

**Commerce and literature, proposal for a paper
Mikko Tolonen, University of Helsinki and St Andrews: "Commercial
aspect of *Fable of the bees*"**

Fable of the bees is an important book, resonating in many ways eighteenth century European literature. Little or close to nothing has been said in scholarship about the marketing strategies employed by Mandeville's publishers or what impact the success of the *Fable* had on later editions of the work. This aspect, however, is crucial, if we want to understand this work as a physical object. To study this aspect of the book is relevant also for intellectual history because the promotion and marketing of the *Fable* altered the shape of the work.

The main focus of the paper is on Jacob Tonson jr. as the publisher of the *Fable of the bees*. Tonson became the publisher of the book in 1723 when he bought the copyright from the author after the charges at the grand jury against the author had been cleared. This paper offers a new interpretation of this issue of copyright ownership contrary to what has previously been asserted in Mandeville scholarship. Tonson as the copyright owner of later editions of the *Fable* can be established, along other evidence, by paying attention to Tonson's publishing profile: their publishing house simply did not act as a trade publisher.

At the same time, the paper focuses on the interesting question of the title of the *Part II of the Fable of the bees*. Why was it called such, since it is a different work altogether? The chronological treatment of the subject ends in a speculation about the possibility of a very unusual method of marketing: that of title-leaf advertising and its connection to a pirated Edinburgh edition of the *Fable* in 1750s; title-leaf advertising being a practice that is sometimes discussed in scholarship, but of which we have very little evidence.

For a wider audience, Mandeville makes an interesting case-study of eighteenth-century British bookselling strategies promoting a versatile author of different genres, such as medical texts, pamphlets, poems, translations, newspapers and philosophical dialogues.