he leaves all the profits to his subjects who have taken the pains of it*"<sup>199</sup> therefore the state does not receive any benefits for allowing trade to be carried on within its borders for one reason, and that is the fear of hindering the self-sufficiency of trade for the purposes of individual benefits.<sup>200</sup>

It was obvious to Mandeville that wealth and luxury are a mutually reinforcing phenomena<sup>201</sup> where trade plays a pivotal role in serving both the individual as well as public good by supporting the nation. Therefore it is impossible to have the state have no interest in trade in a flourishing nation.<sup>202</sup> Mandeville argued that without luxury trade would cease to exist and therefore it is impossible to have one without the other as he says in the *Fable*:

*"As Pride and Luxury decrease,  
So by degrees they leave the Seas.  
Not Merchants now, but Companies  
Remove whole Manufactories."*<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> See page 17-20 of this thesis.

<sup>198</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. xcvi.

<sup>199</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick, Fénelon: *Moral and Political Writings*, p. 75-76.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>201</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. xcvi.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. Xcvii.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

This verse further reinforces the undeniably important connection of luxury and its concomitant vices in keeping a nation and its trade flourishing. The role of vices here serves the same reason as in the discussion on the necessity of luxury, in which it provides an incentive<sup>204</sup> which sets the common good in motion and keeps it going. Mandeville claims that by removing or controlling luxuries, the incentive as well as the entirety of trade would suffer and people and companies would soon leave the nation that has implemented such rules and laws because of the economical downfall which the new laws have created as:

*“Envy it self, and Vanity,  
Were Ministers of Industry;  
Their darling Folly, Fickleness,  
In Diet, Furniture and Dress,  
That strange ridic’lous Vice, was made  
The very wheel that turn’d the Trade.”*<sup>205</sup>

By removing luxury from a nation, its concomitant vices would follow with it. The incentive would be lost and there is nothing else to offer the people to keep the trade alive after this point or even to stay in the nation. It was the people engaging in activities that included obtaining luxurious goods who were responsible for the common good as by doing so they unwillingly employed many people who were responsible for the entire process surrounding the luxurious good in mind from which the state benefited just as much.

#### **4.1.5.1 Conclusion of trade**

Fénelon’s main goal of his comprehensive discussion on trade is to show that a nation is able to live on, flourish, and obtain wealth even without relying on luxuries. He achieves this by engaging in trade of only superfluities of true needs that are left after all the true needs of the inhabitants have been fulfilled. His incentive to keep people in the state from leaving is not material whatsoever. He believes that people will be content with living in a

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<sup>204</sup> See page 46-48 of this thesis.

<sup>205</sup> Mandeville, Bernard., Kaye, Frederick Benjamin. *The Fable of the Bees, Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits*, Vol. 1, p. 25.

happy frugal and simple nation free of vice and therefore free of material corruption. As for the role of state in trade, Fénelon argues for absolute freedom of trade with the only interference of the state being punishing crimes and mistakes. Mandeville on the other hands ridicules every aspect of Fénelon's reformatory policy on trade. He sees and argues for the pivot role of trade in a flourishing nation, in which wealth and luxury are deeply intertwined and he also sees the necessity of the state to be present in trade. Mandeville further claims that it is impossible for trade to exist if luxuries are to be forbidden or even controlled and the economic outcome of such policies would ruin the entire nation as the main incentive that luxury and its concomitant vices provide would be lost, and argues for the role which these incentives play in the nation by further ridiculing Fénelon's account of people living happily in his reformed nation just because it is free from corruption.

#### ***4.2 Fénelon and Cheyne***

As shown in the chapter on Cheyne we could have seen that his critique of luxury is very strong in nature and his ideologies urge people to seek a golden mean in their lifestyles. Cheyne's main concern is the human body and not politics and morality, whereas his French ideological counterpart's concern is based on politics and morality even in questions and concerns regarding the human body Fénelon applies the effects of luxury on the human body in a broader spectre of politics and/or morality. This part along with comparing the thought of Fénelon and Cheyne will investigate the supposed ideological connection between Cheyne and Fénelon, and will try to answer the question whether the obvious ideological similarity is purely a coincidence or if Fénelon really influenced Cheyne's ideas. Based on the timeline of events and publications we know that just as was the case with Mandeville, the thought and arguments ran from Fénelon to Cheyne and not the other way around.

#### 4.2.1 The Golden Age<sup>206</sup>

The first and most obvious ideologic connection between Fénelon and Cheyne is regarding the uncorrupted state of existence and especially Fénelon's idea of The Golden Age discussed in the first part of the first chapter on Boetica. Fénelon's ideology of Boetica consists of a state that carried on "*no foreign trade [and] had no need of money*"<sup>207</sup> and practiced no unnecessary arts in their lives, only those that were necessary for the existence of their simple and frugal country. All of this created an ideal state for living in the author's mind,<sup>208</sup> which is undoubtedly the state of living in the Golden age, which was the starting point of all nations. The Boeticans carried on a simple life and their true needs are easily supplied by their own doing which doesn't require luxuries in order to satisfy the inhabitants. As I have proven in the first chapter, superfluities and luxuries - luxurious lifestyle corrupts people and it is this lifestyle that has brought us from the ideal point of existence in the Golden Age to a corrupted state of existence. Luxury corrupts people's morality, which includes their respect for the laws and the ability to rule, effeminates people and causes them to live a life of softness and laziness. Most importantly, it is our own wrongdoing that has caused this separation from the ideal point of existence.<sup>209</sup>

Cheyne's idea of the uncorrupted state of existence is very similar in its principles to that of Fénelon as discussed before in a part dedicated to this issue. Cheyne views the uncorrupted state as something that we had at the beginning of existence and it was our own wrongdoing that has caused us to depart from this state of existence to a corrupted one. Cheyne sees and discusses the beginning of existence with the ancient greeks and concludes that "*while they lived in their simplicity and virtue were healthy, strong and valiant*"<sup>210</sup> and only our own wrongdoings had caused the corruption as Cheyne continues and uses the example of the creation of medicine to express that it could only have been

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<sup>206</sup> It is possible to compare The Golden Age in terms of argumentation of both Mandeville and Fénelon, however this part is deliberately left out as Mandeville's arguments are focused on The Golden Age in terms of the fall of man, which is not sufficiently connected to the issue of luxury while Fénelon's and Cheyne's accounts of The Golden Age are necessary for their line of argumentation on the issue.

<sup>207</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 290.

<sup>208</sup> Hanley, Ryan Patrick. *Essay*. In *Fénelon: Moral and Political Writings*, p. 84.

<sup>209</sup> See page 35-36 of this thesis.

<sup>210</sup> Cheyne, George. *The English malady*, p. 56.

luxury and laziness that caused this corruption of people from which nervous disorders emerged.<sup>211</sup> Cheyne further validates this point by arguing that “*when mankind was simple, plain, honest, and frugal, there were few or no diseases*”<sup>212</sup> Therefore we can imply and argue that if in there weren’t any diseases in the uncorrupted state, then there also wasn’t any luxury or laziness present as well.

#### **4.2.1.1 Conclusion of The Golden Age**

Cheyne’s understanding of the corruption is based on the diseases of the body whereas Fénelon applies the corruption on a wider scale but as it was presented, their idea for the uncorrupted, ‘golden’ state of existence is based on the same ideology. Both thinkers imply that once upon a time there was a state of existence, which was completely free of corruption due to its lack of luxury and laziness. In Fénelon’s case it is due to everybody working towards satisfying their true needs, which means that no-one lived a sedentary or ‘lazy’ life as everyone was employed in their respective occupations<sup>213</sup> which provided them with ‘just enough to get by’ and therefore were safe from luxury and its effects on their lives. The same general idea can also, even though it is not directly discussed be applied to Cheyne’s view of the uncorrupted state in which he implies that when mankind was simple there were no diseases, and as I have shown the diseases stem from the luxurious lifestyle that corrupts the health of the people, therefore there also could not have been any luxury and excess present.

#### **4.2.2 Nourishment**

The idea of regulating even the most simple and elementary things in order to achieve absolute frugality and simplicity is in the centre of Fénelon’s thought. His regulations regarding nourishment are just as strict as any other as he sees certain foods to be just as problematic as any other thing where luxury can be present. Fénelon claims that luxurious and excessive food “*effeminates the mind, and subverts the constitution*”<sup>214</sup> by allowing inordinate desires to prevail and not being able to regulate them. Furthermore, Fénelon

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<sup>211</sup> See page 31-39 of this thesis.

<sup>212</sup> Cheyne, George. *The English malady*, p. 174.

<sup>213</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 290.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 344-345.

claims that food that is luxurious and is not simple and plain can never allow a person to be healthy, as it is said that these foods also corrupt the health of the person indulging in them. The next thing in line of corrupting forms of nourishment is the art of cookery, which renders the appetite importunate, when the wants of nature are supplied, as well as high seasoned meats that stimulate appetite after nature has been sufficed.<sup>215</sup> It is clearly visible what is at the centre of Fénelon's argument. The entirety of the discussion is based around excess and food being prepared in a way that is not plain and frugal, therefore also excessive, which is the central issue in this point, for which Fénelon has devised a solution. All the food prepared and consumed needs to "*consist of the best food, but it should always be plainly dressed.*"<sup>216</sup> Only if this is adhered to can a person enjoy the virtues that come with moderation and frugality along with good health, and "*capacity and disposition for the purest and highest enjoyments.*"<sup>217</sup>

Dr. Cheyne viewed nourishment as the most important thing in keeping a body healthy, as well as being crucial for the treatment of disorders resulting from a fault in the quality and/or quantity of nourishment consumed. Cheyne believed that overindulgence in both quality and quantity physically wears out a human being by crippling its internal parts with its composition, which is the core cause of the nervous disorders. Everything that is excessive in quality and quantity while also not being soft, tender, light, and easily digested is according to Cheyne considered a luxury of the table, and therefore being damaging to the body. The art of cookery is yet another thing that proves to be damaging to the body as it works only as an invention of luxury which forces an unnatural appetite which further exacerbates the conditions, as well as rendering a natural appetite incapable of moderation.<sup>218</sup> Cheyne however unlike Fénelon only sees this to be an issue in people of the so called 'better sort'<sup>219</sup> whose tables are "*furnished with provisions of delicacy, number and plenty, sufficient to provoke, and even gorge the most large and voluptuous appetite*"<sup>220</sup> and not in people whose status doesn't allow them to afford these luxuries.

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid.; and see page 22 of this thesis.

<sup>216</sup> Fénelon, François de Salignac de La Mothe, *Adventures of Telemachus*, p. 344-345.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Cheyne, George. *The English malady*, p. 29-30, 51, 159; and Cheyne, George. *An essay of health and long life*, p. 30.

<sup>219</sup> See page 35 of this thesis.

<sup>220</sup> Cheyne, George. *The English malady*, p. 49-51.



#### **4.2.2.1 Conclusion of nourishment**

Both Fénelon and Cheyne see nourishment as a possible issue, although for a slightly different reason. As I have shown, Fénelon's issue with luxurious foods and the art of cookery that is connected to it are an issue as the overindulgence in luxuries and excess causes people to lose the ability to control their desires along with being damaging to the health. Being that Fénelon's account of these issues is not centred around medicine, he doesn't provide any additional support or explanation for his argument to what exactly happens to the body and health if his rules are not adhered to. This is where Cheyne's account comes into play. He uses the same general idea which was presented by Fénelon and applies it to the human body with (for that time) concrete evidence why overindulgence and luxuries of the table are damaging to the body stating that it physically wears out the body, which gives rise to a whole set of nervous disorders. The art of cookery is, however something, which has the exact same meaning for both thinkers. Both Fénelon and Cheyne see the art of cookery as something that only serves one purpose, and that is overindulgence after the bodily needs have been satisfied. Both thinkers see the central issue that is in the middle of the luxurious nourishment debate, which is excess and excessive indulgence in things that are not necessary to satisfy the basic human bodily needs and therefore it can be said that both Fénelon and Cheyne worked with the same idea, and the only difference is that Cheyne argumentation is based around the human body and Fénelon's is based around the society, but based on the same principle.

## **Chapter V: Conclusion**

After an analysis of the discussed primary literature has been done, all topics regarding luxury related to the topic of this thesis have been discussed, investigated, and compared with each other (if applicable), which revealed some interesting facts and ideological connections between the discussed thinkers. First of all, the most extensive chapter of this thesis, the first one on Fénelon has discussed and investigated every area which could be influenced and changed by the presence of luxury, and using this the question of what is luxury, and what role does it play in the society as thought by Fénelon was

answered . As shown, Fénelon's general view of luxury is negative as he argues that there is nothing positive or virtuous about a luxurious life, and the only thing luxury does is that it causes corruption and an eventual destruction of a nation. When the first chapter concluded, the general idea the investigation of Fénelon's thought brought carried on to the second chapter, which dealt with the English perspective of luxury, however not from the standpoint of morals or politics, but health.

Cheyne was just as big of a critic of luxury as Fénelon and as I have shown throughout their respective chapters and most notably in the comparison chapter of this thesis, they shared the same stance when it came to the corrupting and 'bad' effects of luxury, most notably when discussing The Golden Age, and nourishment. The issue of quantity and quality of food consumed is central for Cheyne's thought and this is where the thought of the two thinkers is very similar, and in some instances, as shown with the art of cookery, the same. Both authors share the answer of the luxury question, even though Cheyne never explicitly says what is luxury as he is only interested in the luxurious lifestyle, which allows people to eat luxuriously as well as not exercise enough as their occupations are usually of the sedentary sort. By implying that one of the reasons for the creation and exacerbation of nervous distempers is eating and drinking more than living requires, it can be assumed that Cheyne applied this logic to the entire issue of luxury, where he therefore would share his argument with Fénelon, who claimed that luxury is everything that is not needed to fulfil the basic and natural human needs, therefore everything that is consumed after the needs of the nature are supplied is to be considered excessive, and therefore luxurious.

Based on this logic I would like to imply that Cheyne was truly inspired if not influenced by Fénelon's thought, which he applied to the human body. The question of what role does luxury play in society can also be answered using the same method. Both thinkers see the negative role luxury has and how it damages societies. The former in the destruction of a nation and the social order by the vices that accompany luxury, and the latter in the declining mental health of the inhabitants of England.

The third discussed thinker was Mandeville, whose connection to the luxury debate is self explanatory as he was the biggest advocate for the usefulness of luxury. Nevertheless, Mandeville also acknowledged the negative effects luxury has on the individual human being in terms of vices associated with luxury, however the positive effects these vices

have on the entire society are undeniable, therefore Mandeville is able to defend luxury by defending the English way of life, which prospered and flourished because of the vices being present in the nation. As Mandeville claims throughout *The Fable*, a society bereft of these vices would succumb to severe unemployment and economic downfall, along with not being able to support a large nation in the first place. Mandeville cleverly uses this argument to answer the question of the role of luxury in a society, which is that luxury provides an incentive for the inhabitants to work and serves as a promoter of social stability. Therefore a nation without luxury and its concomitant vices is unable to flourish and provide for its people as well as the people not being able to provide for the nation. The second part of the question of the luxury debate is not so easily answerable with Mandeville as he acknowledges the issues that come with designating certain things as luxurious, however what he provides instead is the explanation for each answer and the issues with them.

The comparison of Mandeville with Fénelon revealed that both authors, even though one is pro-luxury and the other one against agree with the definition of superfluities, and as it was shown Mandeville provides countless counterarguments, mostly grounded in real life situations to oppose and ridicule Fénelon in many instances, most notably on the topic of trade and war, however this is not sufficient to either prove or disprove Hont's hypothesis, and therefore further multidisciplinary research on this topic is necessary which will cover all the bases of *The Fable* and compare them with the entirety of *Adventures* in all aspects, not just in terms of philosophy. I have discussed and comprehensively investigated the three mentioned thinkers, answered the luxury question with each thinker using their original arguments obtained, and grounded in primary literature along with comparing the arguments and providing a brief discussion at the end of each comparison.

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