

Sympathy and Communication in Hume

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Introduction

This paper attempts to read Hume's theory of sympathy as a consistent development of the theory of perception in Hume's *Treatise*.¹ Hume's theory of perceptions enters into a new stage with his discussion of the passions in book 2. This development signifies something crucial much beyond a mere change in topic. Prior to this there were no human beings appearing in Hume's epistemology; no human beings with emotion, feeling and passion. Abstract ideas, custom, causation, the external world were all explained only through the association of perceptions. After discussing the topics that deal with the setting in which human activities are conducted, a theory that explains "blood and tears" human beings logically follows. Thus, the central theme of book 2 of the *Treatise* is passion. In this paper, I argue that Hume's theory of sympathy explains the perception of human sentiments which enables communication and moral relationships.

There still seems to be a prejudice prevailing among Hume readers that book 2 of the *Treatise* is slightly less significant compared to the other books, but this picture needs to be revised. I show its crucial significance to his entire theory. My view is that Hume's theory of passion explains sociability. In book 1, Hume deals with the physical perception *per se*, but in book 2, he deals with the social perception of physical objects. Hume deals with the external object in relation to our "social," as opposed to physical, behaviour that is based on the pleasant or painful impressions of things. This at the same time means that human relationships in general are composed in relation to the recognition of the social value of things, which leads to the foundation of the system of property. Therefore, Hume's theory of passion prepares the idea of justice. I argue that Hume's sympathy can be understood as an extension of the recognition of social value of things. The primary function of sympathy is nothing other than "perception." Hume's idea of sympathy explains the perception of other people's sentiments in like

manner to how we perceive the social value of objects. It creates a direct human relationship in the form of “communication” that consists in sharing the same sentiments. Communication enables human beings to engage in cooperative action. Hume's theory of passion, therefore, has a close link to his epistemology and moral theory. I also argue that Hume's theory of sympathy has a role to play in providing an alternative to the concept of providence.

1. The significance of Pride and Humility

Hume regards passion as a kind of perceptions. Like other perceptions in general, passion is not any innate quality, and is produced through a process that is freed from immediate reaction. Because of this openness to the world, passion can represent an individual situation, and serve as the basis of a human relationship which is the central theme in Hume's discussion of passions. Hume focuses on passion in order to deal with the human interactions that are obviously beyond physical contacts. In his dealings with passion, he denies the assumption that human beings are independent of each other. Hume sees that the perception of the self is created out of interactions of passions, in other words, the self is a product of human relationship.² This is clearly a criticism of the Hobbesian method of introspection. Hobbes believes that only when one reflects upon his own mind can one know what others think. It is true that human beings have relationship with each other also in Hobbes; they have the sentiments of pity, or benevolence. But all of those sentiments originate in a unilateral relationship toward others, and can be reducible to the desire of self-preservation.³ Hobbes writes,

Grief, for the Calamity of another, is pity; and ariseth from the imagination that the like calamity may befall himself; and therefore is called also compassion, and in the phrase of this present time a fellow-feeling.⁴

Hobbesian theory implies a hedonistic picture of human motivation, according to which all human actions are motivated by self-interest. This is because Hobbes's theory of motivation is based on a mechanical theory according to which motion is determined solely by the cause that immediately precedes it.⁵ Hume criticises this understanding because it is

based on an unwarranted picture that human perceptions are determined directly by the immediately preceding sensations.

Hume finds an initial clue for refuting Hobbesian individualism in the common phenomena of human nature that we in fact feel “pride and humility.” Pride and humility are self-directed sentiments whose counterparts, when directed to others, are love and hatred. He indicates that there is an enigma about feeling pride and humility.⁶ Pride and humility, though they are opposite sentiments, have the same object, the self. However, the self cannot be their sole cause because the object and the cause of pride and humility are different. This is a peculiar point that is not seen in the perceptions of external things; external things are at once the object and the cause of perceptions. The cause of pride must be something that causes good effects, and that of humility must be something that causes bad effects. In addition, the cause of pride and humility must be something that is close to the object of pride, because unless the object is closely related to the self, it cannot cause them; this is a corollary to the theory of causation that involves constant conjunction. Hume maintains, therefore, that there must be “double relations” of impressions and ideas: between the impression of the cause and the self, and between the idea of the cause and the self. Hume explains the double relations as follows.

That cause, which excites the passion, is related to the object, which nature has attributed to the passion; the sensation, which the cause separately produces, is related to the sensation of passion: From this double relation of ideas and impression, the passion is deriv'd. The one idea is easily converted into its cor-relative; and the one impression into that, which resembles and corresponds to it: With how much greater facility must this transition be made, where these movements mutually assist each other, and the mind receives a double impulse from the relations both of its impressions and ideas (T 287).

It is noteworthy that the transition of impressions is the central principle in Hume's theory of causation. Hume mentions that the hypothesis of the double relation can be compared to the theory of causation (Cf. T 289). In Hume's example, someone's good house causes a pleasant impression to

others. The vivacity of the pleasant impression is discharged through the relation of ideas between the object and the self, to the idea of the self, and thus produces an impression of pride. In this way, one feels pride in oneself. In pride and humility, the impressions of pleasant object that initially belong to others are transferred into the self of the possessor as the subjective impression of pride. The impression of pride, in turn, gives rise to the idea of the self as the object of pride that is the recognition that one is praiseworthy. Regarding the relationship between the object and the subject, impressions of objects are easily transferred to the impressions of the self. Here is seen an interchangeability of the *loci* of sentiments. Phenomena of pride and humility evidence that perception occurs prior to the idea of the self.

Feeling pride is to perceive other people's impression as one's own. To be proud of something is to feel pleasant impression about oneself because of some object that is related to oneself. Unless other people find pleasant impressions of the object, one cannot feel proud about it. In this sense, pride is a social product. In the process, mere physical objects are transformed into social value. The social nature of pride and humility creates a pattern of social behaviour regarding the possession of external things; people naturally prefer to possess those things that cause pride, and to avoid those that cause humility. Therefore, this eventually leads to the foundation of a system of justice.⁷ The mechanism that causes pride or humility can be applied to human behaviours that cause pleasant or painful impressions to other people. Those behaviours that cause pleasant effects produce pride, and those that cause painful effects produce humility. Therefore, human behaviours can be socially evaluated in accordance with their effects on other people.⁸ In this way, morality follows the same mechanism as the evaluation that a possession of external objects have upon human beings.

2. Explanation and Justification of Sympathy

After discussing pride and humility, Hume deals with “the love of fame” in section 11 of the *Treatise*. This topic is a variation of the time-honoured topic of reputation of Locke's *Essay*.⁹ The concept of sympathy appears for the first time in the section which can be rightly regarded as an application of the principle of pride and humility. Some commentators suspect that Hume does not give a definition of sympathy despite the fact that he attaches

great importance to the concept.¹⁰ However, it seems to be Hume's strategy to explore sympathy in the general function of passions. In other words, for Hume, it is necessary to think of sympathy in reference to the human experiences of the transference of passions.

The basic function of Humean sympathy is alleged to convert ideas into impressions.¹¹ This function cannot be ignored because Hume does not think that sentiment leaps from mind to mind. However, in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of sympathy, it is necessary to clarify the conditions that produce sympathy as well as its practical implications. Hume thinks that function of sympathy is to receive the sentiments of others.

No quality of human mind is more remarkable, both in itself and in its consequences, than that propensity we have to sympathize with others, and to receive by communication their inclinations and sentiments, however different from, or even contrary to our own (T 316).

It is crucial to understand that passions are a peculiar object of perception in that they have completely different qualities in accordance to the perspective of the observer. The same passion has a completely different quality between the person who causes it and one who merely observes it. For example when we witness the misfortune of other people, we are capable of having painful moral sentiments, of which we have no direct experience of the cause. There must be some mechanism that makes this possible. Hume's concept of sympathy should first of all be regarded as attempt to identify this mechanism; for an individual to understand the sentiment of others, that person has to have the capacity to feel other's sentiments as his own in some way or other. However, it has to be further clarified what it means that to have the same sentiments with others. Sentiments themselves are not the entity that can be identifiable in terms of strength or quality. It is well known that Hume makes no difference between impressions and ideas except in relation to the force or liveliness. Hume says,

The idea of ourselves is always intimately present to us, and conveys a sensible degree of vivacity to the idea of any other subject to which we are

related. This lively idea changes by degrees into a real impression; these two kinds of perception being in a great measure the same, and differing only in their degree of force and vivacity (T 354).

It is important to note that the equivalence of ideas and impressions means that there is no difference in terms of their cognitive contents.¹² The difference that sympathy brings to ideas is not mere increase of strength; it is the change of attachment of the ideas. Before the working of sympathy, sentiments of others are known only as ideas that belong to other people. But after the working of sympathy, the same ideas become impressions that belong to the self because one's present sentiments are always impressions. Therefore, sympathy is a means to share a similar attitude toward the situation of others.¹³ Through sympathy, people are motivated to act as though they are the person facing the situation in the manner that is peculiar to the first person. What actually takes place in sympathy is not so much the mere increase of vivacities as this change of vectors of the sentiments. Therefore, it is possible to regard sympathy as a mechanism that makes people adopt the perception without taking into account the difference between the self and the other.¹⁴

Hume is conscious that he has no fewer rivals in his theory of sympathy than in other topics.¹⁵ There are ample evidences in the *Treatise* that Hume is very aware of the criticism that his theory of sympathy can contradict our common experiences. In the first place, it is necessary to remember that Hume notes pride and humility because they are common phenomena. He takes it for granted that sympathy “is not only conspicuous in children... but also in men of the greatest judgement and understanding (T 316).” He even insists that opinions as well as sentiments are shared among people by sympathy.

Hume supplies a very elaborate explanation why the fact that we do not always feel as other people does not contradict his basic theory. Most briefly, Hume ascribes the dysfunction of sympathy to the insufficiency of the double relation of impressions and ideas (Cf. T 290-294). If the insufficient double relation causes the dysfunction, it proves that the double relation is an essential condition of sympathy as claimed by Hume. Hume also admits a contrary force to sympathy, called “the principle of

comparison (T 372f.)” that works to prevent the working of sympathy. The principle of malice and envy explains our tendency to enjoy the misery, and to hate the happiness of others. By this principle, Hume provides his alternative to the Hobbesian thesis that human beings are naturally selfish. According to Hume, malice and envy are not the same as selfishness, because they are not natural. They are compatible with the working of sympathy. In order to envy other people's happiness, we need to feel the pleasure of others by sympathy, even if it results in the sentiment of malice by comparison with the less gratifying situation of oneself. Therefore, these counter-examples in our daily experience support the validity of Hume's theory of sympathy.

Hobbes asserts that sympathy is reduced to the sentiment of self-love. He claims that sympathy occurs from imaging that the same thing happens to ourselves; there is no sympathy that shares another person's happiness without reference to self-interest. He sees sympathy as in fact a form of self-love; deriving pleasure from the happiness of others, which is originally the Epicurean point of view.¹⁶ This opposition reveals an important point that unless one acts with no regard for one's self-interest, it cannot be properly regarded as the working of sympathy. In other words, the working of sympathy is equivalent to the denial of egoistic-individualism. This also leads to a fundamental problem whether the good is pleasant and naturally done on its own, apart from self-interests. Hume criticises the egoist-interpretation of sympathy in the *Enquiries*¹⁷ as follows.

Now as these advantages are enjoyed by the person possessed of the character, it can never be self-love which renders the prospect of them agreeable to us, the spectators, and prompts our esteem and approbation. No force of imagination can convert us into another person, and make us fancy, that we, being that person, reap benefit from those valuable qualities, which belong to him. Or if it did, no celebrity of imagination could immediately transport us back, into ourselves, and make us love and esteem the person, as different from us (E 234).

In short, Hume denies the possibility of egoistic-individualism because it is incompatible with the nature of imagination to reduce other love to self-

love.¹⁸ Furthermore, this hypothesis cannot explain the sympathy of painful sentiments; based on the egoistic picture of human beings, it cannot happen that one feels pain in order to make oneself painful. Adam Smith allies with Hume in refusing to ascribe self-love to the sentiments of sympathy. Smith says,

Sympathy, however, cannot, in any sense, be regarded as a selfish principle... this imaginary change is not supposed to happen to me in my own person and character, but in that of the person with whom I sympathize... I consider what I should suffer if I were you, and I not only change circumstances with you, but I change persons and characters. My grief, therefore, is entirely upon your account, and not in the least upon my own. It is not, therefore, in the least selfish. A man may sympathize with a woman in child-bed; though it is impossible that he should conceive himself as suffering her pains in his own proper person and character (TMS p. 317).¹⁹

Obviously, it is absurd to reduce the pleasure and pain of other people to self-interest.²⁰ However, the theoretical framework of self-interest theory is by no means absurd. The Hobbesian explanation is not illogical but only a due consequence of a strict individualist framework. In order to refute the individualist explanation, it is necessary to provide a theory for individuals to obtain non-individual sentiments. Hobbes's strict nominalist position prevents him from giving non-individual perspective.²¹ This is exactly what Hume tries to indicate by his theory of indirect passions. Hume's theory of perceptions that comes prior to his concept of individuals is capable of identifying the foundation that is common among different individuals. Hence, with the theory of sympathy, Hume breaks the individualist framework of society with its implication of the social contract theory.²²

There is another objection to the Humean concept of sympathy. According to this objection, even if sympathy does exist, it is not of any contagious nature as Hume maintains, but stems from the rational judgement of the individuals. This is a Smithian criticism to Hume. More fundamentally, this criticism is concerned with the relationship between sentiments and reason. To take the conclusion first, Hume considers this a confusion of the explanation and justification of sympathy. The point is that

sympathy is a perception and not a result of rational judgement. Perception is fundamentally imposed on human beings: we do not have a free control over our perceptions. If, for example, a person perceives merely some percussive sound, when hearing some other person “crying” out of distress, it does not mean that the person perceives the sentiments of the other person properly. It is possible that we judge the crying is not a proper reaction to the situation. Thus, the judgement, although impossible without the perception, is different from the perception to the situation. Hume's sympathy is concerned with original perception as material for judgement.

The Humean “general point of view” represents the situation in this proper manner. Therefore, sympathy implies the general point of view. Without sympathy based on the general point of view, we have only our individual view, and cannot behave “humanly.”²³ Just as those who do not feel hot by fire never fails to misconduct with fire, those who cannot understand another person's feeling via sympathy can never communicate with others. To obtain a proper perception is to make common kind of reaction. We will not be able to deal with fire properly unless we feel hot by it. In the same manner, if we do not feel sad by seeing people's distress, we do not deal with the situation morally.²⁴ In this way, Hume conceives morality in the similar manner as causal reaction.

As a pleasant, agreeable or useful object causes in us a pleasant perception, so we feel pleasure by perceiving happy face, and feel pain, by perceiving sad face. This idea is expanded to Hume's basic tenet that “utility pleases” in his moral theory.²⁵ To approve something means that we try to advance it, and to disapprove something means that we try to avoid it. In this way, sympathy is closely connected to other-regarding behaviour. In other words, to have sympathy means to act in the place of the person with whom we are sympathizing. Therefore, moral behaviour is to take the sentiments of other people through sympathy as the motivation of one's own behaviour.

There seems to be another problem in accepting Hume's theory. It is certain that there are cases in which we should not feel sympathy. For example, we should not sympathize with a gratified thief. Because we understand that not all of our sympathy may be appropriate, we seek for a standard of justification of our sentiments. Hume's theory of sympathy

implies the denial of human rationality because the mechanism of sympathy is common with animals.²⁶ This is why Hume elaborates at length to explain the exceptions to his theory.

In Hume's theory of sympathy, there is no worry that we are inevitably controlled by wrong or inappropriate sentiments. It is not because the wrong sentiments are not infectious, nor because we can avoid being infected by wrong sentiments, but because other sentiments are infectious as well. The wrong or right of sentiment is not determined, when a sentiment is considered singularly. It is realised only by understanding the fact that if some sentiments are inappropriate, other sentiments will emerge to take counter effects. This is possible because sympathy is not restricted to present or immediate sentiments of a closed circle. Though there is no universal sympathy, we can in principle share sentiments of all those concerned with it in the end.

“Wrong sentiments” can be understood as lacking generality. Wrong sentiments are disapproved by most members of the society, and are corrected through their massive opposing influences, which also presuppose the working of sympathy. For example, sympathy with the gratification of a successful thief is more than nullified by sympathy with the repugnant sentiments of his victims, and by sympathy with ordinary people who accept the moral norm that prohibits stealing. Thus, the norm is derived from the sentiments of the general populace. Hume denies any other standard against which the moral value of a sentiment is determined.²⁷ In this way, sympathy can bring sentiments of the overall effects of the situation to a “judicious observer.” Hume says,

In order to cause a transition of passions, there is requir'd a double relation of impressions and ideas, nor is one relation sufficient to produce this effect. But that we may understand the full force of this double relation, we must consider, that 'tis not the present sensation alone or momentary pain or pleasure, which determines the character of any passion, but the whole bent or tendency of it from the beginning to the end (T 381).

There is always a tension between explanation and justification in Hume. The relationship between explanation and justification is a variation of the

“is-ought” problem. Hume's theory of belief is a theory for explaining the belief rather than a theory for showing which among the competing beliefs is justifiable.²⁸ Hume focuses on the elucidation of human beliefs because even the justified belief must again be a belief. In sympathy, it is more important to explore the natural mechanism of the perception of sentiments, which by its implication can serve as a standard of justification.

3. Sympathy and Communication

Pride and humility are produced through the transition of impressions between object and subject; the impression that is entertained regarding the object, is transferred into an impression regarding the self. In other words, objective sentiments become subjective through sympathy. Impressions themselves belong neither to the subject nor to the object. In this way, sympathy provides a point of view that comprehends particular perspectives. Hume says,

in sympathy our own person is not the object of any passion, nor is there any thing, that fixes our attention on ourselves; as in the present case, where we are suppos'd to be actuated with pride or humility. Ourselves, independent of the perception of every other object, is in reality nothing: For which reason we must turn our view to external objects; and 'tis natural for us to consider with most attention such as lie contiguous to us, or resemble us (T 340-341).

It is obvious that Hume thinks that the perception of ourselves crucially depends on the relation with object around which we are placed. He says that the change of the ideas into impressions “proceeds from certain views and reflections (T 317).” Hume insists that the following maxim must be established,

That 'tis not the present sensation or momentary pain or pleasure, which determines the character of any passion, but the general bent or tendency of it from the beginning to the end (T 384-385, bold letters mine).

Therefore, sympathy is a development of the sentiments of people in

general and reactions from one sentiment. This means that one sentiment and situation are seen not from a single perspective, but are seen and considered from a general point of view. In this sense, sympathy is not limited to the present sentiments and situation, and can extend even to the people who are not present.

'Tis certain, that sympathy is not always limited to the present moment, but that we often feel by communication the pains and pleasures of others, which are not in being, and which we only anticipate by the force of imagination (T 385).

This expansion of the idea of sympathy suggests the expansion of human relationships. Sympathy introduces a public dimension to a human relationship by liberating human sentiments from the direct and merely personal reaction to the situation. This represents the generalisation of the point of view. In this way, particular impressions obtain general recognition. Therefore, sympathy consists in the creation of a general point of view that takes the form of the circulation of custom and shared opinion in a society.

Hume confirms the relation-centred character of passions. Sentiments of other people are transmitted through relations where they are placed. Sympathy is not only produced through relations; it has a corollary effect of strengthening relationships. Sympathy is the basis of human relationship by enabling communication that is one of the central concepts in Hume's *Treatise*. It is to be remembered that the primary function of general ideas is to make communication possible.²⁹ On the basis of communication, human relations and society are established. Because of physical limitations, individual human beings can have direct sentiments only of themselves. Without sympathy, other people appear to be no different from mere bodies with arbitrary movement. Communication that is based on sympathy as a form of trans-subjectivity enables us to attain mutual understanding. What is communicated through sympathy is not restricted to mere sentiments; on the basis of sentiments, opinions of people also become communicable.

Sympathy also serves as a foundation of our beliefs. This is true of our all beliefs including what is called strict sciences. Science cannot be established without taking into account the sentiments of other people. Suppose you are

a political scientist, how can you analyse the political situation without relying on data, whose bulk parts are composed of other people's opinion? Similarly, in all human endeavours, one's intellectual appreciation is founded upon the sentiment of sympathy. If you are historian, can you witness in person any event that occurred before you were born? If someone maintains that only truth matters, why is it that this truth matters for him rather than that truth? Or is there any one absolute truth that covers everything? Why, then, are there many activities, or "everything," rather than just one? This is possible because we naturally receive the sentiments of other people in their original form. To deny the Humean notion of sympathy is to deny a fundamental condition for science. Therefore, for Hume, sympathy provides essential materials for sciences. Hume criticises the theories that allege reason to be their source, because they pretend that they can do without sympathy, though they derive their opinion surreptitiously from sympathy.³⁰

The other fundamental function of the Humean sympathy is to cause partiality, not impartiality, of sentiments in individuals. Partiality means to take care of a particular need. Hume's morality is based on partiality as there is no impression that corresponds to impartiality. Everything owes its existence to some partiality, and every sentiment is partial including the moral sentiments.³¹ Where there is a partiality or an imbalance of sentiments, nature tends to work to put them right.³² As long as human life continues, there will always be some imbalance that requires adjustment.

Partiality inevitably accompanies imbalance as its by-produce, which needs to be dealt with.³³ Hume thinks that human behaviour is motivated by that imbalance, rather than by impartial ideal that has no root in reality. It is to be remembered that the general point of view occupied originally as a means for correcting our biased perceptions. The most human beings can do for themselves is to try to meet this requirement. Parents attend their children, and workers listen to their colleagues, to name just two examples. All we do is to address the imbalance issued by sentiments of our friends, family, neighbours, and others, with the provision of justice in civil society.³⁴ It is impossible to act for those particular distant people whom we do not have sympathy for. Also, people are justified in taking charge only of their "proximity," because "distant" people have their own neighbours. In this

way, all are placed under the mutual care of each other.

Therefore, it is a mistake to think that the motivation for human activities consists in utility, or in any dogmatic ideal, religious or ideological. It is also groundless to suppose that some unseen providence will automatically work to produce the best result out of the imbalance. On the basis of the adjustment, the redistribution of property can take place, and market can function properly.³⁵ The real authority of opinion consists in this function as well; opinions do not indicate the moral law or the standard of morality, but represent people's sentiments.³⁶ In all of these, Humean sympathy signifies a vehicle that lets the excess or deficit of passions proceed its way into equilibrium.

Ultimately, there is no other ground but sympathy with others that one engages in social activities.³⁷ Precisely because of this, to deceive others by pretending false emotions or opinions for self-interest is a vice. In the fundamental manner, trust is the fundamental principle of human relationships. People are not responsible to believe the false emotions or opinions of others and to act on them, because the system of human nature binds everyone. We cannot decide whether or not to sympathise with another's opinion in the first instance; sympathy occurs prior to judgement.³⁸ With the assumption of sympathy as a natural human phenomenon, lying is treason against human nature. Thus, Hume's theory of sympathy is very fundamental to his theory of morals; without the working of sympathy, the system of human interaction can hardly be sustained.³⁹

4. Concluding Remarks

The central significance of Hume's theory of passion is to explain the social recognition of physical objects and human actions. We have seen that because of the transference of passions, physical objects come to assume a social significance. Human relationships are organised pivoting on the property relationship. As can be seen in Hume's theory of justice, human beings are given social recognition as a property owner.⁴⁰ Therefore, human relationships are a reflection of property relationships. Hume's theory of passions is first of all a theory for explaining this mechanism.

Sympathy is a special case of the transference of passions that have the sentiments of other people as their original objects. The most significant

function of sympathy is the recognition of the sentiments of other people. The morality of a person is determined by the effects of his own action. In terms of perceptions, both property and action are qualities that produce some pleasant or painful sentiments in others. In accordance with the effects of one's actions, one is accorded with moral recognition by other people. Therefore, sympathy enables us to have a recognition of the moral quality of other people.

Evaluation of actions and possessions are incorporated into the human world through sympathy. Sympathy provides necessary perceptions that produce a variety of human communication on the basis of which moral norms and institutions are created. It has become clear that sympathy indicates the direction of human sentiments that create stability among human relationship, thus Hume's theory of sympathy replaces the non-human concept of providence.⁴¹

Notes

- 1 David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978). Hereafter abbreviated "T" with page numbers inserted parenthetically in the text.
- 2 See Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, " 'Pride Produces the Idea of Self ': Hume on Moral Agency", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 68, No.3: September 1990. pp. 255-269.
- 3 Hobbes, T., *Leviathan*, Cambridge University press, 1996, p. 45. For a historical background explanation, see Jennifer A. Herdt, *Religion and Fraction in Hume's Moral Philosophy*, Cambridge University press, 1997. esp. Chapter 1.
- 4 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 43 (part1, ch. 6.).
- 5 In fact, this is why Hobbes' explanation of society is not described as a historical process but as a sudden creation by covenant.
- 6 As pride and humility represent cardinal vice and virtue in Christian ethics, this can be regarded as Hume's challenge to Christian ethics.
- 7 Cf. Hume, *Treatise*, book 2. part 1. section 10.
- 8 Cf. Hume, *Treatise*, book 2. part 1. section 7.
- 9 Cf. *Essay*, book 2. chapter 28. paragraph 10-12. John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch, Oxford University Press, 1975. Hereafter abbreviated "Essay" with book, part, section and paragraph numbers inserted parenthetically.
- 10 P. Mercer, *Hume's Concept of Sympathy*, p. 437. in S. Tweyman.
- 11 Cf., D. G. C. Macnabb, *David Hume — his theory of knowledge and morality —*, Gregg Revival, 1991, p. 186.
- 12 Cf. Paul Ardal, *Passion and Value in Hume's Treatise*, Edinburgh University Press, 1966.

- p. 43.
- 13 Stroud asserts that the feeling of sympathy is “the same general affective quality”. See Barry Stroud, *Hume*, Routledge, 1977, p. 198.
 - 14 Cf. B. Stroud, 1977, p. 198, R. J. Lipkin criticises this view. However, Lipkin's argument is defective as a Hume interpretation because he deliberately ignores the difference of the concept between the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry*. See, his “Altruism and Sympathy in Hume's Ethics,” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 65, 1987, pp. 18-32, Esp. pp 19-20.
 - 15 Other than Francis Hutcheson who he once seeks for an academic patronage, other opponents include, Hobbes, Mandeville, Shaftesbury and, Joseph Butler before him. Moreover, Hume's theory of sympathy is harshly criticised by his later generations, most of all by Jeremy Bentham who owes the basic idea of utilitarianism to Hume. Bentham criticises the principle of sympathy and antipathy as “caprice”, “sentimentatism”, or “ipsedixitism”. Post humorously, some commentators ascribe utilitarianism to Hume mostly when they criticise him. So, Hume is blamed from both sides. See his *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, in *Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*, Thoemmes Press, 1955. Vol. 1, pp. 4-9.
 - 16 Jennifer A. Herdt points out that this is why Hutcheson opposes Hume. See Herdt 1997, p. 52.
 - 17 David Hume, *Enquiries concerning Human Understanding and the Principles of Morals*, ed. P. H. Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
 - 18 Hume takes another example of a loving mother who is taking care of her sick child to her own death.
 - 19 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Liberty Fund, 1984. 7.3.1.4. Later, we will examine whether this is possible.
 - 20 Jennifer Herdt says, “If it is absurd to say that we approve of someone in order to feel pleasure, it is yet more absurd to say that we disapprove of someone in order to feel pain.” p. 58.
 - 21 See my “The Epistemological Foundation of Justice in Hobbes, Locke, and Hume”, *ICU Comparative Culture* 36, 2004.
 - 22 See my “Justice and the Stability of Property in Hume”, *Bulletin of Keiwa College* 9, 2000.
 - 23 It is arguable that Hume uses “humanity” in *Enquiry* in this sense.
 - 24 This relates to the problem of the sensible knave who deliberately takes advantage of morality. Hume's theory of sympathy implies those knave cannot be happy for his criminal success based on miseries of other people. See Chapter 9, Conclusion of *An Enquiry concerning the Principle of Morals*.
 - 25 Section 5 of *An Enquiry of the Principle of Morals* reads “Why Utility Pleases”. Obviously, the answer consists in the same principle as sympathy. This is another evidence Hume retains sympathy in *Enquiries*.
 - 26 Hume discusses the pride and humility of animals in the same way as humans. Cf. (T 2.1.12), “Of the pride and humility of animals”.
 - 27 This makes a sharp contrast to Adam Smith's maintenance that the judgement of our

conscience can go against the opinion of all mankind.

- 28 See my "Hume's Theory of Belief and Causation: A Moral Reading", *Bulletin of Keiwa College* 11, 2002.
- 29 See my "Custom as the Humean Alternative to Locke's Abstract Ideas", *Bulletin of Keiwa College* 10, 2001.
- 30 The situation is the same with regard to the idea of objectivity.
- 31 Adam Smith, on the other hand, asserts that impartiality is the fundamental moral quality.
- 32 In fact, this is the basic idea of justice.
- 33 Locke says that "uneasiness determines the Will." See his *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, (ed) Peter H. Nidditch, Oxford University Press, 1975, 2. 21. 31.
- 34 In "Of Parties in General", Hume remarks that one of the many dangers of a divided society is that members of such a society have difficulty in maintaining a stable sympathetic understanding of the needs and interests of those around them: when interests are divided, it becomes difficult to reconcile self-interest and public interest. See Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, "Pride Produces the Idea of Self: Hume on Moral Agency", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 68, No. 3, 1990. p. 267.
- 35 See John Grey, "Hume on Liberty and the Market - a Twenty-First Century Perspective", *The David Hume Institute*, Hume Occasional Paper No. 60, 2002.
- 36 This is Hume's criticism of Lockean social contract theory.
- 37 This has to do with Quine's thesis that the validity of a statement can only be determined by the fact whether it is accepted in the community. See his *Word and Object*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1960.
- 38 This is a crucial criticism of Adam Smith. His theory of impartial spectator ignores this fundamental fact of human nature, and therefore fails. It is an application of moral practice, but cannot explain morality itself.
- 39 Hume's theory of sympathy is very fundamental to his theory of promise, without the working of sympathy, the system of promise cannot be explained. Hobbes stipulated the system of promise as an artificial arrangement, precisely because there is no sympathy in his system.
- 40 See my "Justice and the stability of property in Hume", *Bulletin of Keiwa College* 9, 2000.
- 41 I am grateful to Jonathan Hearn, Russell Keat, and Allan Blondé for their various comments and suggestions on earlier versions of this paper.