

and thereby making the utilitarian goal of the happiness of others the standard of moral behavior, Hutcheson contended that man, animated by his moral sense, was not a solitary but a sociable creature. By giving rise to natural bonds of affection, the moral sense made men sociable and benevolent, not autonomous and self-interested. From these premises, it followed both that society, being natural to man, preceded the formal establishment of civil government and that benevolence was its basic organizing principle. Where individual autonomy was the starting point for Locke's political thought, social interdependence provided the foundation for Hutcheson's moral philosophy. Although Hutcheson thought that men's experience with the inconvenience and uncertainties of the natural world was what eventually drove them to contract with one another to form a civil society, that society, he insisted, was based upon ties of affection and benevolence.

If Hutcheson's moral philosophy rejected several important elements of Lockean liberalism, it also included important modifications of the civic humanist tradition. Far from sharing civic humanist anxieties about the corrosive effects of commerce, Hutcheson endeavored to show that commerce was entirely compatible with traditional conceptions of republican virtue and that the prosperity and luxury that flowed from commerce were often a stimulus to virtuous behavior. For if benevolence and affection for others was dictated by the moral sense, so also, Hutcheson thought, was self-love, which he regarded as the social equivalent of gravity in the physical world. Every bit as important to the successful functioning of society as benevolence, self-love, Hutcheson argued, contributed to the public welfare not only by making men industrious but also, like benevolence, by directing them to seek the approval of others by turning their industry towards activities that were perceived as socially desirable. If self-love also gave men a strong impulse towards accumulation, that was, in itself, harmless. Indeed, he suggested, accumulation often contributed directly to the utility of society by providing the material foundations for the exertion of that liberality that was the source of so many public improvements and a spur to emulation and the spread of benevolence. By thus stressing the social benefits of self-love, Hutcheson helped both to legitimate self-interest and to justify the economic aggrandizement that was the hallmark of the commercial age. In so doing, he drew a sharp distinction between himself and Mandeville. Where Mandeville had regarded self-interest as vicious but socially useful, Hutcheson redefined self-interest as

virtuous in itself. So far from being opposed, self-interest and virtue were, in Hutcheson's view, entirely complementary.

Hutcheson's conception of the moral sense, of the supremacy of sentiment over reason in moral decision, provided the point of departure for the considerable output of moral thought produced by Scots during the latter half of the eighteenth century. This was true for *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals** (London, 1751) by David Hume; *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion** (Edinburgh, 1751) by Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696–1782); *Theory of Moral Sentiments** (Edinburgh, 1759) by Adam Smith; *An Enquiry into the Human Mind** (London, 1764), *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (Edinburgh, 1785), and *Essays upon the Active Powers of Man* (Edinburgh, 1788) by Thomas Reid (1710–96); *Essays on the Nature and Immutability of Truth* (Edinburgh, 1770) and *Dissertations, Moral and Critical** (London, 1783) by James Beattie (1735–1803); and *Sermons** (Edinburgh, 1777) by Hugh Blair (1718–1800). It was also true of the work of the Swiss natural-law theorist Jean Jacques Burlamaqui, whose *Principles of Natural Law*,* referred to in Chapter 2, was so influential among American Revolutionary leaders. To be sure, few of these writers accepted Hutcheson's theories without qualification: Kames, a lawyer, insisted that the moral sense was grounded in justice and a notion of minimal duties towards others rather than in benevolence; and Burlamaqui tried to synthesize the doctrine of moral sense with Lockean rationalism by arguing that while the moral sense suggested moral principles, reason was required to verify them.

But the deepest and most systematic break with Hutcheson came from Thomas Reid, professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow between 1764 and 1780 and father of the common sense philosophy that would be so influential in nineteenth-century American education, and his follower James Beattie, professor of moral philosophy at Marischal College, Aberdeen. For the moral sense of Hutcheson, Reid substituted common sense—defined as the shared wisdom of the community—as the agency through which men come to understand what is and is not moral and grasp the self-evident truths about man's relationship with man. In contrast to the moral sense, Reid's common sense was an essentially rational faculty, albeit it was the product of an intuitive, rather than an inductive and reflective, reason. Moral sense proponents like Hutcheson and Kames had at least suggested that the moral judgments of ordinary men were equivalent to those of the learned, but Reid took this point much