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GRADUATE COLLEGE

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AN ALTERNATIVE WORLD VIEW

A DISSERTATION  
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SHAFTESBURY AND COSMIC TORYISM:  
AN ALTERNATIVE WORLD VIEW

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## PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to define cosmic toryism and briefly to indicate some of its sources and influence as a prelude to a larger study and history of the idea. The third Earl of Shaftesbury is the best known and clearest exponent of cosmic toryism and hence his works are the focal point of my work--a status they will continue to hold in the larger work. Cosmic toryism was a world-view that competed with the new science and philosophy of Newton and Locke at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Its foundations are both similar to and at variance with the better-known beliefs. It was a philosophy designed for those who could not accept the cold implications of empiricism, but who, nonetheless, accepted rationalism. It is a backward-looking philosophy which, seeing the apogee of civilization in classical times, was determined to bring the contemporary world to that peak of civilization. As such, it was influential and gained many prominent adherents at a time when Newtonianism was not, as so often believed, universally accepted. It was, however,



ultimately a failure--along with much of the Enlightenment. But its failure does not discount its importance for its adherents in their struggle to understand the contemporary world.

"If such be the will of God,  
so let it be."

Epictetus

## CHAPTER I

### LIFE AND WORKS

Grandson of Dryden's "Achitopel," Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, was born in his grandfather's London residence on the 26th of February, 1671.<sup>1</sup> The first Earl immediately placed his hopes for the future of the family-line in his grandson, for his own son, whom Dryden characterized as a "shapeless lump," was a man of

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<sup>1</sup>No biography of Shaftesbury exists, although I understand Professor Robert Voitle of the University of North Carolina is working on one. Shaftesbury's son wrote a sketch of his life to prefix to posthumous editions of the Characteristics: it remains the primary source of biographical information on the third Earl. Manuscripts of the sketch are in the third Earl's papers in the Shaftesbury Archive, Public Record Office, PRO 21/225 and 21/226. The sketch, never included in the Characteristics, was published by Benjamin Rand, ed., The Life, Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury (London: 1900), pp. xvii-xxxi. Other sketches of Shaftesbury's life, occasionally adding to the fourth Earl's account, can be found in Leslie Stephen's article on Shaftesbury in the Dictionary of National Biography, vol. IV; Thomas Fowler, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson (London: 1882); and R. L. Brett, The Third Earl of Shaftesbury: A Study in Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory (London: 1951), as well as in the following pages.

few parts and a weak constitution;<sup>2</sup> thus in 1674 the first Earl formally assumed guardianship of young Shaftesbury<sup>3</sup> and immediately entrusted his upbringing to John Locke, his secretary and confidant. Locke recommended that Mrs. Elizabeth Birch,<sup>4</sup> the daughter of an Oxford schoolmaster, who was fluent in Greek and Latin should take charge of the boy and begin his education. Mrs. Birch was clearly successful for, according to the fourth Earl, "my father made so good a progress in his learning that he could read with ease both the Latin and Greek tongues when eleven years old."<sup>5</sup> Shaftesbury himself commented that he and his six brothers and sisters were "from the earliest infancy" governed by Mr. Locke "according to his own principles (since published by him<sup>6</sup>). . . . I was his more

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<sup>2</sup>Heretofore everyone has said that the cause of the second Earl's illness is unknown; however, I have encountered a letter that indicates that he was afflicted with gout by his mid-teens, which certainly would account for at least part of his ailments. In a letter to John Locke, the family physician, the second Earl's mother-in-law, Lady Rutland, mentioned his gout. 10 March 1671. PRO 4/ 210.

<sup>3</sup>PRO 20/2. Although technically Shaftesbury is only Lord Ashley until 1699 when he inherited the Earldom, I have chosen to refer to him as Shaftesbury throughout to avoid confusion.

<sup>4</sup>Nothing is known about Mrs. Birch but what the fourth Earl tells us. Rand, p. xix.

<sup>5</sup>Rand, p. xix.

<sup>6</sup>Thoughts Concerning Education, 1693.

peculiar charge, being the eldest son taken by my grandfather and bred under his immediate care, Mr. Locke having the absolute direction of my education. . . ."<sup>7</sup>

It is worth noting that young Shaftesbury's education does not appear to have been wholly in accord with Locke's precepts for the education of a gentleman. Locke felt that a gentleman should display four characteristics as a result of his education: virtue, wisdom, breeding, and learning.<sup>8</sup> These characteristics were to be achieved by a careful upbringing guided by a tutor-governor in conjunction with the parents.

The great work of a governor is to fashion the carriage and form the mind; to settle in his pupil good habits and the principles of virtue and wisdom; to give him by little and little a view of mankind, and work him into a love and imitation of what is excellent and praiseworthy; and, in the prosecution of it, to give him vigor, activity, and industry. The studies which he sets him upon are but, as it were, the exercises of his faculties, and employment of his time, to keep him from sauntering and idleness, to teach him application and accustom him to take pains, and to give him some little taste of what his own industry must perfect. For who expects that under a tutor a young gentleman should be an accomplished critic, orator, or logician? go to the bottom of metaphysics, natural philosophy, or mathematics, or be a

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<sup>7</sup>Letter to Le Clerc, 8 February 1705. PRO 22/2.

<sup>8</sup>John Locke, On Politics and Education, ed. by Howard R. Penniman (New York: 1947), p. 319. Also Maurice Cranston, John Locke: a biography (London: 1957), pp. 239-245.

master in history or chronology? though something of each of these is to be taught him. But it is only to open the door, that he may look in, and as it were begin an acquaintance, but not to dwell there. And a governor would be much blamed that should keep his pupil too long and lead him too far in most of them. But of good breeding, knowledge of the world, virtue, industry, and a love of reputation, he cannot have too much; and if he have these he will not long want what he needs or desires of the other.<sup>9</sup>

The pupil should be reared in a Spartan atmosphere, which encouraged manliness, avoiding all effeminacy, but without beatings or cruelty. The principle task was to instill virtue, wisdom and good breeding: learning is "the least part" of the education. Schools were to be avoided: it is not "worth while to hazard your son's innocence and virtue for a little Greek and Latin."<sup>10</sup> In terms of formal learning, Locke stressed the need to gain a thorough command of English first; then the pupil should acquire an equally thorough knowledge of French and Latin by conversational methods. He considered Greek to be of use only to a scholar: another reason for avoiding schools, where "much ado is made about a little Latin and Greek."<sup>11</sup> Finally Locke objected to the custom of the grand tour which usually occurred between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one;

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<sup>9</sup>Locke, pp. 281-82.

<sup>10</sup>Locke, p. 253.

<sup>11</sup>Locke, p. 331.

at an age when a young man is too eager to secure and enjoy his freedom to benefit from travel. It would be better to go as a boy under sixteen with a tutor or else alone when over twenty-one.<sup>12</sup>

While practically none of the details of Shaftesbury's education, such as what he read, are known, several facts indicate that Locke's principles were not adhered to as rigidly as Shaftesbury suggests. In his later life he certainly showed that Locke's stress on virtue and good breeding was successful. The third Earl was nothing if not a virtuous man and the main thrust of his writings was to disseminate virtue to the world at large. Also censure of effeminacy appears constantly in his works as being contrary to virtue. Still major deviations from the theory occurred. The first and perhaps most notable one in light of Locke's repeated disdainful remarks about the study of Greek was Shaftesbury's early mastery of the language--a mastery which colored his entire career.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, the first Earl withdrew his grandson from Mrs. Birch's tutelage and sent him to a private school at the age of eleven. After his grandfather's death in 1683 Shaftesbury's father sent him to Winchester: he remained there for three years,

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<sup>12</sup>Locke, pp. 384-85.

<sup>13</sup>Indeed Shaftesbury would later caustically comment on Locke's lack of knowledge of the Greeks. PRO 22/7. Below, Chapter IV.

apparently miserable due to the taunts of his schoolmates, who insulted him "on his grandfather's account, whose memory was very odious to the zealots for despotic power."<sup>14</sup> Thirdly, Shaftesbury embarked on a grand tour at the age of fifteen which lasted for three years; most of his time was spent in France and Italy, although he also visited Locke in Rotterdam. The tour, however, was not wasted as Locke feared such tours might be, for Shaftesbury acquired such a thorough knowledge of French that "in France he was often taken for a native" and in Italy he developed a strong affection for Italian culture, particularly that of the Renaissance. Finally, his youth apparently was not Spartan: in a letter of 1704 he recalled that "the most contagious of all airs has been my natural one: the worst of nourishments has fed my mind from its first rise. Courts formed it: courts and the pleasures of courts were its early milk, its very essence. Ambition was the best ingredient, the soundest part of such a soul. Effeminacy, luxury and those other sirens drew the remaining part, and were the counter-springs of so disordered and wretched a machine."<sup>15</sup> Locke did not intend his principles to be applied uniformly--he

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<sup>14</sup>Rand, p. xix.

<sup>15</sup>PRO 22/7. This lengthy letter to "Teresias" (an unknown figure, who seems to have been a monk or some other clerical personage judging from the remarks in the letter) is a candid statement of Shaftesbury's intellectual development. It was clearly not intended for publication, as his remarks to Le Clerc on Locke were.



expected variations according to the individual. He may well have recognized Shaftesbury's scholarly traits early and encouraged them, and he certainly did not have the influence over Shaftesbury's father that he had with his grandfather. The fact remains that Shaftesbury was never a disciple of Locke--as has often been noted--and the deviations in the educational pattern may partially account for the intellectual estrangement of the two.

Shaftesbury returned from his grand tour in 1689. The next five years of his life are almost a total blank. His son tells us that he was offered a seat in Parliament, but chose instead to devote himself entirely to study. Again, most unfortunately, there is nothing to indicate what he studied. Given his later interests, one must assume, however, that much time was spent on the Greek and Latin classics, particularly the Stoics, and on the Cambridge Platonists. He may also have done some writing, for as his son notes his major ethical treatise, An Inquiry concerning Virtue, was drafted "when he was but twenty years of age."<sup>16</sup>

In 1695 Shaftesbury entered the House of Commons as a member from Poole, Dorset, one of the seats in which the family had an interest. His entry into Parliament marked the beginning of his active interest in politics. Although

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<sup>16</sup>Rand, p. xxiii.

ill health prevented him from serving in Parliament for more than a few years, Shaftesbury maintained a strong interest in politics until his death. His correspondence is full of letters commenting on political affairs and letters concerning the choice of representatives for seats in which the family had interests, Poole, Weymouth, and Shaftesbury.<sup>17</sup> He was active in the Commons until the Parliament's dissolution in 1698 and is credited, by his son at least, with playing an important role in the passage of the Treason Act of 1695.<sup>18</sup> The strain of constant attendance, however, adversely affected his health: Shaftesbury, like Locke, was an asthmatic and found the smoke of London intolerable. Therefore he withdrew from parliamentary politics after the dissolution and went to Rotterdam to recuperate. Henceforth Shaftesbury's weakened constitution would plague him.

In Rotterdam, where he spent a year, Shaftesbury lodged at the home of an English Quaker merchant, Benjamin

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<sup>17</sup>PRO Bundles 20 and 21 passim.

<sup>18</sup>Rand, p. xxi. According to his son, Shaftesbury carefully prepared his maiden speech on this subject but was so overwhelmed by the occasion that he was unable to deliver it. Finally he stammered, to the effect, if I who am prepared cannot speak, what must be the position of the person fighting for his life under the charge of treason? These impromptu remarks swung the House in favor of the bill. The story may be apocryphal, for it was also told of Charles Montagu, later Earl of Halifax.

Furly.<sup>19</sup> Furly had played host to John Locke during his last two years of exile:<sup>20</sup> he also hosted a literary and philosophical circle, which included Pierre Bayle, the most renowned sceptic of the age and author of the Dictionnaire historique et critique; Jean Le Clerc, a professor of philosophy at the Remonstrant seminary in Amsterdam<sup>21</sup> and critic who edited three influential journals, Bibliothèque universelle et historique, Bibliothèque choisie, and Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne; and Philipp van Limborch, a Remonstrant theologian.<sup>22</sup> Shaftesbury immediately joined this circle, becoming intimately acquainted with Bayle and Le Clerc, although he was disguised as a

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<sup>19</sup>See William I. Hull, Benjamin Furly and Quakerism in Rotterdam (Swarthmore, Penn.: 1941), esp. pp. 101-5. Hull asserts that Shaftesbury made an "incognito" visit to Furly's house in 1691 (p. 101). No other accounts of Shaftesbury's life mention this visit, which would have occurred during his "period of study." Shaftesbury did visit Locke during his grand tour in 1687 and perhaps again late in 1688 or early in 1689: perhaps one of these visits is the one Hull is referring to. The 1687 visit is attested to by a list of books left "with Mr. Lock at Rotterdam November 5, 1687." Bodleian Library, MSS Locke, c. 7, fol. 80.

<sup>20</sup>Cranston, pp. 280ff.

<sup>21</sup>The Remonstrants were liberal nonconformists committed to a rational theology and a minimal creed. The sect was founded early in the seventeenth century: it was never a popular sect, but included many influential intellectuals. Cranston, p. 233.

<sup>22</sup>Hull includes brief sketches of each of these men, pp. 128ff.

"student of physic" in order to be able to devote himself to studying.<sup>23</sup> Sometime either shortly before this journey or during it he composed a preface for an edition of the sermons of Benjamin Whichcote, which he published in 1698--his first publication.<sup>24</sup> Since Whichcote was a well-known Cambridge Platonist, this work indicates Shaftesbury's knowledge of the Cambridge Platonists and his sympathy with the rational theology of his Rotterdam compatriots.

According to his son, during Shaftesbury's visit John Toland, the deist, who received a small stipend from the Earl, surreptitiously published an unauthorized edition of An Inquiry concerning Virtue from the draft written some years earlier. "He [the third Earl] was greatly chagrined at this, and immediately bought up the whole impression before many of the books were sold. . . ."<sup>25</sup> When Shaftesbury finally published An Inquiry in 1711 in the Characteristics, he described it as "formerly printed from an imperfect copy; now corrected and published entire." All this would seem to indicate that he did not want the treatise

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<sup>23</sup>Rand, p. xxii.

<sup>24</sup>Two copies of this work, the 1698 edition and a 1742 reprint, are in the British Museum. Two MS volumes of sermons by Whichcote are in the Shaftesbury papers, PRO 24/16 and 24/17. See William E. Alderman, "The Significance of Shaftesbury in English Speculation," PMLA, XXXVIII (1923), 175-195.

<sup>25</sup>Rand, p. xxiii.

known at this time: yet it was known and circulated in manuscript about 1699, for in 1700 a Robert Day published a critical commentary on it.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, in 1701 Shaftesbury asked Pierre Des Maizeaux<sup>27</sup> to translate An Inquiry into French. It is doubtful that Des Maizeaux ever finished the translation for in 1705 he was still working on it and no copies are known today.<sup>28</sup> Other evidence to indicate that An Inquiry was known before its inclusion in the Characteristics is the long section of The Moralists defending the essay, which Shaftesbury inserted into the 1709 edition of that work. Thus the fourth Earl's account appears somewhat dubious.

His health being somewhat restored, Shaftesbury returned to England in the fall of 1699 and in November of that year inherited the Earldom. He did not immediately

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<sup>26</sup>Alfred Owen Aldridge, "Two Versions of Shaftesbury's Inquiry Concerning Virtue," The Huntington Library Quarterly, XIII (1949-50) 209, and Alfred Owen Aldridge, "Shaftesbury's Earliest Critic," Modern Philology, XLIV (1946), 10-22.

<sup>27</sup>Des Maizeaux (1673-1745), a French Protestant living in Holland, was introduced to Shaftesbury by Bayle and returned to England with Shaftesbury in 1699. He published numerous books including A Collection of several pieces of Locke (1720) and Recueil de diverses piéces sur la philosophie, la religion naturelle, &c, par Leibnitz, Clarke, Newton (1720). Rand, p. 307.

<sup>28</sup>Several letters dated from July 1701 to February 1705 between Des Maizeaux and Shaftesbury testify to the intended translation. PRO 27/17.

take his seat in the Lords, for the problems of his newly acquired estate--centered at Wimborne St. Giles, Dorset--occupied him for about a year. His interest in the Parliament of 1699-1700, however, is shown by his correspondence with Furly and Thomas Freke, M.P. from Dorset, during this period.<sup>29</sup> In the Parliament beginning in February 1701, however, Shaftesbury began active participation, which continued, as his health permitted, until William's death in 1702. Shaftesbury was a supporter of the Whigs,<sup>30</sup> backing Lord John Somers in the debates on the Partition Treaty--at one point during the debates he made an extraordinary journey from Somerset to London in one day to be able to vote with Somers.<sup>31</sup> He was active in securing passage of the Act of Settlement late in the same Parliament. Later, to obtain a Parliament which would actively support William's war policies--which Shaftesbury stoutly defended throughout the course of Anne's reign<sup>32</sup>--he "almost alone" urged dis-

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<sup>29</sup>E.g., PRO 20/13 - 20/49. Shaftesbury carried on a regular and extensive correspondence with Furly about English politics until his death. A major portion of it was edited by a relation of Furly's, Thomas Forster, The Original Letters of Locke, /Algernon/Sidney, and Shaftesbury (n.p.: 1830).

<sup>30</sup>Shaftesbury was nominally a Whig: given his background and family he had to be. Still, as I propose to discuss in Chapter III, the simple classification of Whig is inadequate.

<sup>31</sup>Rand, p. xxiv.

<sup>32</sup>PRO Bundles 20 and 21, passim, especially letters to Furly, but also letters to John Molesworth and General Stanhope.

solution and, after the dissolution, his efforts to secure the election of friendly MPs led William to offer him the place of Secretary of State.<sup>33</sup> His son also credits him with "the greatest share" in composing William's last speech of December 31, 1701.<sup>34</sup> Continuing his fervent support of William's war policies, he wrote a political pamphlet, Paradoxes of State, published in 1702, which argued that there was no difference of party in face of the French threat: all England must be united in defense of the revolution settlement and the Protestant church. This entailed support of Holland, the Austrian interests in Spain, and the Act of Settlement. "To conclude, Since we have a Prince to whom we ow /sic/ that Religion and Liberty of which we are yet possesst . . . if we are any way wanting at this Time in supporting him . . . we must justly bear the . . . Brand of being the worst of Subjects and of English-men . . . the most detestable, and, in a word, the most ungrateful of Men."<sup>35</sup> With Anne's accession to the throne, Shaftes-

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<sup>33</sup>Letter to Furly, 29 December 1701, PRO 20/49 and Rand, p. xxiv.

<sup>34</sup>Rand, p. xxiv. Somers is usually given credit for urging the dissolution and for composing the King's speech. I have not attempted to verify Shaftesbury's role in these activities.

<sup>35</sup>Paradoxes of State, Relating to the Present Juncture of Affairs in England and the rest of Europe: Chiefly grounded on his Majesty's Princely, Pious, and most Gracious Speech (London: 1702). PRO 20/68. It was published anonymously, but proof of Shaftesbury's authorship is found in two letters to Furly dated 6 January 1702 and 30 January 1702, PRO 20/52

bury's active political career ended: his "reward" for his vigorous support of William was to lose his only state office, the Vice-Admiralty of Dorset.

Shaftesbury's health was permanently ruined by his vigorous political activity and the remainder of his life was spent in semi-retirement. Also his political activities seemingly affected his fortune adversely. After asking Furlly to find him a house where he could live in absolute privacy "for my health's sake and on the account of my private circumstances," he returned to Rotterdam in mid-1703 for a stay of just over a year. It is from letters written during this visit to his steward, John Wheelock, that we discover the extent to which Shaftesbury believed his fortune to have declined:

I am sorry to hear all things are so low and tenants so disheartened. The greater must be my frugality and care to repair the great wounds I have made in my estate. I shall keep in my compass of £200 for the year that I stay here, and if this does not do it shall be yet less, and the time longer, for I will never return to be as I was of late richly poor; that is to say, to live with the part of a rich man, a family and house such as I have, and yet in debt and unable to do any charity or bestow money in any degree.

Again, from a second letter:

I hope by your good management for me I may be able (if I live) to support myself at St. Giles's

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and 20/55 respectively. See also David Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III (London: 1969, first published 1955), p. 473.



but it must be after a very different way of living. I should have been glad to have lived in the way that is called hospitable in my country, but experience has but too well shown me that I cannot do it. Nor will I ever live again as I have done and spend to the full of my estate in house and a table.<sup>36</sup>

It is doubtful that things were as bad as Shaftesbury believed--or else Wheelock was an extraordinary financial manager--for an account book dated 1704-19 shows that Shaftesbury had a potential income of about £7000 per annum and an actual income of about £4000.<sup>37</sup> A "Family-Book" for St. Giles's, 1704-07, indicates that the household at St. Giles's consisted of twenty-nine persons during this period.<sup>38</sup>

Beyond noting his concern for his estate, little definite can be said about Shaftesbury's last visit to Rotterdam. His relationship with Pierre Bayle must have matured into one between intellectual peers, however. Previously he had passed himself off as a student and had become acquainted with Bayle under these circumstances.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>PRO 20/78 and 20/79.

<sup>37</sup>PRO 22/6. This set of records is a compilation of Wheelock's accounts for the years 1704-19 made for probate purposes after the third Earl's death. It includes a list of all the manors, estates, etc., held by the third Earl as well as yearly records of rents owed, paid, arrears, etc. The figures tally with those given by K.H.D. Haley, The First Earl of Shaftesbury (Oxford: 1968), p. 20, about the first Earl's inheritance and potential annual income.

<sup>38</sup>PRO 22/3.

<sup>39</sup>Rand, p. xxii.

They had corresponded in the interval between Shaftesbury's visits and Bayle had sent Shaftesbury copies of his Dictionnaire as it was printed. None of this indicates, though, a relationship about which Shaftesbury could write after Bayle's death:

. . . I must own my private loss makes me think less of that which the public has sustained by the death of so great a man. This weakness friendship may excuse, for whatever benefit the world in general may have received from him, I am sure no one in particular owed more to him than I, or knew his merit better. . . . I know very well that it is in religion and philosophy, as in most things, that different opinions usually create not only dislike, but animosity and hatred. It was far otherwise between Mons. Bayle and myself, for whilst we agreed in fundamental rules of moral practice and believed ourselves true to these, the continual differences in opinions and the constant disputes that were between us, served to improve our friendship. I had the happiness to see that they lost me nothing of his; and I know my own increasing every day as my advantages increased by his improving conversation. I may well say improving in every respect, even as to principles in which the enemies of Mons. Bayle would least of all allow him the character of a promoter. But if to be confirmed in any good principle be by debate and argument, after thorough scrutiny, to re-admit what was first implanted by prevention, I may then say, in truth, that whatever is most valuable to me of this kind has been owing in great measure to this our friend whom the world called sceptical. Whatever opinion of mine stood not the test of his piercing reason, I learned by degrees either to discard as frivolous, or not to rely on with that boldness as before; but that which bore the trial I prized as purest gold.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>PRO 22/4. Letter to Mons. Basagne, a mutual friend, who was writing a memoir of Bayle, who died in 1706.

In another letter written two years later Shaftesbury again speaks of his association with Bayle, more clearly defining it:

. . . Whatever his opinions might be, either in politics or philosophy (for no two ever disagreed more in these than he and I), yet we lived and corresponded as entire friends. . . . Nor was there ever a fairer reasoner, or a civiler, politer, wittier man in conversation. His learning the world knows well enough by his books. But this I know of him by a long and intimate acquaintance, and living under one roof with him, which made me a nearer witness as to his integrity and worth, for which he was yet far more valuable to me than for all his wit and learning.<sup>41</sup>

The two men clearly became intimate, probably having daily conversations. Unfortunately the question of intellectual influence is one that cannot be answered, though.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>PRO 22/4. Letter to "Mr. Darby," 2 February 1709. (Mr. Darby possibly is Shaftesbury's own publisher, Derby, but I have no definite evidence of this.) Darby's original letter asked permission for an unspecified author to dedicate a biographical sketch of Bayle to Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury denied permission in this letter. A work entitled "The Life of Mr. Bayle in a letter to a Peer of Great Britain" had been published in 1708. It is generally assumed that Shaftesbury was the peer; the author was Des Maizeaux. Des Maizeaux says that he wrote the work at the request of Shaftesbury; whether the two works are the same or not is a question I cannot answer. See "The Life of Mr. Bayle," The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter /Pierre/ Bayle. The Second Edition. To which is prefixed, The Life of the Author by Mr. Des Maizeaux (London: 1734-37), p. ii. Also, Alfred Owen Aldridge, "Shaftesbury and the Deist Manifesto," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series, vol. 41, part 2, 1951, p. 371 and Leo Pierre Courtines, Bayle's Relations with England and the English (New York: 1938), p. 136.

<sup>42</sup>See below, Chapter IV. Also Courtines, p. 134.

Much of Shaftesbury's time in Rotterdam, as throughout the remainder of his life, was probably spent in writing. Since an edition of The Moralists, with the title The Sociable Enthusiast, was circulated privately and anonymously within a year after his return to England, it is likely that it was written during his stay in Rotterdam.<sup>43</sup> This work demonstrates Shaftesbury's admiration for Plato, for it is written in dialogue and given a classical, albeit Roman rather than Greek, setting. It has also been seen as a conversation between Shaftesbury and Bayle, in which Philocles (Bayle) is persuaded to give up his sceptical pose by Theocles (Shaftesbury).<sup>44</sup> Perhaps it grew out of the conversations between the two men.<sup>45</sup>

Shortly after Shaftesbury's return to England in 1704, his former tutor, John Locke, died and he was asked by Jean Le Clerc to contribute information concerning Locke's life

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<sup>43</sup>A long letter to Lord S---s /Somers/ dated 20 October 1705 accompanied Shaftesbury's anonymous presentation of the work to Somers. In the letter Shaftesbury comments on his reluctance to dedicate the work to Somers since Swift had recently dedicated A Tale of a Tub to him. (Shaftesbury's feelings about Swift are nicely summed up in another letter: ". . . that detestable writing of that most detestable author of the Tale of a Tub . . ." PRO 23/9.) He goes on to discuss the reason for writing the book--to try to bring statesmen back to a study and understanding of philosophy. PRO 22/4.

<sup>44</sup>Aldridge, "Deist Manifesto," pp. 322-23.

<sup>45</sup>The contents of The Moralists will be discussed in Chapter II.

in the Shaftesbury household for a memorial to Locke that Le Clerc planned to write. This Shaftesbury did,<sup>46</sup> but only after insistent prodding by Le Clerc: Shaftesbury's health had been again upset by his return voyage and his recovery was so slow that some six months later he told Le Clerc that "I am scarce yet got up." Le Clerc's "Eloge Historique de feu M. Locke" was published in his Bibliothèque choisie in 1705 and translated into English in 1706: it has served as a basis for most subsequent biographies of Locke.

Shaftesbury never regained his health: his letters from 1705 onwards continually lament his ill health.<sup>47</sup> Thus, he seldom visited London again, alternating his residence between Wimborne St. Giles, a small house in Chelsea (a distant suburb of London!), and Surrey, where he sometimes stayed with an old friend, Sir John Cropley, at Betchworth, and at another small house he took in 1709 in Reigate. That he retained his interest in politics, his

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<sup>46</sup>Several copies of Shaftesbury's letter remain in his papers at the PRO, including PRO 22/2 and 28/114 (an offprint from a published version in Notes and Queries, III (February 8, 1851), 97-99. Le Clerc's "Life and Character of Mr. John Locke. . . , " 1706, is item 47/27 among the Locke papers included in the Shaftesbury Archive.

<sup>47</sup>A Doctor Pitt provided an analysis of Shaftesbury's ailments in May 1705. (PRO 22/100) This document is fascinating, not only because it diagnoses Shaftesbury's problems, but also because it provides an insight into medical practices of the day. The diagnosis is, by modern standards, reasonably acute: the prescribed treatment is antiquated.

letters to Furly continue to show, for they provide a running commentary on the political situation for Furly and other Rotterdam friends. Being out of favor at court, however, created at least one difficulty: Shaftesbury had received a promise from William just before his death that a young protégé of his, Thomas Micklethwayte, would receive a place at court. The change of monarch and Shaftesbury's subsequent loss of favor prevented his pursuing the request for a few years, but in 1707 he began, again, his efforts to get William's promise fulfilled. This led to a lengthy correspondence between Shaftesbury and Sidney Godolphin and to the accreditation of the Earl as a private advisor to Godolphin.<sup>48</sup> Micklethwayte received a minor office in the Treasury, which, interestingly, he kept through the change of ministry in 1710: perhaps this was due to Shaftesbury's influence again, for he was on good terms with Harley.<sup>49</sup> Micklethwayte assumed the responsibility of being Shaftesbury's literary agent and executor when the Earl retired to Naples in 1711 and was responsible for the

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<sup>48</sup>Fowler, p. 27, and Letters from the Right Honourable the Late Earl of Shaftesbury, to Robert Molesworth, Esq.; Now the Lord Viscount of that Name. With Two Letters written by the late Sir John Cropley. To which is prefix'd a large Introduction by the Editor /John Toland/ (London: 1721), pp. x-xi.

<sup>49</sup>There is no direct evidence that Shaftesbury used his influence with Harley in Micklethwayte's behalf. His good relationship with Harley, however, is to be seen from several letters, notably one dated 29 March 1711, in which Shaftesbury congratulated Harley on his elevation to the

publication of the second edition of the Characteristics.

Micklethwayte was only one of a number of young men to whom Shaftesbury was a patron. Shaftesbury made a point of seeking out able youngsters on his estates and providing for their education: two may be mentioned. Henry Wilkinson was sent to Rotterdam to be apprenticed to Benjamin Furly in his counting-house. After he had served his apprenticeship, Wilkinson remained in Rotterdam and became a wine merchant.<sup>50</sup> Michael Ainsworth clearly occupied an important part of Shaftesbury's affections: he was sent to Oxford and Shaftesbury's letters to him at Oxford were always addressed "Good Michael" or "Honest Michael" and contained many other signs of sincere affection, as well as much advice about study and conduct.<sup>51</sup> Ainsworth desired to join the clergy and Shaftesbury secured him a post through his friend, Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. It was in a letter to Ainsworth that Shaftesbury first acknowledged his philosophical estrangement with Locke, noting that "'Twas Mr. Locke that struck at all

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Earldom of Oxford, recalling their close ties as youths and his early support of Oxford's "interest, which I thought of greater moment to the public, than my own or family's could ever be." PRO 25/22.

<sup>50</sup>Hull, p. 102.

<sup>51</sup>Shaftesbury's letters to Ainsworth were published in 1716 as Several Letters written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University.

fundamentals, threw all order and virtue out of the world, and made the very ideas of these (which are the same as those of God) unnatural, and without foundation in our minds."<sup>52</sup> Shaftesbury's rejection of Locke will be discussed later; all that needs be noted now is that Shaftesbury thought enough of Ainsworth to discuss philosophy with him--something that he did not often do in his letters.

It has already been noted that Shaftesbury provided John Toland with a small pension. Although the pension was apparently ended during Shaftesbury's period of economy in 1703-4, the two men continued to correspond and after Shaftesbury's death Toland talked as though they remained intimate to the end.<sup>53</sup> Another friend and recipient of an annuity from Shaftesbury was Pierre Coste, a French Protestant who took refuge in Holland after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. There he met Locke, who brought him to England and introduced him to Shaftesbury. Before and after Locke's death Coste translated several of Locke's works into French, later doing the same for Newton's Opticks and Shaftesbury's Letter concerning Enthusiasm. Coste was chosen to act as the tutor to Shaftesbury's only

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<sup>52</sup>PRO 20/143 (MS copies of the letters to Ainsworth) and 25/22 (a printed copy of the letters).

<sup>53</sup>See Toland's introduction to Letters . . . Shaftesbury . . . Molesworth.



child.<sup>54</sup> He also acted as a commentator on several of Shaftesbury's essays, sent a copy of the Characteristics to Leibniz for comment, and published Shaftesbury's Judgment of Hercules, his only essay in aesthetics to be published.<sup>55</sup> Coste, like Ainsworth, received letters from Shaftesbury concerning philosophy: two of the most interesting contain a "course" of reading in Horace that the Earl prescribed for Coste.<sup>56</sup> These letters not only confirm Shaftesbury's knowledge of and love for Horace, but they also clearly indicate how Shaftesbury interpreted and understood the Latin poet. Finally, mention must be made of a young Pole, Crell,<sup>57</sup> whom Furly introduced to the Earl. After being educated at Leiden and Cambridge at Shaftesbury's expense, Crell became his secretary and amanuensis and received a small life-annuity in Shaftesbury's will.

In 1709 Shaftesbury decided that he had to marry to preserve the family line: he had been counting on his brother, Maurice, to marry and propagate the line, but by

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<sup>54</sup>Letter to Sir John Cropley, 2 December 1711, PRO 23/8.

<sup>55</sup>Correspondence between Shaftesbury and Coste, 1711-1713, PRO Bundles 21, 22, 23, and 45/80 passim.

<sup>56</sup>PRO 27/20 and 22/118.

<sup>57</sup>I have never encountered Crell's Christian name. He is always referred to, in both primary and secondary sources, as Mr. Crell or simply Crell. E.g., Hull, p. 102, and Brett, p. 53.

that year it had become clear that he was not going to do so. The Earl's health and general lack of inclination had prevented him from marrying sooner. His thoroughly business-like approach to the question seems somewhat out of character: that it indeed was is confirmed by his unexpected happiness with the outcome. He began by negotiating with a family of substance and name--what family is not known--but when the negotiations failed, the Earl commented that he was determined to "pursue my intentions for my family's sake without further delay, being resolved in my circumstances of health . . . to have no other regard in the choice I made, than merely that of a good family, a good character, and such an education as might best suit a lady's temper to my circumstances and way of life."<sup>58</sup> The lady chosen was Jane Ewer, a distant relation. She proved to be an admirable and devoted choice, which Shaftesbury himself acknowledged on several occasions, often sounding like a delighted child: ". . . I should in reality think I did wonders in extolling the happiness of my new state, and the merit of my wife in particular, by saying, that I verily thought myself as happy a man now as ever."<sup>59</sup> Their only child, Anthony Ashley Cooper, was born in February, 1711.

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<sup>58</sup>PRO 22/4; also Letters . . . Shaftesbury . . . Molesworth.

<sup>59</sup>PRO 22/4; also Letters . . . Shaftesbury . . . Molesworth.

Between 1708 and 1711 Shaftesbury published his major works: all were dedicated to Lord Somers, to whom Shaftesbury wrote a lengthy letter discussing each work as it appeared.<sup>60</sup> Each was published anonymously, although the Characteristics carried an anagram of initials to indicate the author.<sup>61</sup> The first work, A Letter concerning Enthusiasm, came out in 1708 in response to the "French Prophets," a group of fanatical French Protestants who had emigrated to England. The Letter denounces enthusiasm (fanatical religion) and argues that raillery is the best antidote for such "madness." Shaftesbury also laid the groundwork for his later and more serious philosophical works by indicating that there is such a thing as valid enthusiasm, which a person understanding true beauty or goodness will possess. The Letter was probably the most commented on and the most popular work of Shaftesbury's--even in 1768 another translation of it into German was made.<sup>62</sup> It occasioned such comment that Shaftesbury was

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<sup>60</sup>All are in PRO 22/4.

<sup>61</sup>"A.A.C.A.N.A.AE.C.  
M.D.C.L.X.X.I."

(Anthony Ashley Cooper, Armiger, Natus Anno Aetatis Christi 1671). Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times in Three Volumes. Fifth Edition, Corrected with the addition of a Letter concerning Design (/London/: 1732), I, p. iv.

<sup>62</sup>See the review in Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek, Band II, Pt. I (Berlin, 1770), 270. I am indebted to Dr. R.W. Home for finding this review.

obliged to write a second work, Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour, published in 1709, to defend his use of raillery when discussing religion. A revised edition of The Moralists, A Philosophical Rhapsody, formerly circulated privately under the title, The Sociable Enthusiast: A Philosophical Adventure,<sup>63</sup> also appeared in 1709. It was Shaftesbury's first serious philosophical treatise, written in dialogue, expounding his cosmological views. In 1710 Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author was published. It is a work in literary criticism and is his first excursion into aesthetics. Finally, in 1711, these miscellaneous essays were collected together into a three volume work entitled Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times. The Characteristics also included a revised version of An Inquiry concerning Virtue or Merit and a group of newly written Miscellaneous Reflections on the Preceding Treatises, etc. An Inquiry was Shaftesbury's most complete statement of his ethical philosophy and introduced the phrase "moral sense" into ethical theory.

The Characteristics quickly became a popular work and elicited considerable comment. In Shaftesbury's view the two most significant commentators were General James Stanhope, later the first Earl of Stanhope, and Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz. Stanhope and Shaftesbury began cor-

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<sup>63</sup>See above, p. 18.

responding on philosophical subjects sometime before 1709, for in 1709 Shaftesbury ventured to tell Stanhope "the greatest confidence in the world," his rejection of Locke's philosophical principles.<sup>64</sup> After the Characteristics appeared Stanhope wrote a number of letters to Shaftesbury and Micklethwayte praising the work:

Stanhope says the Characteristics will sell mightily as soon as we have a peace. Learning will come in fashion and philosophy will be necessary. That it is the only book in our language where either is truly to be found. That it is from thence our noble and generous young men must form themselves and learn virtue; that for himself he is the wiser and honestest for having read it and that it has put him upon reading the ancients. That he has read over Horace and Virgil twice and also Demosthenes and Plutarch and Tully /Cicero/ and several others, but could not get Homer in Spain. That he shall never read (as he swore to me) any book but the Characteristics and the ancients for the future part of his life. . . . I should have told you before that Mr. St---e /Stanhope/ has translated a great part of the Inquiry concerning &c. into Latin and designs going on with it in his country retirement this winter. . . .<sup>65</sup>

Apparently Stanhope never finished the translation of An Inquiry; at least it was never published.

Pierre Coste sent Leibniz a copy of the Characteristics for comment without identifying the author. Leibniz responded with an extraordinary, often page by page, critique of the work, giving it an extremely favorable review,

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<sup>64</sup>PRO 22/7.

<sup>65</sup>Micklethwayte to Shaftesbury, 29 August 1712, PRO 21/216.

although he carefully pointed out the weak parts of Shaftesbury's philosophy. Several of Leibniz's comments are worthy of quotation not only as illustrative of his critique, but also to indicate the similarity of his and Shaftesbury's thought: the two philosophers worked totally independently, but, as Leibniz's comments show, many of their sources were common.<sup>66</sup>

The Letter concerning Enthusiasm contains a great many fine thoughts; raillery is I believe a good preservative from this distemper, but not very likely to cure those who are already infected. . . . I question too whether the ridicule is a good touchstone, since the best and most important things in the world are liable to it. And truth, which is generally hid from the eyes of the vulgar, is not always sure to have the laughers on its side: I have said that raillery always carries scorn in it, and it is injustice to take pains to expose anything to contempt, which does not really deserve it. . . .

Turning to the Essay on Freedom of Wit and Humour Leibniz notes that Bayle first made certain remarks that both he and Shaftesbury agree with. He then objected to the use of common sense as a basis for morals, saying that such a basis is derived from the principles of Hobbes and Locke, which his Theodicy has, he hopes, demonstrated incorrect. Shaftesbury surely resented being compared to Hobbes and Locke, for most of his writings were in opposition to them.

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<sup>66</sup>PRO 26/9. This is an English translation of Leibniz's comments: a transcript of his comments in the original French is item 26/8.

Unfortunately he did not comment on this part of the critique.

Leibniz says that An Inquiry concerning Virtue "is wholly systematical, and contains very solid thoughts upon the nature of virtue," which show that virtue is derived from "the affections which nature has given up," that is, from natural or innate affections. Such is consistent with "my own opinion."

Yet, while Shaftesbury begins by inquiring into the nature of deity, "this divinity with which the discourse opens is not enough employed in the course of the work." Granted the author is trying to show that even atheists "are obliged to follow virtue," by showing that virtue is derived from the natural affections alone, this is not enough, for morality is carried to "its highest pitch" by considering the immorality of the soul and this necessitates consideration of "the providence of God." Again, Shaftesbury must have been appalled by this argument, for An Inquiry is largely designed to refute the notion that a belief in God is necessary for morality. Clearly he was not successful in convincing Leibniz.

Leibniz had, however, reserved his most effusive praise for The Moralists:

I thought I had long before penetrated the sentiments of our noble author, till coming to his treatise too modestly called a Rhapsody /The Moralists/, I perceived I had been entertained only in his outward apartments, and I was sur-

prised to find myself now in his cabinet, or to speak more properly in the Sacrarium of his most sublime philosophy, in which I was as much charmed as his Philocles in the company of Theocles and Palemon. The turn of the discourse, the style, the dialogue, the new Platonism, the manner of arguing by interrogations, but above all the greatness and beauty of his ideas, the bright enthusiasm, the apostrophe to the deity, raised me to an extasy. At the conclusion of the book I returned to myself, and had the leisure to make reflections of what I had read. I at once found there almost my whole Theodicee, (but more agreeably turned) before it had come abroad. The harmony, the disappearing of real Evil especially with regard to the whole, the unity of true substance, the great unity of the supreme substance, of which the others are but emanations and imitations, are there placed in the most agreeable light imaginable. Scarce anything is wanting except my pre-established harmony, my banishment of death, and my reduction of matters or of multitude to unity or to Simple Substances /monads/. I expected only to have found a philosophy like that of Mr. Lock, but I was led beyond even Plato and Des Cartes. If I had seen this book before the publishing of my Theodicee, I should have made that use of it I ought to have done, and have borrowed from thence very considerable passages; and I am only sorry that this treatise does not fill a whole volume. . . .

To conclude, I wish for the benefit of foreigners, that all the treatises contained in these three volumes were translated into French, as well as the first pieces,<sup>67</sup> for there are few works in which solidity and elegance are so well united.

Shaftesbury was properly flattered by Leibniz's response, although he objected to his censure of raillery, seeming to miss the more serious criticisms:

. . . I have now to thank you for the most agreeable present you have made to me in the

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<sup>67</sup>Coste had translated the two essays on raillery--the Letter concerning Enthusiasm and the Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour--into French in 1710.



transcript of the criticism of the worthy and learned Mr. Leibniz on Characteristics. You may safely in the author's name acknowledge the honour he thinks he has received by it, and the satisfaction he finds in the candour and justness of his censure; particularly in what relates to the too great concessions of that author in favour of Raillery and the way of Humour. Does not the author himself secretly confess as much in his work? . . . For our author's part I dare declare for him that he takes even this censure of Mr. Leibniz as a real honour done to him and (what is far more) as a just testimony rendered to truth and virtue. How much must he therefore of necessity be by the encomiums afforded him from so eminent a hand? . . .

I must confess that these and other approbations from those of the highest merit and best judgment<sup>68</sup> make me conceive so much a higher value than I could have presupposed of those works, and, such an opinion of the good they may possibly do in the world, that if Mr. Leibnitz's critical encomium could with his leave and on account of his great name and just character be thought worth the being inserted in Mr. Le Clerc's Bibliothèque Choisie I should be very much pleased; especially since it serves to support Mr. Le Clerc's favourable judgment of that author.<sup>69</sup>

Not all reaction to the Characteristics was as favorable as that of Stanhope and Leibniz. The work was considered by many to be a "manifesto" of deism, and "with few exceptions, Shaftesbury was attacked by nearly every anti-deist of the century."<sup>70</sup> The major attacks on

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<sup>68</sup>He is referring to General Stanhope as well as Leibniz.

<sup>69</sup>Letter to Coste, 25 July 1712, PRO 23/9.

<sup>70</sup>The question of whether Shaftesbury was a deist or not has been debated for over 250 years. I do not pro-

Shaftesbury came after his death, although the Letter concerning Enthusiasm occasioned much controversy as soon as it was published.<sup>71</sup> Bernard Mandeville led the attacks on the Characteristics in his Fable of the Bees (1723); he was followed by Pope's Dunciad (1729), Bishop Berkeley's Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher (1732), and John Leland's A View of the Principal Deistical Writers (1754). In the main, however, reaction to Shaftesbury was favorable throughout the course of the eighteenth century: the fact that the Characteristics went through eleven English editions from 1711 to 1790 is sufficient indication of its popularity.<sup>72</sup> His influence was varied and widespread: deists such as Matthew Tindal used Shaftesbury as a source of authority; churchmen such as Bishops Hoadly and Butler adopted his arguments for virtue; poets such as James Thomson and Mark Akenside praised and used his concepts of beauty and virtue; even a former critic, Pope, adopted his cosmic toryism, albeit indirectly through Bolingbroke.<sup>73</sup>

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pose to get involved in the controversy, since it is irrelevant to my study; whether he was a deist or a Christian, he believed in a deity, and that is all that we need to know in seeking the origins of his cosmic toryism. One of the latest arguments for Shaftesbury as a deist is Aldrige, "Deist Manifesto," especially p. 297.

<sup>71</sup>See below, pp. 36-7 for Shaftesbury's own comments.

<sup>72</sup>The dates of the editions are: 1711, 1714, 1723, 1727, 1732, 1733, 1737, 1744, 1749, 1773, 1790. Editions also appeared in France and Germany.

<sup>73</sup>C. A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in

His influence on the French Enlightenment remains a debated subject. One of Diderot's first publications was a free translation of An Inquiry and his Pensées Philosophiques (1746) was a development of Shaftesbury's scepticism and was burnt by the Parlement of Paris.<sup>74</sup> Voltaire repeatedly cited Shaftesbury in his works, originally in a favorable vein, but after he had given up his own optimistic philosophy, the references became unfavorable.<sup>75</sup> It is even possible to make a case showing Shaftesbury's influence on Rousseau and the origins of the Romantic movement.<sup>76</sup> In terms of pure philosophy, Shaftesbury founded a new school of ethics and ethical theory, the moral sense school, which flourished as a major part of the Scottish Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. His first disciple, Francis Hutcheson,<sup>77</sup> was responsible for transmitting his ethical ideas to Scotland, where they were picked up and expounded upon by Adam Smith, David Hume, Adam Ferguson, and Thomas Reid.

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England," PMLA, XXXI (1916), 300-308. Also Chapter V below.

<sup>74</sup>Leslie Stephen, "Cooper, Anthony Ashley, third Earl of Shaftesbury," DNB, vol. 4, p. 1057.

<sup>75</sup>Dorothy B. Schlegel, Shaftesbury and the French Deists (Chapel Hill: 1956), chaps. II, III passim.

<sup>76</sup>Schlegel; C. A. Moore; Alderman.

<sup>77</sup>See Fowler, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson.

A paradox, however, arises out of any discussion of Shaftesbury's influence: as can easily be seen he was a well-known figure in the eighteenth century, yet his reputation died with the century. Since 1800 he has been strictly a subject for historians. The explanation lies, it seems to me, in the set of ideas he was advancing. They were intended to promote a world-view contrary to the one generally held by the end of the eighteenth century. The empiricism of Newton and his successors prevailed in science and philosophy: the great political revolutions established democratic thought at the expense of the aristocracy. In a word, the Earl's notions had become outmoded and quaint.

To return to Shaftesbury's life, in July 1711 he was forced to abandon England and its cool, damp climate for Naples. He was granted passes through the war zone by Louis XIV<sup>78</sup> and travelled through the Alps in the late fall. The trip almost killed him, so fragile was his condition. He did, however, make it to Naples with his wife, Crell, and a nephew of John Wheelock, Bryan Wheelock. By the summer of 1712 he had made a fair recovery from the ordeal of the journey and had some hopes of remaining alive

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<sup>78</sup>These passports and Shaftesbury's correspondence with the Duke of Berwick, the general in command of the French troops in Piedmont, are preserved in PRO 21/190 and 22/7.

for a reasonable period.<sup>79</sup>

Shaftesbury's life in Naples was occupied with three activities: preparing the Characteristics for a second edition, his "virtuoso" studies, and his continuing commentaries on political events. Thomas Micklethwayte had been left in charge of the English arrangements for the second edition and Shaftesbury sent him copious instructions concerning corrections, particularly of the Miscellaneous Reflections; the other essays having been revised previously. Shaftesbury had also commissioned Simon Gribelin, "the most famous of contemporary engravers,"<sup>80</sup> to design a set of allegorical engravings to serve as frontispieces to each treatise and volume of the second edition. The engravings--emblems--were to depict the content of each work pictorially. Hence, he also sent detailed and exacting instructions to Gribelin via Micklethwayte for these.

In one of his letters of instruction to Micklethwayte he added comments on the English reception of the first edition. The comments are notable for they indicate Shaftesbury's own understanding of the nature of the Characteristics and hence merit quoting in full:

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<sup>79</sup>ALL of Shaftesbury's letters from Naples comment on his state of health. Thus it is quite easy to follow the course of his final illness. PRO 22/7, 23/8, and 23/9.

<sup>80</sup>Brett, p. 53.

I will add only a bold word on our author's side, which I could not do, till I had occasion to know how the foreign as well as our home-world judged of this production. 'That tho the times should continue ill, they will not hinder Char---cks from growing still in vogue.' This is good news for Mr. D--y /Derby, his publisher7, provided he can have the necessary faith. And this, methinks, is no hard demand from such a disinterested author and frank bestower as he has had to deal with. Besides that he never yet found this author overpresumptuous in the opinion of success, but rather backward, as by the happy event in the several treatises has appeared.

One seeming demonstration, however, I have had in my head, and, methinks, am able to give you of this future event. 'Tis plain how the smallest work which comes abroad is now-a-days canvassed and noised about by friends, enemies, examiners, and critics. 'Tis plain again how strongly this very work itself was attacked when only the Letter on Enth. &c, its little finger, first appeared. The body at last followed, and showed itself daringly in the very worst time. Open defiance was bid to the whole part and opposite tribe. And what ensued?--Perfect stillness and quiet--The book however gained ground: and still gains, as I presume: yet all is put up. Not a murmur or a mutter abroad in print from any single party-man, or author of note. And why this?--Consider, and you will perhaps find some sparks of reason from a small hint.

Whatever matter of least note arises at present in Great Britain is immediately made a party-affair. And the parties, each of them, are well embodied and act in a sort of discipline, under their heads. But more especially the Tory-party. They all wait the word and watch the eye. Many a longing tooth, many a sharp stomach there has been towards it: many talons whetted, many throats prepared. But the word was Hush!--'The author has a name and character. He is not yet made desparate. His being fallen upon and forced to declare himself may urge such a spirit as his to make mad work. Whereas if we contain ourselves, and let him alone, he will either be wholly quiet, or at

least go no further than those tolerably decent bounds which reach not the vulgar. And for this he has in a manner given us his word.'

On the other side the Whig pen-men, by tacit agreement, give no offence or provocation. They preserve also a deep silence. They neither recommend the book (whatever hints they take from it) in any of their prints or pamphlets, nor will they venture at this season and without necessity to take so dangerous a weight upon them. But should any considerable hand amongst them offer at this (as I heartily wish no-one yet may) the truce being broken, the author will begin to be tightly canvassed and thoroughly dissected; to the great advantage of the bookseller and (I am fully persuaded) to no less advantage of the work itself; which I hope we shall be able to fit for bearing the very sharpest criticism.<sup>81</sup>

The import of this letter is not that Shaftesbury was disappointed with the lack of controversy, but that he saw the Characteristics as a political work. At first glance one does not think of it as a political work, as supporting either a Whig or Tory point-of-view; indeed, I can discover no secondary author, contemporary or modern, who speaks of it in these terms. Yet Shaftesbury clearly did. He saw it as a work supporting his political stance, nominally Whig, but actually more complicated than that.<sup>82</sup> Shaftesbury wanted an educated elite of politicians, following in the steps of Cicero, who could be counted upon to be virtuous and who would work for the best interests

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<sup>81</sup>Letter to Micklethwayte, 1 September 1712, PRO 26/1.

<sup>82</sup>See below, Chapter III.

of the whole: "There was once a time when statesmen and such as governed in the Senate and in the field thought it no disgrace to them to give many spare-hours to philosophy. . . . Philosophy has not the honour /now/ to be owned by men of note or breeding. . . . Reason, wit, and letters are no longer a security to great men's understandings. They betray themselves on every occasion of their private lives, and are no more able to regulate their opinions or conduct in what relates to their happiness /and the happiness of the whole/ than the merest of the vulgar whom they despise."<sup>83</sup> Since the Characteristics, among other things, sets forth the way to virtue, it becomes possible to see how Shaftesbury could consider it as a political work.

In his letters from Naples, he also discusses his "virtuoso" studies with Micklethwayte, who encouraged him to publish them. These "virtuoso" studies dealt with art and aesthetic theory: Shaftesbury was planning a second major work which would extend his philosophical views into aesthetics. Two of the essays were completed by his death, The Judgment of Hercules and a Letter on Design. The Judgment of Hercules was published first in

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<sup>83</sup>Letter to Lord Somers, 20 October 1705, accompanying the first edition of The Moralists. PRO 22/4.



a French translation by Coste in 1712 and in English in 1713. The Letter on Design was first published in the fifth edition of the Characteristics (1732). Benjamin Rand collected the published essays and outlines and notes for other essays into a single volume, which he entitled Second Characters and which was printed in 1914--the first appearance of all Shaftesbury's aesthetic writings. Shaftesbury also acted as an agent for Sir John Cropley, his life-long friend, and purchased several paintings for him during this period.

The letters to Furly discussing politics--particularly the state of the war and Tory efforts to gain a peace--continued unabated. One interesting letter indicates that Shaftesbury feared his mail was being opened and gave Furly instructions for including his mail in diplomatic pouches.<sup>84</sup> A correspondence was established with John Molesworth, the son of his friend Viscount (Robert) Molesworth, who was the English Plenipotentiary in Tuscany. Molesworth provided Shaftesbury with current information on the events in England, and they exchanged views on the events. Also General Stanhope and his aid, Arent Furly, son of Benjamin, briefed Shaftesbury on the Spanish campaign. Hence Shaftesbury did not feel as isolated in Naples as he feared he would be, and thus his

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<sup>84</sup>PRO 23/9.

stay was as pleasant as possible in his circumstances.

Winter came early in 1712 and quickly destroyed what residue of moderate health Shaftesbury had built up during the summer. By late December he knew he was going to die and began making arrangements for its occurrence. On January 10, 1713, he wrote his last letters to Cropley, Micklethwayte, and Wheelock, and on February 15, 1713, he died at the age of forty-one.

Shaftesbury has been called "the greatest Greek of modern times"<sup>85</sup> and the best known portrait of him, by John Closterman, depicts him in classical robes standing beside books of Xenophon and other Greek authors in a classical landscape. His favorite authors were Plato, Epictetus, Cebes, and Xenophon; the Stoic tradition was his forte. Of Latin authors, Marcus Aurelius and Horace were his choices. "Perhaps no modern ever turn'd the Antients more into sap and blood, as they say, than he. Their Doctrines he understood as well as themselves, and their Virtues he practis'd better."<sup>86</sup> Shaftesbury's life was devoted to Virtue, that is, the attainment of

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<sup>85</sup>Second Characters, or the Language of Forms: By the Right Honourable Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, Author of Characteristics. Ed. by Benjamin Rand (Cambridge: 1914), introduction.

<sup>86</sup>Toland, introduction to Letters . . . Shaftesbury . . . Molesworth, p. vii.

the Good--a Platonic ideal--in this life: his writings were designed to show the way to Virtue; his public life and commentaries on it showed that he strove to create the conditions necessary for the practice of Virtue; his private life was wholly unblemished by any hint of impropriety or selfishness. He had before him what he took to be the classical ideal of Virtue and he attempted to personify it.

## CHAPTER II

### SHAFTESBURY'S COSMIC TORYISM

Post-Revolution England--the Augustan Age--was an era pervaded by feelings of accomplishment and contentment. Strife in religion, in the social order, in politics, in natural philosophy was a thing of the past. The Church had been defended and toleration removed potential sources of conflict. The aristocratic social order had been confirmed and the "vulgar" remained content with their lot. "Political stability" advanced and the nation achieved greatness and prosperity. The universe had been explained and natural law reigned supreme. The major problems confronting Englishmen had been solved leaving only the finishing touches to be applied. Philosophy, literature, and the arts once again began to enjoy their rightful places in the culture of England: many felt that a new Elizabethan Era was unfolding. It was, in short, an enlightened age.

Such was the milieu in which Shaftesbury flourished. His thought both reflected and stood apart from the times. It was the first major statement of the cosmic tory worldview, a system which combined the contentment of the age

with a deep reverence for classical culture. A cosmic tory, such as Shaftesbury, attempted to explain the present by using the classical philosophies of Platonism and Stoicism. Several important literary figures, notably Addison, Pope, and Thomson, carried cosmic toryism beyond the philosophical realm. Shaftesbury served as the fountainhead for each.

Because cosmic toryism, as an idea, has seldom been studied, a fairly explicit definition of the term must be given.<sup>1</sup> For it one may turn to contemporary religious understanding. As the seventeenth century with its almost interminable warfare, religious and philosophical conflict drew to a close, men began to lose their interest in the spiritual world--organized religion--and its explanations for many phenomena.<sup>2</sup> One of these was the problem of evil. The traditional Christian doctrine of the Fall was

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<sup>1</sup>Basil Willey, so far as I know, coined the phrase "cosmic toryism" and gave an extensive definition of it in his book The Eighteenth Century Background: Studies on the Idea of Nature in the Thought of the Period (London: 1946), pp. 43-56. I have generally followed Willey's line of reasoning in the following pages. Willey, however, cites Soame Jenyns (1757) as the first major proponent of the notion. I see the notion as coming much earlier, specifically with the writings of Shaftesbury.

<sup>2</sup>Charles H. Vereker, Eighteenth-Century Optimism: A Study of the Interrelations of Moral and Social Theory in English and French Thought between 1689 and 1789 (Liverpool: 1967), Pt. I. Vereker discusses developing secularization and particularly the problem of evil.

inadequate for an increasingly secularized intelligentsia. But if the doctrine is dropped, the obvious evil in the world--a world governed by immutable natural law--assumes a role of greater consequence, for evil violates, or appears to violate, natural law. Hence it must be explained. A variety of explanations resulted: some are significant for our purposes, because they underlie a world-view that was attractive to the age.

Pierre Bayle, the sceptic, was much concerned with the problem and provided a "rational" answer to it. He was more concerned to discomfort the Christians than to uphold the results of natural philosophy, and hence he turned to the ancient Manichean arguments for a "system of two principles"--a principle of good and a principle of evil which govern the world in competition and thus explain both that which is good and that which is bad.<sup>3</sup> Bayle's was an extreme position and was not generally accepted: its importance lies in the fact that many, including Shaftesbury, who adopted other explanations felt compelled to refute Bayle's thesis in the process of stating their own.

A more common solution was the one which the later

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<sup>3</sup>The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter /Pierre/ Bayle: The Second Edition, to which is prefixed, The Life of the Author by Mr. Des Maizeaux (London: 1734-37), "Manichees."

eighteenth century knew as optimism.<sup>4</sup> In the late seventeenth century several variations on the theme "this is the best of worlds" were composed: optimism was the best-known. Natural law indicates a world which works according to eternal principles and yields a universal order and unity. Not everything, however, fits into the pattern of harmony: anomalies--evil or ill--occur which need explanation. Somehow evil has to be made to conform with the universal order. And therein lies the solution. Evil is only an apparent violation of natural law. God, who is omniscient, omnipotent, and benevolent, fashioned a universe which, taken as a whole, is good. It is wholly harmonious: all is ordered and unified. Evil or ill is only apparent, for in the sight of God, who sees the Whole, it conforms to the universal order. That is, what appears to mere mortals to violate natural law or to be not good needs be seen in the context of the Whole where it will be understood to be compatible with natural law and good. Thus, in this best of worlds, evil does not exist: it only appears to exist because man's understanding is finite. Those things which seem to us to be ill are actually contributing to the good of the Whole.

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<sup>4</sup>The Oxford English Dictionary gives the date 1737 as the first usage of the term in referring to Leibniz's "best of possible worlds" doctrine.

The world, then, is good: all things are in their proper order. Even man is not vile, but precisely what he should be, for everything, including man, contributes to the good of the Whole. The status quo is what God intended.

At the same time as empirical natural law was coming to dominate natural philosophy, metaphysical idealism experienced a revival. The cosmological theories of Plato, notably those of the Timaeus, were revived to confirm the goodness of the world. Plato solved the problem of the One and the Many--how the unchanging One generated the Many, the imperfect world of corruptibles--by asserting that the One is "Good" and hence it desired to share its goodness, which it could do by bestowing existence on the not-itself. Because the One is Good, in its self-overflowing, it could not deny existence to any possible kind of being. Thus the paradox occurs that the One, which is Good, generated things which, even in its own sight, are imperfect or evil. Indeed anything less than the One itself must be imperfect, and, in its degree of imperfection, evil. However, goodness in the Whole necessitates that all possible things have existence. Hence a "full" universe is the greatest of all "goods." This explanation had been used by theologians such as Thomas Aquinas, and it led, by the seventeenth century, to the widely accepted doctrine of "the great chain of being."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>See Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A



It was revived by the Cambridge Platonists and became a fairly widely accepted explanation for the general goodness of the world. Shaftesbury, for instance, used it in his derivation of a cosmic tory world-view. Again, the world is good in its totality. The status quo is what God intended.

Cosmic toryism was a world-view which used the latter two explanations of evil as its philosophical basis, because they seemed to demonstrate that the world as it stood in the Augustan Age was as perfect as could reasonably be expected. Historians have usually dealt with these ideas by using the term "optimism" and have generally seen them as coming from Leibniz's Theodicy and finding their fruition in the French Enlightenment. My thesis is that a somewhat similar set of ideas arose in England, largely independent of and in advance of Continental thought, during the Augustan Age, and that the English version--as developed by Shaftesbury--encompassed the political as well as the philosophical world.

The third Earl of Shaftesbury was the first<sup>6</sup> major proponent of the cosmic tory world-view.<sup>7</sup> The precise

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Study of the History of an Idea (New York: 1960, first published 1936).

<sup>6</sup>He was not, however, the first "Englishman" to publish the basic notion. That honor goes to Archbishop William King of Dublin, whose De Origine Mali appeared in 1702.

<sup>7</sup>It must be noted immediately that Shaftesbury did not use the term, and that the unity I propose to indicate in his

origins of his cosmic toryism cannot be determined, although they undoubtedly lie in the Stoic philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, in Platonic idealism, and in his own background.<sup>8</sup> His philosophical writings are predicated on the belief that the world taken as a whole is good, using both the "optimistic" and the Platonic justifications to corroborate his belief. His life was spent in the milieu of comfortable aristocratic society, and his above average education added a thorough understanding of classical thought, which bolstered his natural belief in aristocratic superiority and satisfaction with the prevailing social and intellectual order. He was, in a real sense, an archetypal cosmic tory.

Cosmic toryism, then, may be said to have three defining characteristics: the belief that the world as a whole is good; the belief that evil or ill is only apparent, since apparent evil actually contributes to the good of the Whole, although it may affect individuals adversely; and satisfaction with the status quo as being what God intended. Furthermore, cosmic toryism set itself against the "progressive" notions derived from Lockean epistemology: thus cosmic toryism does not contain the element of hopefulness that is usually associated with

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thought is not readily apparent in his writings. It is, nonetheless, there.

<sup>8</sup>I shall discuss the origins of Shaftesbury's thought in detail in Chapter IV.

the term "optimism." It was a world-view suited to its age.

Since the perfection of the universe and of the existing social order could be taken as established, the main business of a philosopher, such as Shaftesbury, was to vindicate these ideas against criticism and to demonstrate the means by which one should live in this sort of world. The remainder of this chapter will show how Shaftesbury accomplished these tasks.

## i

Among the third Earl's papers in the Shaftesbury Archive at the Public Record Office is an extensive series of notebooks. They fall into three classes: first, there is a set which contain materials on a variety of philosophical subjects dating from his two extended visits to Rotterdam, in 1698 and 1703-04; second, there are several consisting of drafts of translations from Greek and Latin made by Shaftesbury but never published; and third, those containing his researches into and drafts of projected treatises on aesthetic subjects. The first group ranges from a tiny vellum book of notes, mostly in Greek, kept on his return voyage in 1704<sup>9</sup> to a semi-formal two-volume

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<sup>9</sup>PRO 27/11.

octavo set comprised of essays written during both visits to Rotterdam.<sup>10</sup> The other notebooks in this group contain odd philosophical comments rather than sustained discussions, but one also finds in them reading notes on Plato's dialogues and lists of books purchased in Holland. In the second group are found a "Design for a Socratic History"<sup>11</sup>--an outline for a life of Socrates based on those of Xenophon and Plato--and drafts and indexes for a translation of Arrian's life of Epictetus.<sup>12</sup> The third group dates from his residence in Naples and consists of several notebooks, subsequently published by Rand as Second Characters.<sup>13</sup> Most of the notebooks are in Shaftesbury's hand, although some have been copied in a fair hand. These notebooks are of interest for they indicate the direction and development of Shaftesbury's thought and, more significantly, they give an insight into the origins of that thought. They provide conclusive evidence of the influence of the classics on Shaftesbury. They show that his philosophical interests developed from a more worldly concern with ethics to a more spiritual concern with aesthetics, indicating that Platonic idealism

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<sup>10</sup>PRO 27/10.

<sup>11</sup>PRO 27/14.

<sup>12</sup>PRO 27/16, 24, 25, 26.

<sup>13</sup>PRO 26/1, 2, 3, and 27/15, 27. For a full citation of Rand's Second Characters, see above, p. 40n.

increasingly molded his thought.

For this study the first group of notebooks, those dating from Shaftesbury's visits to Rotterdam, are of prime importance, particularly the two-volume set of philosophical essays.<sup>14</sup> The essays carry such titles as "Deity," "Good and Ill," "Human Affairs," "Self," "Passions," "Character," "Opinion and Precepts," "Life," and "Philosophy." Shaftesbury entitled this set of notebooks "Exercises," a considerably more apt title than Rand's title, "Regimen," for he used the notebooks to test ideas and arguments rather than as a regulatory guide to philosophy. Indeed to call these works "essays" as I have been doing is perhaps misleading, since the term "essay" usually connotes a degree of formality that is not to be found in most of them; many are little more than random jottings, while others are fairly systematic containing sustained arguments. Thus I shall henceforth refer to this set of notebooks and its contents by the same term Shaftesbury used--"exercises."

Most of the exercises are dated 1698, with additions dated mainly 1703-04, although a few originated during the second trip. Thus, for the most part, they predate his

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<sup>14</sup>This notebook has been published by Rand with totally inadequate identification, however. It forms the portion of his Life . . . entitled Philosophical Regimen.

published works and give us a clear indication of his thought in its formative stages. Happily, marginal notes indicate the source of many of the ideas Shaftesbury expresses; the most frequent citations are to Marcus Aurelius, Horace, and Epictetus, showing the predominant Stoic influence on this stage of his career. Unfortunately, he did not cite contemporary sources in the same manner; nonetheless, ideas from Descartes, Hobbes, and the Cambridge Platonists can be discerned, showing that he was not solely concerned with the classics.

Cosmic toryism is a theme that runs throughout the exercises. It is a theme that is not fully developed in any single one, but its ubiquity demonstrates its seminal role in Shaftesbury's philosophy. The most explicit statements of it are found in the exercise entitled "Deity," which is the longest of the series. Here Shaftesbury tests several arguments for the existence of a deity: almost all involve or are predicated upon the principles of cosmic toryism.

The exercise opens with the assertion that all things in the world are united. As the branch is united with the tree, so is the tree with the earth, air, and water which feed it and with the flies, worms and insects which feed on it. "For these are made to it, and as much as the mold is fitted to the tree, as much as the strong and upright

trunk of the oak or elm is fitted to the twining and clinging branches of the vine or ivy, so much are the leaves, the seeds, the fruits of these trees fitted to other animals, and they, again, to one another. All hold to one stock."<sup>15</sup> Now consider the system of the macrocosm and note the relation and mutual dependence of one thing on another, for instance, the earth and the planets on the sun. Here, too, there is "order, symmetry, regularity, union, and coherence of the whole."

From this postulation of unity, Shaftesbury concludes that "as the plant or tree has a nature, the world or universe must have a nature," and asks the questions, "What sort of a nature should this be?" (Shaftesbury's *italics*) The universal nature is the deity; thus the question becomes, how can we comprehend the existence of the deity? To this question Shaftesbury provides several answers in the form of short arguments. The first is the most comprehensive; the later arguments are supplementary.

There are three types of nature in the world--vegetative, sensitive, and rational. The universal nature is surely not merely vegetative, as plants, nor sensitive,

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<sup>15</sup>This and all subsequent quotations from the exercises are my transcriptions of PRO 27/10, which I have verified with Rand's edition. Since all the materials in the remainder of this section come from PRO 27/10--which is not paginated--I will not give any further citations to this notebook, other than to identify the exercise being discussed in the text.

as animals, nor imperfectly rational, as men. Should not the universal nature

which exhibits reason in all that we see; which practices reason by a consummate art and prudence in the organization and structure of things; and (what is more) which produces principles of reason and raises up intelligences and perceptions of several degrees in the beings that are but of a moment's duration, that start out of it, as it were, and sink into it immediately; should not this sovereign nature of the whole be a principle itself of much greater understanding and capacity than any else? Should not the most extensive sight or knowledge with which we are acquainted and the highest wisdom which we admire, be as nothing in comparison with that original one from whom all is derived? And should not that affection,<sup>16</sup> which we see in all natures towards their offspring and productions, towards what is more remotely united to them, or what is strictly any part of themselves, be much inferior to that affection of the Supreme Nature towards all and to what is produced and administered, by it, as everything is? And what is this in one word, but that God is; that He is one and simple, infinitely wise and perfectly good?

Thus God is a universal nature of a higher order than the worldly natures, but nonetheless one that comprehends them.

Next it must be asked, what is the nature of the Whole, that which is comprised of all that exists? It cannot be merely a vegetative or sensitive nature, for then it could not produce things with reason or intelli-

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<sup>16</sup>Affection is a technical term for Shaftesbury. He defines it in the exercise "Natural Affection" as feeling or love according to the design and will of nature. See below, pp. 64-67.



gence. Therefore the nature of the universe is intelligent. One philosopher<sup>17</sup> agrees that there is intelligence in the nature of things, but the Whole is not united and thus there is not just one intelligence. But can this be?

Are not the small fibers of this root conspiring together and united? They are; but, with what? With the plant; and the plant with what? With the earth and other plants. And the earth and other plants with what? With air, water, animals, and other things around; the animals themselves with one another and the elements in which they live and to which they are fitted, as either by wings for the air, by fins for the water, and other things of that kind. In short, all these conspire together and so all other things, whatever they may be, in this world. And is it not the same with the world itself in respect of the sun and the planets?

It is clear, therefore, that all things cohere and conspire; all things are in one, the Whole, and are included in the nature of the universe. Since that nature must be able to produce intelligent things, it is itself intelligent, and therefore there is a universal intelligent and provident principle.

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<sup>17</sup>Perhaps Spinoza. I have been unable to determine whether or not Shaftesbury read Spinoza; it seems likely though that Bayle would have introduced him to the Jewish philosopher, if he had not already read him. Cryptic references, such as this, throughout his writings seem to refer to Spinoza, although they may merely be references to early Stoics. The fact that no marginal note identifies the source, however, suggests that the person is contemporary. John Robertson, in his edition of the *Characteristics* (London: 1900), I, pp. 240-303 *passim*, sees much similarity between *An Inquiry* and Spinoza's *Ethics*, but does nothing more than point to the similarity in his notes. He does not provide any evidence that Shaftesbury actually read him.

But if it be denied that the universe is one or has one nature, surely it will not be denied that a stalk of grass has such a unitary nature. If the stalk of grass does, then by the argument above, the whole earth has it and so too the whole system of the world. Hence, either this system is one whole and is united or "what is strange to imagine" there is incoherence in the great Whole. If the latter, either there are no other unified worlds or they are independent. Now if there are independent worlds, there must be intelligences and eternal principles which make each of them united and whole. "But since it is unreasonable and unaccountable thus to multiply principles, as, for instance, to say that of the motion that is in the world, there should not be one and the same principle but several; so with respect to what is intelligent, it must be unreasonable to think that there is any more than one common principle of intelligence."<sup>18</sup> Thus it follows that there is one common principle of intelligence and wisdom--one eternal and infinite mind--which acts as the unifying principle of the universe.

Shaftesbury, then, varies the argument for order and specifically introduces the basic principle of cosmic

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<sup>18</sup>Obviously this is an application of the Principle of Simplicity or Ockham's Razor. The analogy to motion is extremely apt, for one of the supreme arguments in favor of Newtonian mechanics was its adherence to the Principle of Simplicity.

toryism, the goodness of the Whole. This time he begins by declaring that either what we see is order, proportion and harmony, or it is not. If neither the frame of the heavens nor the body of man demonstrate order, what else could order be? If what we see is order, how could disorder have produced it? Clearly it could not; hence, order must be a principle in things and be proper and natural to them. If it is natural to some things, then surely it is to all things: if to all things, then all things are united and have one nature. That nature, then, must be a nature more perfect than that of the particulars contained in it; if so, it is a wise and intelligent nature. Furthermore, it must order everything for its own good, and since that which is best for the universe is both the most wise and just, it follows that the supreme nature is perfectly wise and just.

"All things stand together or exist together by one necessity, one reason, one law: therefore there is one nature of all things, common to all. Nothing is out of the whole, nor nothing happens but according to the laws of the whole." Every particular nature, at all times, produces what is good for itself, "unless something foreign molest and hinder it, either by overpowering and corrupting it within, or by violence from without." In such a case the nature of the thing "strives to throw

off the distemper." "What are all weaknesses, distortions, sicknesses, imperfect births and seeming contradictions or crossnesses of nature, but merely this? And how ignorant must one be of all natural operations who thinks that any of these things happen by a miscarriage of the particular nature, and not by the force of some foreign nature that overpowers it?" Therefore,

every nature is constantly and never-faillingly true to itself, and certain to produce only what is good to itself and to its own right state. And if every particular nature do this, shall not the nature of the whole do it? or shall that alone miscarry and fail? or is there anything foreign that shall do violence to it, or force it out of its way? If not, then all that it produces is for its own good, the good of all in general; and that which is for the good of all in general is just and good. If so, rest satisfied, and not only rest satisfied, but be pleased and rejoiced with what happens, knowing from whence it comes and to what it contributes.

Shaftesbury here has not only specifically introduced the basic principle of cosmic toryism, but he also borders on violating it. He established the goodness of the Whole; he then had to account for deviations from that goodness. Using an analogy to inertia<sup>19</sup> he argued that a foreign force overpowers the particular nature thereby causing it to deviate from its true course. But such foreign forces cannot be generalized, for if they are generalized and used to operate against the nature of the Whole, another

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<sup>19</sup>This analogy is used again in The Moralists.

universal nature is introduced into the system, thereby destroying the unity of the Whole. Indeed, a system analogous to Bayle's Manicheanism would be created, and, as we shall see, Shaftesbury strongly opposes such a system in The Moralists. This is not to say that Shaftesbury has gone so far as to create a system of two principles, but it is to point out how close he came to doing so and thus how easy it is to do so within the general framework of cosmic toryism.

His final argument for an intelligent universal nature--deity--is basically the Cartesian argument for the existence of God. We know that we, as human beings, have a mind because we are conscious of it.<sup>20</sup> But we can be conscious of no other mind outside our own or, indeed, that there is any such thing as a mind besides our own. If we believe that there is no other mind outside our own, we can go no further.<sup>21</sup> If, however, we believe that a mind exists outside ourselves, what are the grounds for such a belief? "It must be this, or nothing: when there is a consent and harmony of parts, a regular conduct for the good of the whole, a steady management suitable to one end and design." If there be an economy of the whole

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<sup>20</sup>"Cogito ergo sum." "I think, therefore I am."  
Descartes, Discourse on Method, 1637.

<sup>21</sup>It leads to the position of solipsism, the position argued by Berkeley to show the limitations of Lockean epistemology.

and a mind, would you expect to see it, as you do a man?--certainly not. What then will satisfy you of the existence of this mind?--the effects of such a mind: order, agreement, unity, subserviency of inferior things to superior, all making them operate towards a general good. But is this not the way things are?--certainly. Then there must be a mind outside our own--a universal mind.

Shaftesbury has, to his satisfaction at least, demonstrated the existence of an intelligent deity which provides for the unity and goodness of the world as a Whole. His deity is, by necessity, "present with all things, knows all things, and is provident over all," that is, it is omniscient, omnipotent, and omni-benevolent.

The cosmological discussion ends with a poetic, almost mystical, plea for man to understand his place in the cosmic tory scheme of things and with a similarly poetic recapitulation of the system. "Yesterday thou wert entertained with the contemplation of several natural things." You noted the wisdom and wonder of the order of the heavens, the completeness and perfection of man's anatomy. You praised the ability of Providence to do these wondrous things. "These were thy thoughts yesterday. Today it is an earthquake . . . a slight infection of the air which hurt some cattle, or which affected thyself." Today you reproach Providence. The world is

all wrong, all is disorder. "But was not all this owned possible, and even natural, but yesterday?--It was.-- Which is it, then, that is wrong and disordered? the world, or thyself?" Consider the heavens. See the design. "Think, in the midst of this ocean of being, what the earth and a little part of its surface is; and what a few animals are, which there have being." Embrace with your imagination those "spacious orbs" and place yourself in the midst of this divine architecture.

Consider other orders of being, other schemes, other designs, other executions, other faces of things, other respects, other proportions and harmony. Be deep in this imagination and feeling, so as to enter into what is done, so as to admire that grace and majesty of things so great and noble, and so as to accompany with thy mind that order, and those concurrent interests of things glorious and immense. For here, surely, of anywhere, there is majesty, beauty, and glory. Bring thyself as oft as thou canst into this sense and apprehension; not like the children, admiring only what belongs to their play; but considering and admiring what is chiefly beautiful, splendid and great in things. And now, in this disposition, and in this situation of mind, see if for a cut-finger, or what is all one, for the distemper and ails of a few animals thou canst accuse the universe.

The good of the Whole, then, is paramount: man must understand his role in the Whole and accept minor disorders. For if there be an order and economy for the good of the Whole, then nothing can happen to you but from that economy, which has provided the best that is possible for you. If you believe this, then you must

love whatever happens to you from that economy. If you try to change the economy, you destroy, insofar as an individual can, that economy, which prevents the universe from being perpetually ill. "Nature has done her part. Nature has been kind in this and in that, in affording a passage out of life, in putting an end to misery. Nature has provided. Nature has taken care."

Man needs to believe in the deity so that he will not oppose the design of the world. "If there be deity, there is no chance of contrary ill design. If all be from one wise and good design, then all is to one and the same end, and nothing is supernumerary or unnecessary." Hence, if any one part be removed or perish, all perishes and disorder and confusion must take over.<sup>22</sup> "If there be a supreme reason of the whole, then everything happens according to that reason." Violation of the reason of the Whole causes it to perish.

Thus does it follow as a necessary consequence from the opinion of deity /belief in deity/, that whatsoever happens in the world, or whatever is appointed to me in particular, should be kindly affected, esteemed and beloved by me, be it hardship, poverty, sickness, death. For what else should I choose, or what else esteem and love, but that which tends to the good and perfection of the whole in which I am included?

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<sup>22</sup>While Shaftesbury does not specifically mention it at this point, or indeed anywhere in this exercise, this argument is predicated on the notion of a chain of being and a full universe or a plenum. See Lovejoy.



Now, if the whole be perfect, everything that happens in the whole is such.

Either the whole is perfect or imperfect. If it be an imperfect whole, how can there be a deity? If, therefore, it be a perfect whole, what is there in it besides what is just, equal, necessary, good? How can anything be altered, and not the whole be rendered imperfect? See, therefore, that neither on thy own, or any other account, thou desire ever to correct anything in the order of things. For, what is this but, as much as in thee lies, to destroy the perfection, happiness, and security of the whole, and consequently also thy own?

Man is an integral part of the system of the Whole: man must understand that system and contribute to it according to the plan of the Whole.

Shaftesbury used the exercise "Deity" to set forth a cosmological system. In many ways it served as a prelude to The Moralists, for there he adopted the same cosmological system and repeated many of the arguments. The system is the one which necessarily underlies cosmic toryism: the ideas that the whole is good and that ills are only apparent and fairly well spelled out; the notion of the acceptance of the status quo is there, but not in its final form; and, of course, only philosophical ideas are discussed--the ethical and political consequences are omitted. The incompleteness is totally justified, though, for Shaftesbury's concern in this exercise is not to state cosmic toryism--indeed, he never gives a complete statement of it at any one time--but to show the

necessity of a deity to account for the world as it is normally understood.

The problem that most concerns Shaftesbury in other exercises is one that must concern anyone adopting a cosmological system of the nature outlined in "Deity"--what is the relationship of the individual to the system of the Whole? Shaftesbury devotes several of the exercises to finding the answer to this question. Perhaps the most systematic answer is found in "Natural Affection." Here he shows how the conscious individual relates to the deity. He begins by defining the technical term "natural affection." "What is it to have natural affection? Not that which is only towards relations, but towards all mankind--to be truly a lover of men." But is that all? No. "To have natural affection is to affect according to nature or the design and will of nature." Without the design and will of nature nothing can be said to affect naturally. Is it natural for a parent to love its offspring or for any creature to affect its own kind? If this is natural, is it not simply that the preservation and support of a species is designed by nature in this manner? "This therefore is the design and will of nature, that by the natural and good affection of creatures towards their own species the species should be preserved and be prosperous." Now

either this design of nature is wise and good and it is to man's good to follow it, or he must live by some other rule. If there be another rule, let us see how men live without natural affection.

Which are the happiest, or in the best state, those that live orderly and obey these affections, or those that are hardened against nature and have all of this kind unnatural and in disorder? Of this there has been enough said elsewhere.<sup>23</sup> Nor is anything more evidently demonstrable than this, that the only means and rule of happiness (even amongst these other creatures, as far as they are capable of happiness) is to follow nature, and whether knowingly or unknowingly, to act in pursuance of this design, and under the power of such affections as these.

Hence natural affection--living according to the will or design of nature--leads to happiness.

So much for ordinary creatures and man using only common reason: but what of the man who comprehends the Whole--what it is, how it is governed, that it is wise and good--for such a man is in a higher degree rational. In this instance, what has been called natural affection and what has been shown of the order of nature shows that "it is from an all-powerful, wise and perfect design." It follows that, besides the relation to a species--that is, natural affection for the species--"there is a further relation which every creature has, viz., to the

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<sup>23</sup>Presumably a reference to Hobbes and his description of the state of nature.

whole of things as administered by that supreme will or law which regulates all things according to the highest good." Hence a creature who is in that higher degree rational, who considers the good of the Whole, and who considers himself regulated by the Whole, must feel himself under an obligation to the interest and good of the Whole superseding the interest of his species. Thus a superior affection exists. "Now if it has been made the good and happiness even of unknowing and irrational creatures to follow that private and inferior affection which is only towards a species and part of the whole, how can it be but much more the good of every knowing and rational creature to live according to that affection which is the highest and most perfect?" Natural affection is the reward of every creature for it preserves the creatures in its most perfect state; a "right and deserving affection" towards nature and the Whole likewise generates the happiness and good of a rational creature.

What, then, is this right and deserving affection? Ordinary natural affection causes man to sacrifice himself in any necessary manner if a father, friends, or country be in danger.

If there be a supreme parent, a common father of men and all other beings, and if all things happen according to the will of this first parent, it follows that everything is to be kindly and well accepted; no murmuring, no complaining. If all things in the universe are for the good

of one another, all united and conspiring to one end, all alike subject to one wise and perfect rule, all alike produced from one original and fountain: it follows that I must in a certain manner be reconciled to all things, love all things, and absolutely hate or abhor nothing whatsoever that has being in the world. If the universe be as one city, and the laws of that city perfect and just, it follows that whatsoever happens, according to the laws of that city, must be accepted and esteemed. And since there is nothing but what is according to those laws, there is nothing that happens but what I ought highly to applaud, and to accompany with my mind and sincerest affection. And if I do otherwise I am impious, unjust, unnatural, ungrateful, an apostate from reason, and vicious in a higher order and degree.

The natural affection of a rational creature is, then, the apotheosis of cosmic toryism. It is the understanding of nature, of the good and of the Whole. It is learning how "to submit"<sup>24</sup> all lesser affections to the rule and government of the Whole, how to accompany that supreme and perfect mind and reason of the universe. "This is to live according to Nature, to follow Nature, and to own and obey Deity." It is, again, "to affect according to nature or the design and will of nature."

The cosmic tory system requires not just a united and a good universe; it requires that rational beings--men--accept that universe and order their lives according to it. Nature has a will and a design. Man lives in a

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<sup>24</sup>A phrase later used by Addison and Pope in defining the relationship of man to their cosmic tory systems.

determinist system to the extent that his happiness is achieved by submitting to the system. This is not to say that man does not have free will, for he does indeed have free will. He can choose between submitting to the government of the Whole or not: if he does not he will be unhappy, for he will either not understand or accept natural goodness and hence will be subject to the apparent ills of the world. This will lead him to be angry, bitter, and discontented. On the other hand, if he chooses to submit to the government of the Whole, he will understand that all things work towards the good of the Whole and "this only can afford us happiness and content; bestow peace, serenity, calm; make us to live in friendship with men and with due acknowledgement and reverence and piety towards God."

In an exercise composed during his second stay in Rotterdam, 1703-04, Shaftesbury continues the discussion of man's free will in conjunction with natural affection. The exercise "Providence" raises the important question, why cannot an individual know before he has acted the consequences of his actions taken in accordance with divine will? "Nothing can be wiser than that order of Providence: that the same things it has placed out of our power it should also have placed out of our knowledge." If we knew the consequences beforehand we might not be willing to

act according to natural affection. By not knowing beforehand, "I cease not to act still and affect according to nature." "And thus I affect both according to nature and with nature. According to nature, as willing the good of my relations, and country, primarily, chiefly, and as most eligible; but not absolutely i.e., according to the lesser degree of natural affection<sup>7</sup>. With nature, as yielding to Providence, and accompanying Providence when its will is declared i.e., according to the higher degree of natural affection<sup>7</sup>." Such is the harmony between an individual and Providence when the individual knows wherein Providence has placed his good and ill. He knows that it is in his own power to choose the things that are his good. He knows that he cannot blame Providence if he chooses wrongly.

Again, only one thing is impossible for an individual to affect--that is his real ill, for Providence has made it impossible for him to do so. That is, Providence has made it an impossible case that there should be anything in the whole course of nature to oppose the individual's good. "There is not, and cannot be, any such thing in Providence; for what is really my good, Providence has placed within my power to obtain; what ill, to avoid."

Providence has given me means to know both it and myself, and to be conscious for what and to what I was born. If I use these I am a man, and as such Providence will use me. If I use

them not I am a mere animal (let my shape be ever so much of a man), and as an animal Providence will use me, even as we men use other animals, making them willingly or unwillingly serve our purposes.

Knowledge of and harmony with the deity makes an individual a full man: he must use his reason to understand the nature of things. Having done this, man achieves natural affection, which enables him to operate in conjunction with the will and design of nature and of the Whole. By doing so, he chooses his own good--that is, his good coincides with the good of the Whole. The good is clearly more than immediate pleasure. Immediate pleasure, as Shaftesbury indicates elsewhere,<sup>25</sup> is ephemeral. True good, the good that appeals to the rational man, is this harmony with Providence. Hence, man has free will to choose or not to choose the rational course: once the choice is made, he loses his free will, for now he either voluntarily acts in harmony with Providence or his actions are at the pleasure of Providence.

In the exercise entitled "Nature" Shaftesbury defends nature's design of man and shows the absurdity of wanting to change it. From this analysis he indicates man's role in the immediate world, which will ultimately lead to cosmic toryism in ethics and politics. "Nature"

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<sup>25</sup>See above, pp. 60-63 and below, pp. 73-79.



opens by noting that other creatures have strength and hardiness denied to man and asks why they have been denied. "Say as well, why not wings for man?" If man had wings, what changes in his physique would have to be made? Look at a bird: is not its whole structure fashioned for the end of flying? Is it not in a manner all wings? How else could it perform such a motion if all other parts were not subordinated to the wings? If man were enabled to fly "must not the other members and parts be starved to feed these new ones?" Must not man's feet and hands be starved? "And how, pray, as to the brain? Must not the brain also starve?" See how it is even now with man: does not the mathematician or other student who thinks intensely starve the body and parts for the benefit of the brain? On the other hand, does not the wrestler, rider, or dancer starve the brain for the benefit of the body? "If the balance be so just and even here, if so nicely held by nature that the least thing breaks it, in creatures of the same frame and order, what would it be to change the order quite, and make some essential alteration in the frame?--What would it be indeed but monstrous? for what else is a monster?" Therefore it would be better for a person desirous of a strong constitution to ask not 'Why was I not made as strong as a horse?' but 'Why was I not made a horse?' The design of man, then, is of a unit;

one part cannot be exaggerated without loss to another part. But is not the design of nature the same?--certainly.

Such is the admirable distribution of nature, its adapting and adjusting not only of the stuff of matter to the shape and form, and of the shape and form to the circumstance, place, element, region; but also of the affections, appetites, sensations, instincts, passions, mutually to each other as well as to the matter, form, action, and all besides. All managed for the best; with perfect frugality, and just reserve;<sup>26</sup> with perfect liberality too and utmost bounty.

Just reserve may be seen in all creatures, for there is nothing superfluous in their structures. Again, note the birds: their structure is wholly designed for flight. Thought and reason are primary in man, hence, his brain dominates and his other organs are subordinate. But do not beasts have instincts, which man does not have?--True. "And can anything more commend the order of nature than this very thing? Is not this according to that admirable economy, that wise, equal, and just reserve, which we have spoken of just now?" The females of beasts know instinctively how to care for their young without the need of lessons. But why do not humans have this instinct? For they have sagacity of another kind--reason and discourse--which teaches them these things. To be sure a human infant is the most helpless and weak of creatures,

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<sup>26</sup>The last phrases were adopted by Pope in his An Essay on Man.

but it is for a purpose. "Does not this refer man yet more strongly to society, and force him to own that he is purposely and not by accident made rational and sociable, and cannot otherwise increase or subsist but in and by society?" Man, in short, is a social animal: this is the role he is fitted for by his brain. It is the part nature has destined him to play in the Whole. Hence it is absurd to try to change man, to try to emphasize those parts that must be subordinated to the brain. Man must exist in society to survive: this his brain fits him to do.

Another exercise, "The End," continues the theme of man as a social animal and illustrates for the first time Shaftesbury's determined opposition to Hobbes. Either man is made with design or without design. If without, then there is no end either in the whole or in any part of man: the muscles, the eyes, the heart are without purpose or end. But surely this is false. If, then, the parts have an end, there must be an end for man as a whole. Sight, taste, hearing are not the ultimate end but are means to a further end. So if the pleasure of sight or tastes is not the end, then pleasure in general is not the end.

What is it, then, that we call the end? To eat, drink, sleep, copulate, and the pleasures which belong either to eating, drinking, sleeping, or copulating are all of them only means,

and refer to something further. If we can find nothing beyond, then all that we can say is, that the end of man is only to be in such a certain sound and perfect state of body; and such as serves to generate similiar bodies. But if besides what has been mentioned, there are any certain dispositions of mind such as plainly refer to a species and society, and to the enjoyment of converse, mutual alliance, and friendship, then it is the end of man's society. Therefore to be such as to serve to that end of society (which is to be good or virtuous) is that to which everything in man is lastly referred, and which is properly his end. And where his end or perfection is, there certainly must be his good.

The end or design of nature for man is society. What are his natural affections towards children, relations, friends, and country but manifestations of that end? "The perfection of human nature is in that which fits and accomodates to society, for he who wants those natural affections which tend thither, is imperfect and monstrous." If, however, the end of man--society--be not also his good, then his private good is to go contrary to nature, so that his end in nature and his end in himself are entirely contrary. In that case, it must be in his good to extinguish his natural affections, which would lead him to society. But if he extinguishes his natural affections, he will become "savage, unnatural, horrid and inhuman." Thus,

if it be a detestable and miserable state to be wholly unnatural and void of humanity and humane affection, then is it the good of man to be socially inclined and affected; if so, it is his greater good still to act by a more

clear and perfect affection of that kind; if so, then that affection which is wholly towards virtue is that in which he finds his greatest good; if so, that it is his end, and not anything else is his end but to affect as is natural to him and as becomes him; to will and incline as the nature of man requires; in short, to follow nature, or the order and appointment of supreme reason in his particular constitution and make.

In other words, man's end, as seen so often before, is to live according to nature.

Shaftesbury has said that natural man must operate in society according to natural affections, that is the love of his relations, friends, country, and, more importantly, the deity who has ordered nature in such a wise and good manner. Man, then, is good and virtuous: at least, rational man is, for he has considered his place in nature and has accepted it. One cannot speak of the "state of nature" when discussing Shaftesbury, for his natural or rational man lives in the here-and-now world: the whole thrust of Shaftesbury's philosophy is to enable man to understand and to cope with the immediate world. Hobbes, of course, argued that man in the state of nature was vile and miserable and that government brought order to his life and made it bearable. Shaftesbury opposes the whole concept of a "state of nature." Man, who is rational and whose end is society, can be vile and miserable only if he rejects what nature (the deity) has offered him. He does not have to impose government on him-

self: nature has already provided it. In short, the status quo is the best. Cosmic toryism has been transferred from the macrocosm to the microcosm.

A glimpse of how Shaftesbury used cosmic toryism as a foundation for aesthetic theory is provided by the exercise "Good and Ill." Here Shaftesbury opens with the question: whose judgment determines what is good? Individual judgments vary widely: one man affects the hero and says the battlefield is the only good, another values wealth, another aims at popularity, another cites poetry and fashionable literature. All go different ways. If it is asked whether riches are themselves good, disagreement arises. So it must be concluded that they are of themselves neither good nor can they be made good. The same conclusion is reached if fame and pleasure are asked about.

In the meantime I both see and know certainly, that the necessary effect or consequence of loving and esteeming these things highly, and as essentially good, is to be envious, to repine and long, to be often disappointed and grieved, to be bitter, anxious, malignant, suspicious, and jealous of men, and fearful of events (all which is misery); and that on the other side the effect of despising these is liberty, generosity, magnanimity, self-approbation, consciousness of worth. And are not these really good, but uncertainly so, as the other? A generous affection, an exercise of friendship uninterrupted, a constant kindness and benignity of disposition, a constant complacency, constant security, tranquility, equanimity: are not these ever and at all times good?

"Whatsoever is good must be alike good to all; whatsoever is ill alike ill to all." Are fame, honor, power, riches good? They are not necessary to all men's contentment, for I do not require them. Thus they cannot be good. Are pain, death, poverty, obscurity ill? These are not ills for everyone, for a sportsman enjoys those things that cannot be accomplished without difficulty and pain. A hermit lives in poverty and obscurity. Thus they are not ill.

The good of life must be found either in the sensations of the body, or in the affections of the soul, or in the action of the mind in thought and contemplation, or in a mixture of these things. If it be in sexuality alone, then the brutes have the most complete and perfect good. If it be in soul and mind subservient to the senses, the brutes again are supreme, for the soul and mind are slighted in favor of the senses. If it be in soul and mind with the senses and body subservient, how subservient must the body be? It must be completely so for the highest degree of good "is the enjoyment of a soul and mind freed from the incitements, commotions, and disorders of sense." Now if the highest good is that of the soul and mind, "what are the thoughts thy mind contemplates with delight? and what are the thoughts it loves to be entertained with?" Find out in what subject resides "the chiefest excellence

and beauty," for it is here that the mind's delights will be found. Look at the immediate world: is it of the first degree of beauty, or is it of a lesser degree? Are the parts less perfect than the whole? Consider painting and architecture: is beauty in every single stroke or stone? If so, is not the beauty of the whole lost because the eye is confined to the beauty of the parts? Hence, "go to the first object. Go to the source, origin, and principle of excellence and beauty the Whole. See where the perfect beauty is, for where it is, there alone can be perfect enjoyment, there alone the highest good."

Thus in searching for the good, that which everyone can agree is good, Shaftesbury again turns to the Whole. The Whole through its harmony, unity, and completeness is beautiful. Hence beauty is the highest good. This, of course, is Platonic and it foreshadows his later aesthetic work.

Finally, the exercise "Philosophy" needs be considered for Shaftesbury's definition of philosophy clarifies the tenor of his works and the rationale of his cosmictoryism. It is necessary that man should examine his ideas. Which ideas? The ideas of space, extension, solidity? But what is it to him, as an individual, whether there is a vacuum or a plenitude? Whether matter be divisible ad infinitum or not divisible? He may be the best versed



man in the world in these ideas, but what does their examination do for him if he has not tranquillity? To solve the true phenomena is important--not the phenomena of the skies, not those of mathematics and mechanics, for their solution does not make one better, happier, wiser, or of a more open, free understanding.

"Either that which I call philosophy is so from the subtlety and niceness of the speculation (and then mathematics, physics, and all of that kind is philosophy), or from its being superior and judge of all the others, as that which teaches happiness and gives the rule of life." As has been seen already, happiness does not consist in outward things--wealth, preferment, and so on--but in the mind. The work of philosophy, then, is "to correct and amend those opinions which we commonly have of outward things:" it should fortify the mind against avarice, ambition, intemperance; it should show the mind how to cure disquiet, restlessness, anxiety and how to find that which will satisfy and content us. "Here therefore lies philosophy." It is to reason about what is good and what is ill; it is to reason concerning happiness.

Shaftesbury's definition of philosophy would be unlikely to satisfy a Newton or a Descartes, but it is certainly one that provides a unifying thread for his writings. It is consistent with the philosophical schools that his

ideas draw together. It is consistent with his reputation as an ethical philosopher. And, finally, it is consistent with his task as a cosmic tory philosopher--to vindicate the perfection of the universe and the social order and to indicate how one should live in this world.

I have reviewed several of the exercises in Shaftesbury's longest and perhaps most significant notebook. I have not, by any means, covered all the exercises included in it: what I have tried to do is choose a representative selection from those dealing specifically with cosmic toryism. The majority of those omitted are concerned with more specifically ethical topics: most, however, are also directly or indirectly predicated on cosmic toryism, but they do not contain such explicit statements of the principles involved. Those chosen are also the most systematic of the exercises, but even in some of them Shaftesbury failed to maintain the systematic approach. The exercise "Deity" is a good example: the last quarter of it trails off into a random and rhapsodic praise of deity; discussion of the principles of cosmic toryism is left behind. None of the other notebooks contain discussions such as these, although one<sup>27</sup> contains extracts from the exercise "Deity." The major items of importance from the other

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<sup>27</sup>PRO 27/12.

notebooks in the first group are the booklists and reading notes. These will be used when I discuss the specific origins of Shaftesbury's thought.<sup>28</sup>

The notebook "Exercises" has shown how Shaftesbury conceived cosmic toryism and how the concept pervades his thinking: it is clear that cosmic toryism is the foundation on which Shaftesbury built his philosophical principles. The exercises in the notebooks explicitly state, or at least touch upon, all aspects of cosmic toryism. But the exercises were private. If Shaftesbury's ideas were to have any influence, they had to be published. Thus the Characteristics.

ii

Shaftesbury's reputation as a thinker and as a writer is based solely on the Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times. Through the Characteristics he established a new school of ethical theory, the moral sense school; he contributed to the establishment of the Enlightenment, principally through his cosmic toryism; and he was considered to be one of the most important prose stylists of the age--a judgment from which the twentieth century would generally dissent. As noted in Chap-

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<sup>28</sup>See below, Chapter IV.

ter I, the Characteristics is a collection of essays, most of which had been published previously. The essays, at first glance, seem to have little in common other than being popularized philosophy. Yet the notion which Shaftesbury called true enthusiasm runs through the whole of the Characteristics. Proper or true enthusiasm is the ardent admiration for and understanding of nature and its "supreme governor."<sup>29</sup> Shaftesbury's aim is to show how true enthusiasm can be attained by reason--the only means of attaining it. In the Letter concerning Enthusiasm and its sequel, An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour, Shaftesbury set out to expose false enthusiasm, that of religious fanatics, and to offer ridicule as an antidote to it. In the two more formally philosophical essays, An Inquiry concerning Virtue or Merit and The Moralists, he set down the philosophical bases and consequences of true enthusiasm. These essays indicate clearly that true enthusiasm is founded on cosmic toryism. In the essay Advice to an Author and in the Miscellaneous Reflections Shaftesbury continues and supports his arguments for the supremacy of reason. Thus the Characteristics actually is of a piece.

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<sup>29</sup>Nowhere in the Characteristics does Shaftesbury give a concise definition of true enthusiasm. He himself cites An Inquiry, bk i, part iii, sec. 3 end; Moralists, part iii, sec. 2; and Miscellaneous Reflections, Misc. ii, ch. i as the principal discussions of the idea. Characteristics, I, p. 54n.

Of the treatises forming the Characteristics, The Moralists is the most important for a study of cosmic toryism. It contains as complete a statement of its principles as can be found in Shaftesbury's works. Among contemporary writers only Leibniz in his Theodicy states similar ideas in a fuller and more systematic manner. One reason for this is that the intended audience of Shaftesbury differed from that of Leibniz. Shaftesbury was writing for the educated upper classes, particularly the governing class:<sup>30</sup> Leibniz was writing primarily for an academic and philosophical audience. The very structure of The Moralists affirms Shaftesbury's intention--it is a dialogue. He felt that the ancient's use of dialogue in poetry and philosophy was the best means of conveying ideas, for the dialogue acted as a mirror allowing the reader not only to be informed of other's ideas, but also to see his own in relation to the others--that is, a process of "Self-Inspection."<sup>31</sup> Dialogue, however, was unfashionable. The age demanded quick and easy answers; the age was superficial and consequently "dogmatical in Philosophy."<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, Shaftesbury chose to emulate

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<sup>30</sup>See above, Chapter I, pp. 35-39. Shaftesbury's covering letter to Lord Somers accompanying the first edition of The Moralists clearly delineates the intended audience.

<sup>31</sup>Char., I, pp. 194-96.

<sup>32</sup>Char., II, p. 190.

the ancients since they combined philosophy and politics and thus provided the model for men of public affairs which he desired to illustrate to his age. The use of dialogue, then, is more than a stylistic device to attract readers; it serves to resurrect the spirit and virtue of the ancients.

Philosophy has been reduced, bemoans Philocles--the sceptical interlocutor--to a study immured in colleges and cells. No longer is she active in the world; no longer does she produce statesmen or indeed even receive any recognition from them. Yet "if Morals be allow'd belonging to her, Politicks must undeniably be hers."<sup>33</sup> If the "Manners and Constitutions" of men in society are to be understood, then it is first necessary to study man "in particular" and to know him as he is. Man has been studied in his relation to society quite often previously, specifically how he comes to join this or that society (i.e., how a contract was formed among men). But consideration of man as a "Citizen or Commoner of the World," to "view his End and Constitution in Nature itself" is considered "over-refin'd Speculation."<sup>34</sup> If, however, man in particular is to be understood, such a study of him must be made. This is the task of The Moralists.

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., pp. 184-85.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

To anyone familiar with the manuscript notebook, "Exercises," one of the most striking things about The Moralists is its dependence on that notebook. The literary aspects of The Moralists are original, that is, they generally do not come from the "Exercises." But a significant proportion of the philosophical content of The Moralists comes directly from the "Exercises." The only important difference between the two is that, whereas the "Exercises" is primarily Stoic in its orientation, The Moralists is openly and clearly Platonic.

Drawing heavily on the exercises "Deity," "Natural Affection," "Nature," "Good and Ill," and "Philosophy" Shaftesbury set forth a cosmic tory system exactly as he did in the notebooks. Due to the stylistic device of the dialogue, however, he did not lay out the system in the progressive order that I followed in my discussion of the "Exercises." That is, he not only used a different starting point, but he also employed digressions to fill in several aspects of the system. Nonetheless, all the necessary ingredients are included, and the whole work stands as an impressive manifesto of cosmic toryism.

O WRETCHED State of Mankind!----Hapless Nature,  
 thus to have err'd in thy chief Workmanship!---  
 ----Whence sprang this fatal Weakness? What  
 Chance or Destiny shall we accuse? Or shall we  
 mind the Poets, when they sing thy Tragedy  
 (PROMETHEUS!) who with thy stoln celestial Fire,

mix'd with the vile Clay, didst mock Heaven's  
 Countenance, and in abusive Likeness of the  
 Immortals mad'st the compound MAN; that wretched  
 Mortal, ill to himself, Cause of Ill to all.-----<sup>35</sup>

With this "Rant" Palemon--who has requested that the conversation be recounted so that he might correct his mistaken understanding of man's nature--raises the problem. Why is man ill and why should he communicate his ill to the rest of the world? Philocles quickly denies that man alone is ill; pleasure and pain, beauty and deformity are everywhere interwoven. Thus they "fell naturally into cool Reasoning about the Nature and Cause of ILL in general: 'Thro' what Contingency, what Chance; by what fatal Necessity, what Will, or what Permission it came upon the World; or being come once, shou'd still subsist."<sup>36</sup>

Palemon insists on using a Promethean figure to account for ill against all Philocles's objections, but is finally persuaded that such a "hazardous Affair" as the creation could not have been undertaken by "those who had not perfect Foresight." Hence the creators<sup>37</sup> were aware of what the consequences of their work would be.

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 199-200.

<sup>37</sup>At this point in the dialogue, Shaftesbury carefully refrains from referring to a single deity and speaks of multiple creators. Only when he gets down to serious discussion does he limit himself to a single creator or deity. This is in keeping with his reliance at this stage on Greek mythology for his material.



Even so, they knew that they could not omit them if the Whole was to be for the best.

'Twas better still that the Project shou'd be executed, whatever might become of Mankind, or how hard soever such a Creation was like to fall on the generality of this miserable Race. For 'twas impossible, you /Palemon/ thought, that Heaven shou'd have acted otherwise than for the best. So that even from this Misery and ILL of Man, there was undoubtedly some GOOD arising; something which overbalanc'd all, and made full amends.<sup>38</sup>

This conclusion, which it might be noted is based on the Platonic argument for the goodness of the world,<sup>39</sup> led Philocles to give a summary account of the cosmic tory system, and that in turn led him to recount in detail the conversation he had with Theocles--a true enthusiast--which convinced him of the veracity of the system.

The main conversation--that between Theocles and Philocles--revolves about the question, what is good? It begins by noting that the common notion of good is pleasure; but the problem of "What sort" is quickly raised. Examples similar to, but not exactly the same as, those in "Good and Ill" are cited to show that different people have different concepts of what is good. Finally it is agreed that only some pleasures are good,

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<sup>38</sup>Char., II, pp. 203-04.

<sup>39</sup>I will discuss the Platonic elements in detail later in this section.

and a type of pleasure usually ignored is put forward as a possible good--pleasures of the mind. But even these are seen to be not necessarily good. At this point Philocles interrupts to assert that one thing can be taken as definite--that pain is ill. But this too, as in "Good and Ill," quickly becomes a questionable assertion. Thus, if pleasure is not good and pain not ill, what is good?<sup>40</sup>

Theocles undertakes to describe to Philocles "the nature of this which I call GOOD;" but he will not do it directly, rather he will attempt to lead Philocles to it by showing him "something of it" in himself. "Tell me, my Friend! if ever you were weary of doing good to those you lov'd? Say when you ever found it unpleasing to serve a Friend? Or whether when you first prov'd this generous Pleasure, you did not feel it less than at this present; after so long Experience?"<sup>41</sup> Friendship is the basis of true good: but is it limited just to individual friendship? "CAN any Friendship . . . be so heroick, as that towards Mankind?"--No. "Publick" friendship, then, is of a higher order than "private friendship."<sup>42</sup> Philocles

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<sup>40</sup>Char., II, pp. 226-37.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 238-39. The terms "Private" and "Publick" are used in marginal headings added by Shaftesbury

demurs from the notion that friendship, particularly to mankind, can be the basis of good. But just as Theocles begins to carry the idea further the conversation is interrupted and he promises to continue the topic the next day.

Public and private friendship are clearly the same as the natural affection discussed in the exercise of that name.<sup>43</sup> Thus far, Shaftesbury has only broached the topic and thus the distinction between natural affection among species and that for the Deity cannot be made. Indeed it is necessary to introduce the notion of Deity first: this is the purpose of the interruption, for a second lengthy conversation ensues which is used to establish the existence of a Deity.

The secondary conversation<sup>44</sup> begins with a defense of a treatise, An Inquiry concerning Virtue, which had

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when he prepared the 1705 edition of The Moralists for the 1709 edition. A printed copy of the 1705 edition with longhand corrections and additions, dated 22 July 1707, is item PRO 26/4 in the Shaftesbury Archive.

<sup>43</sup>In The Moralists, Shaftesbury, for reasons I can only guess at, avoids the term "natural affection." The ideas that he presents are the same as those in the exercise but different terminology is used. Perhaps, he felt that "friendship" would be an easier concept for his readers to grasp than "natural affection." It must never be forgotten that he was writing for a mass audience and hence his philosophy is invariably presented with as little technical jargon as possible.

<sup>44</sup>Char., II, Part II, Sections II-V.

given offense when published.<sup>45</sup> The defense serves to raise the question of how the existence of a Deity can be demonstrated.<sup>46</sup> "A Providence must be prov'd from what we see of Order in things present."<sup>47</sup> Look at the structure of plant and animal bodies. Every part and organ has its "Uses, Ends, and Advantages." The order and exactness of these is evident. "STRANGE! That there shou'd be in Nature the Idea of an Order and Perfection, which NATURE her-self wants!" "Nothing surely is more strongly imprinted on our Minds, or more closely interwoven with our Souls, than the Idea or Sense of Order and Proportion." Thus, "whatever Things have Order, the same have Unity of Design, and concur in one, are Parts constituent of one WHOLE, or are, in themselves, intire Systems."<sup>48</sup> Now if the various systems of the universe are not united into one system<sup>49</sup> then there is no coher-

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<sup>45</sup>This section, Part II, Section III, of The Moralists is the strongest evidence that the fourth Earl's account of the early publication of An Inquiry is mistaken. See Chapter I, pp. 10-11.

<sup>46</sup>Because Shaftesbury simply reiterates the fundamental arguments of An Inquiry, rather than presenting any significantly new material, it will not be necessary to discuss this defense. The basic arguments will be noted when I discuss An Inquiry itself.

<sup>47</sup>Char., II, p. 277.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 284-85.

<sup>49</sup>At this point Shaftesbury cites Locke, Cicero,

ence, order, or design in the Whole. But if there is apparent unity, then there is actual unity.

Here then is our main Subject, insisted on: That neither Man, nor any other Animal, tho ever so compleat a System of Parts, as to all within, can be allow'd in the same manner compleat as to all without; but must be consider'd as having a further relation abroad to the System of his Kind. So even this System of his Kind to the Animal-System; this to the World (our Earth); and this again to the bigger World, and to the Universe.<sup>50</sup>

Thus, "All things in this World are united."

Theocles then delineates the interrelationship-- much as it was done in the exercise "Deity"--of the things in the world. As the branch is united with the tree, so the tree is with the earth, air, and water which feed it.

As much as the fertile Mould is fitted to the Tree, as much as the strong and upright Trunk of the Oak or Elm is fitted to the twining Branches of the Vine or Ivy; so much are the very Leaves, the Seeds, and Fruits of these Trees fitted to the various Animals: These again to one another, and to the Elements where they live, and to which they are, as Appendices, in a manner fitted and join'd; as either by Wings for the Air, Fins for the Water, Feet for the Earth, and by other correspondent inward Parts of a more curious Frame and Texture. Thus in contemplating all on Earth, we must of necessity view All in One, as holding to one common Stock.<sup>51</sup>

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Seneca, and Lucan for support of the notion of a unified system of the world. The citation is notable because it is the only direct citation of Locke in the Characteristics.

<sup>50</sup>Char., II, p. 286.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 287.

There is, then, not just a unity of the world, but also an interdependence of everything in the world on everything else. There is a chain of being. It connects the lowest beings with animals, men, and the system of the bigger world. Thus there is "Order, Union, and Coherence of the Whole!"

Still in this "mighty UNION" the relations of some parts to others are not easily discovered. The ends or uses of some things are not fully clear. "There is no wonder; since 'tis no more indeed than what must happen of necessity: Nor cou'd supreme Wisdom have otherwise order'd it." That is, the appearance of ill is necessary, for a mind, such as man's, which cannot see infinitely, cannot comprehend everything. Thus, even though every particular has a relation to all in general, that relation cannot be perfectly and fully known by man.

"Now having recogniz'd this uniform consistent Fabrick, and own'd the Universal System, we must of consequence acknowledge a Universal MIND."<sup>52</sup> No rational man can reject it except through imagining disorder in the universe. Could anyone, in some remote desert, hear a perfect symphony or see a stunning piece of architecture and believe that no design, no active mind created it? "Wou'd he, because he saw no Hand, deny the Handy-

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 290.

Work?" Would he believe it to have happened solely by accident? Thus if a universal system is accepted--and most men of the day would have done so--then a universal mind, a Deity, must also be accepted.

The conversation then moves on to the topic of man's place in the universal system: most of the material here comes directly from the exercise "Nature." Philocles asks, why has nature given creatures hardiness and vigor which she has denied to man? Theocles replies, why not ask why man does not have wings? And he describes the changes that would be necessary in the anatomy of man if he were to have wings.<sup>53</sup> Once again the answer is predicated on the conservatism and strictness of the order of nature, that is, on the chain of being concept.

Such then . . . is the admirable Distribution of NATURE, her adapting and adjusting not only the Stuff or Matter to the Shape and Form, and even the Shape it-self and Form to the Circumstance, Place, Element or Region; but also the Affections, Appetites, Sensations, mutually to each other, as well as to the Matter, Form, Action, and all besides: 'All manag'd for the best, with perfect Frugality and just Reserve: profuse to none, but bountiful to all: never employing in one thing more than enough; but with exact OEconomy retrenching the superfluous, and adding Force to what is principal in every thing.'<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>See above, pp. 70-72.

<sup>54</sup>Char., II, p. 306. The quotation within the quotation is simply Philocles--who is recounting the conversation--quoting Theocles.

Philocles is willing to accept this answer, until the uniqueness of man's thought and reason is asserted. He then objects that beasts have instincts which man lacks. But surely, Theocles replies, this is good, for it forces man to use his facilities and to enter into society. Man is, by nature, a social animal.<sup>55</sup> Thus man needs to "submit to the Elements of NATURE:" he needs to accept his role in the universal system.

After this lengthy interruption Shaftesbury returns once again to the main conversation--that of Theocles and Philocles on the question of good. Theocles is now presented as a thorough-going Platonist and thus most of his arguments are Platonic in origin. It is also now that the "Rhapsody" promised in the title appears: Theocles voices ecstatic paeans to nature. Indeed, the opening lines of the renewed conversation combine both:

O GLORIOUS Nature! supremely Fair, and sovereignly Good! All-loving and All-lovely, All-divine! Whose Looks are so becoming, and of such infinite Grace; whose Study brings such Wisdom, and whose Contemplation such Delight; whose every single Work affords an ampler Scene, and is a nobler Spectacle than all which ever Art presented-----O mighty Nature! Wise Substitute of Providence! im-  
power'd Creatress! Or Thou impowering DEITY, supreme Creator! Thee I invoke, and Thee alone adore. To thee this Solitude, this Place, these Rural Meditations are sacred; whilst thus inspir'd with Harmony of Thought, tho unconfin'd

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<sup>55</sup>See above, pp. 73-75.



by Words, and in loose Numbers, I sing of Nature's Order in created Beings, celebrate the Beautys which resolve in Thee, the Source and Principle of all Beauty and Perfection.<sup>56</sup>

Nature is said to be the "Wise Substitute of Providence:" that is, Nature is the sensible image of the eternal "Maker" or Demiurge."<sup>57</sup> The "DEITY"--Demiurge-- is the source of all order, beauty and perfection. Again, these characteristics of the original Form--Deity-- are transmitted or transferred to Nature, the sensible image, in the process of creation. The remainder of the conversation is used to expound and detail these assertions.

Theocles continues by demonstrating that there is unity in the individual "Self." Indeed the "Self" or

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<sup>56</sup>Char., II, p. 345.

<sup>57</sup>F. M. Cornford, Plato's Cosmology: The "Timaeus" of Plato translated with a running commentary (London: 1937), pp. 33-5. Cornford correctly points out that Plato's Demiurge cannot legitimately be equated with the Judeo-Christian concept of God. Shaftesbury, of course, has done just that. This, however, is not at all surprising for modern (i.e., post-Renaissance) Platonism has consistently made this error. In the context of Shaftesbury's thought this is undoubtedly a minor point, but it does indicate that his Platonism is not pure. To confirm his position Cornford cites a passage from Galen, which further illustrates how a cosmic tory could use Plato, albeit corrupt Plato, to support his cosmology: "the doctrine of Moses differed from that of Plato and of all the Greeks who have correctly approached the study of Nature. For Moses, God has only to will to bring matter into order, and matter is ordered immediately. We do not think in that way; we say that certain things are impossible by nature and these God does not even attempt; he only chooses the best among the things that come about." (p. 36)

"Personality" of an individual is what is constant and unites the components of the body. "Is there then such a uniting Principle in NATURE? If so, how are you then a Self, and Nature not so? How have you something to understand and act for you, and NATURE, who gave this Understanding, nothing at all to understand for her, advise her, or help her out (poor Being!) on any occasion, whatever Necessity she may be in?"<sup>58</sup> Is there nothing which administers all? A contemporary hypothesis, the mechanical philosophy of Descartes and his successors, says there is not. From eternity there has been only matter in motion, with thought scattered only here and there. No, said the ancient atomists, for only by chance has matter fallen out into its present state: no intelligence guided it. "For my own share (thank Providence) I have a MIND in my possession, which serves, such as it is, to keep my Body and its Affections, my Passions, Appetites, Imaginations, Fancys, and the rest, in tolerable Harmony and Order. But the Order of the UNIVERSE, I am persuaded still, is much the better of the two."<sup>59</sup> Theocles concludes that he is convinced of his own being.

That 'tis a real Self, drawn out, and copy'd  
from another principal and original SELF (the

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<sup>58</sup>Char., II, p. 357.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., pp. 357-58.

Great-one of the World). I endeavour to be really one with it, and conformable to it, as far as I am able. I consider, That as there is one general Mass, one Body of the Whole; so to this Body there is an Order, to this Order a MIND: That to this general MIND each particular-one must have relation; as being of like Substance, (as much as we can understand of Substance) alike active upon Body, original to Motion and Order; alike simple, uncompounded, individual; of like Energy, Effect, and Operation; and more like still, if it co-operates with it to general Good, and strives to will according to the best of Wills. So that it cannot surely but seem natural, that the particular MIND shou'd seek its Happiness in conformity with the general-one, and endeavour to resemble it in its highest Simplicity and Excellence.<sup>60</sup>

In arguing for a "Self" Theocles has established what would ordinarily be called a "soul." His argument is exactly that used by Plato in the Timaeus, except he has reversed it. Plato established the world-soul--the soul of Nature--first and had it transmitted to individuals.<sup>61</sup> Theocles argued for the existence of the individual soul and concluded from it that there must be a universal soul, and that the individual soul was "copy'd" from the world-soul. Again, Plato is called upon to demonstrate the unity of the world, this time through the likeness of the individual soul and the world-soul.

It is worth noting that the discussion of "Self" or soul was added by Shaftesbury when he revised the 1705

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 358-59.

<sup>61</sup>Timaeus, 30B.

edition in July 1707. Indeed, many, but not all, of the Platonic arguments were added in the process of revision, indicating that Shaftesbury's full awareness of Plato came fairly late in his career, after his periods of prolonged study. This is fully confirmed by the date included in his reading notes on Plato: "St G. 1706/7 /O.S.7."<sup>62</sup> Thus we are seeing a major new element in Shaftesbury's thought, which quickly discounts the notion that Shaftesbury obtained his Platonism from the Cambridge Platonists.<sup>63</sup>

Theocles has now obtained a united and intelligent world. But still all is good and this is contrary to appearances. The argument, founded on the inertial analogy, that all particular natures constantly strive for their good and are deflected from it only by outside forces is repeated by Theocles.<sup>64</sup> Philocles fails to accept this as an adequate proof that ill is only apparent and demands a demonstration, which Theocles immediately provides.

TAKE Demonstration then, said he /Theocles/,  
if you /Philocles/ can endure I shou'd reason

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<sup>62</sup>PRO 27/13.

<sup>63</sup>E.g., Aldridge, "Deist Manifesto," p. 322. I will discuss this point further in Chapter IV.

<sup>64</sup>Char., II, pp. 359-60. Shaftesbury here repeats verbatim the argument given in "Deity." See above, pp. 58-59.

thus abstractedly and drily. The Appearances of ILL, you say, are not necessarily that ILL they represent to you.

I own it.

THEREFORE, what they represent may possibly be GOOD.

It may.

AND therefore there may possibly be no real ILL in things: but all may be perfectly concurrent to one interest; the Interest of that Universal ONE.

It may be so.

WHY, then, if it may be so, (be not surprized) 'It follows that it must be so;' on the account of that great Unit, and simple Self-principle, which you have granted in the WHOLE. For whatever is possible in the Whole, the Nature or Mind of the Whole will put in execution for the Whole's Good: And if it be possible to exclude ILL, it will exclude it. Therefore since notwithstanding the Appearances, 'tis possible that ILL may actually be excluded; count upon it, 'That actually it is excluded.'<sup>65</sup>

Theocles has used the Principle of Sufficient Reason to demonstrate the proposition, that is, the principle that nothing is without reason.<sup>66</sup> The reason, of course, is

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<sup>65</sup>Char., II, p. 364.

<sup>66</sup>Lovejoy, p. 175. Lovejoy devotes a chapter of his book to the use of the Principle of Sufficient Reason by Leibniz and Spinoza (Chapter V).

the will of the creator--the Deity. The Deity desires to exclude ill for the good of the Whole; hence all ill is excluded.<sup>67</sup>

The Principle of Sufficient Reason was fairly widely used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most notably by Leibniz and Spinoza. As Lovejoy makes clear, it is ultimately based on the Platonic conception of the creation of the world and was used by Leibniz and Spinoza to explain why everything that exists does exist.<sup>68</sup> It was for both of them a supplement to the principle of plenitude--the notion of a full universe--which is necessary for a chain of being. It is interesting to note, however, that while Shaftesbury accepted the concept of plenitude, as will be seen shortly, his use of the Principle of Sufficient Reason here leads him to a conclusion markedly different from Leibniz's optimism. Shaftesbury uses the Principle to deny the existence of any ill in the world. Leibniz, more in tune with Plato, argues only that this is the best of possible worlds: ill ex-

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<sup>67</sup>Shaftesbury's exclusion of ill here seems to me to contradict his earlier statements--above p. 86-7. There he said the creators could not avoid creating ill, which is wholly consistent with Plato. Here he says the Deity can, if he desires and he does, exclude ill. This latter conclusion is consistent with his belief that ill is only apparent in the world: he asserts this proposition repeatedly in the "Exercises" and in An Inquiry. Thus I take this second argument to be his personal choice.

<sup>68</sup>Lovejoy, pp. 144-182 passim.

ists; indeed it cannot be avoided, but it is minimal.<sup>69</sup>

Using the principle again, Theocles attacks, almost in the same breath, Bayle's Manicheanism. Nothing merely passive can oppose the "universally active Principle" of the good. If an active principle opposes it, it is another principle.

'Tis impossible. For were there in Nature Two or more Principles, either they must agree, or not. If they agree not, all must be Confusion, till one be predominant. If they agree, there must be some natural Reason for their Agreement; and this natural Reason cannot be from Chance, but from some particular Design, Contrivance, or Thought: which brings us up again to ONE Principle, and makes the other two to be subordinate.<sup>70</sup>

With this Shaftesbury removes all doubt that his inertial analogy can lead to a system of two principles--a doubt which arose in the exercise "Deity."<sup>71</sup> There is and can be only one governing principle in the world--the principle of the good. Or to put it another way, the world is united and is governed by a good Deity for the good of the Whole.

It is useless to hope to understand the Whole through the senses, for all that they suggest may be de-

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<sup>69</sup>In this regard it should be pointed out that Shaftesbury seldom speaks of "possible" worlds; indeed he does so only once--in An Inquiry--that I am aware of. Generally he speaks of this "best of worlds."

<sup>70</sup>Char., II, p. 365.

<sup>71</sup>See above, pp. 58-59.

ceitful.<sup>72</sup> Reason alone enables us to be conscious of that "original and eternally existent THOUGHT, whence we derive our own. And thus the Assurance we have of the Existence of Beings above our Sense, and of THEE, (the great Exemplar of thy Works) comes from Thee, the ALL-TRUE, and Perfect, who hast thus communicated thy-self more immediately to us, so as in some manner to inhabit within our Souls; Thou who art Original SOUL, diffusive, vital in all, inspiriting the Whole."<sup>73</sup> Again, Theocles repeats the Platonic conception of the creation as a prelude to a discursive exposition of the fullness of the universe. He begins by detailing the "System of the bigger World," moving on to the inhabitants of the earth, noting how various creatures and plants are suited especially to their environment, and the complexity and completeness of their being. He is describing the plenitude of nature, and he appropriately ends by saying that we are incapable of declaring "the Use or Service" of all things in the universe. Yet we are "assur'd of the Perfection of all, and of the Justice of that OEconomy, to which all things are subservient, and in respect of

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<sup>72</sup>This may be a statement of Shaftesbury's opposition to Locke's epistemology, but it is too brief to be certain. Similar statements, however, are made in An Inquiry. Char., II, p. 369.

<sup>73</sup>Char., II, pp. 369-70.



which, Things seemingly deform'd are amiable; Disorder becomes regular, Corruption Wholesom; and Poisons (such as these we have seen) prove healing and beneficial."<sup>74</sup> We may not understand the Whole, but reason assures us that it is good.

At this point, cosmological discussion ends and the conversation turns to establishing beauty as the true good. By this point Philocles has succumbed to the beauties of nature, as seen in its plenitude. But why, he asks, are not more people enamored of natural beauty? Many appear to be, but they are normally called enthusiasts and are denigrated. No wonder, replies Theocles, for it is easy to pursue the shadow for the substance.

For if we may trust to what our Reasoning has taught us; whatever in Nature is beautiful or charming, is only the faint Shadow of that First Beauty. So that every real LOVE depending on the Mind, and being only the Contemplation of Beauty, either as it really is in itself, or as it appears imperfectly in the Objects which strike the Sense; how can the rational Mind rest here, or be satisfy'd with the absurd Enjoyment which reaches the Sense alone?<sup>75</sup>

We, then, who are rational must not seek enjoyment through the senses: we must seek enjoyment in those objects which are "truly Fair, Generous, or Good." "So that BEAUTY,

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., pp. 388-89.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 395.

said I, and GOOD, with you, THEOCLES, I perceive are still one and the same."

'TIS SO, said he. And thus we are return'd again to the Subject of our Yesterday's Morning-Conversation. Whether I have made good my Promise to you, in showing the true Good, I know not. But so, doubtless, I shou'd have done with good success, had I been able in my poetick Extasys, or by any other Efforts, to have led you into some deep View of Nature, and the Sovereign GENIUS. We then had prov'd the Force of Divine BEAUTY; and form'd in ourselves an Object capable and worthy of real Enjoyment.<sup>76</sup>

Philocles agrees that he has been convinced and now sees "that all sound Love and Admiration is ENTHUSIASM."<sup>77</sup> He, too, has now become an enthusiast. Thus we have true enthusiasm: the love and admiration of "Divine BEAUTY."

The two interlocutors, to strengthen Philocles's conversion, proceed to discuss beauty, the "Chief Science." They search for the subject in which "BEAUTY reigns: where 'tis intire, perfect, absolute." Is it to be found in the metal or stone of the sculpture? No. Is it, then, in the art? Certainly. "The Art then is the Beauty. Right. And the Art is that which beautifies. The Same. So that the Beautifying, not the Beautify'd, is the

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 399-400; see above, p. 89 where the original conversation broke off.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 400.

really Beautiful. It seems so. For that which is beautify'd, is beautiful only by the accession of something beautifying: and by the recess or withdrawing of the same, it ceases to be beautiful?"<sup>78</sup> Thus, "the Beautiful, the Fair, the Comely, were never in the Matter, but in the Art and Design; never in Body it-self, but in the Form or forming Power."<sup>79</sup> Beauty, then, is a form--a Platonic Form. What is ultimately sought is the "first Order of Beauty"--that which is the source of all beauty. It is that which has the power to fashion even minds themselves; in other words, the first order of beauty is "Divine BEAUTY." It is wholly equivalent to the Good and thus to the Deity. Once again, we find beauty leading us to the unity and goodness of the world. Indeed, they are one and the same.

But why discuss beauty at such length? Because beauty--the first order of beauty--is something that the mind and reason of man can enjoy. "Here lies his Dignity and highest Interest: Here his Capacity toward Good and Happiness. His Ability or Incompetency, his Power of Enjoyment, or his Impotence, is founded in this alone. As this is sound, fair, noble, worthy; so are its Subjects, Acts and Employments."<sup>80</sup> The enjoyment of beauty is man's

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 403-4.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 405.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 425.

happiness. And the search for happiness is the definition of philosophy.<sup>81</sup>

In The Moralists Shaftesbury undertook to study the relation of man to "his End and Constitution in Nature." He did this to establish a foundation for a moral or virtuous society, for if man properly understands and accepts his place in nature, he will "know himself" and act properly in this world. Acting properly in this world entails affection for mankind; that is, he will love mankind and all his action will be directed to obtaining or enhancing what is best for mankind and, thus, his own private happiness.

A more detailed study of man's social responsibilities occurs in An Inquiry concerning Virtue or Merit, which was written a few years before The Moralists.<sup>82</sup> The Moralists, however, is the logical predecessor of

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<sup>81</sup>See above, pp. 78-80. The final pages of The Moralists are devoted to repeating this definition of philosophy. Char., II, pp. 438-42.

<sup>82</sup>Precisely when it was written is not known, but it was sometime before 1699, when Toland published it. It did not appear in print again until 1711 when it was included in the Characteristics. I am using the final version--that in the Characteristics--exclusively, since the differences between the two versions are mainly stylistic. Aldridge, however, does point out that a short addition to the 1711 version indicates Shaftesbury had become aware of philosophic idealism in the intervening years: he attributes this to Berkeley's Principles of Human Knowledge (1710), but ignores or is ignorant of the evidence of Shaftesbury's knowledge of Plato. I suspect--since Al-

An Inquiry, for the latter treatise adopts the cosmic tory system as a postulate and proceeds to work out the details of a moral or virtuous society. It was Shaftesbury's only effort at purely formal, systematic philosophy and is a closely-woven essay proceeding with strictly logical order, allowing no diversions or extraneous material. It is necessary for the present exposition of Shaftesbury's cosmic toryism to see how he used cosmic toryism in An Inquiry as the basis of virtue, but it will not be necessary to discuss the details of the ethical system thus derived.

An Inquiry begins by stating its purpose: to inquire into what virtue is, in what manner it is influenced by religion, and whether it is possible for an atheist to be virtuous.<sup>83</sup> To answer these questions the "Original" of all possible opinions concerning Deity or religion must be sought; it is here that Shaftesbury postulates the basic premises of a cosmic tory system.

In the Whole of Things (or in the Universe)  
either all is according to a good Order, and

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dridge never indicates that he studied the Shaftesbury papers--that it is a case of ignorance of the evidence. Philosophic idealism, however, does not play any conspicuous role in An Inquiry. See Aldridge, "Two Versions . . . ," p. 212.

<sup>83</sup>Char., II, p. 7. I will deal in part with all three questions. The third one is the one that created controversy and is the one Shaftesbury defended in The Moralists.

the most agreeable to a general Interest: or there is that which is otherwise, and might possibly have been better constituted, more wisely contriv'd, and with more advantage to the general Interest of Beings, or of the Whole.

If every thing which exists be according to a good Order, and for the best; then of necessity there is no such thing as real ILL in the Universe, nothing ILL with respect to the Whole.<sup>84</sup>

The universe is either constituted according to a good order, or there might be a better possible world. If there is a good order, then there is no real ill, for ill implies a better possible order. Thus if there is no better possible order, then all is perfectly good.

"WHATSOEVER is really ILL" must be caused either by design or chance. If it is caused by design, then there is no one good designing principle (Deity). The designing principle is either corrupt or there are at least two such principles. If ill is caused by chance, then there is no universal designing principle at all.<sup>85</sup> All possible opinions concerning Deity--and there are four--are derived from one or more of these positions. "To believe . . . that every thing is govern'd, order'd, or regulated for the best, by a designing Principle, or Mind, neces-

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<sup>84</sup>Char., II, p. 9.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., pp. 9-10.

sarily good and permanent, is to be a perfect THEIST."<sup>86</sup> To believe that there is no designing principle, that there is only chance, is to be a perfect Atheist. To believe in no single designing principle but in two or more is to be a Polytheist. And to believe that the governing mind or minds are not absolutely and necessarily good, but capable of acting according to mere fancy or will is to be a Daemonist.<sup>87</sup> Thus a believer in what Shaftesbury will argue is the true position of religion, that is to be a theist, necessitates acceptance of the cosmic tory scheme of things as the defining characteristics of the Deity.

With the preliminary definitions established, Shaftesbury turns to the problem of determining exactly what virtue is: after that he will analyze virtue in terms of each of the possible religious opinions. As will quickly become evident, virtue is founded on the notion of natural affection--the idea that we have already seen him use in both the "Exercises" and The Moralists to indicate the individual's role in the system of the Whole.

While it is impossible to understand the reason and end of all things in nature, we can know, through study,

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

many of the reasons or ends of many things.<sup>88</sup> "We know that every Creature has a private Good and Interest of his own; which Nature has compel'd him to seek, by all the Advantages afforded him, within the compass of his Make. . . . There being therefore in every Creature a certain Interest or Good; there must be also a certain END, to which every thing in his Constitution must naturally refer."<sup>89</sup> If the creature's appetites or passions lead him in a direction contrary to his end, then it is ill to him and it will also be ill to others of his kind. Thus what is good and useful to himself is the same to others. "And thus Virtue and Interest may be found . . . to agree."<sup>90</sup>

That there is a system of all animals, an order or economy, in which all animal affairs are regulated, can be readily seen by considering the interrelationships of the various species. If that system is extended to include the vegetable world, and then again to include all other things in this "inferior World," it can be concluded that there is one system of the earth. If the system of the

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<sup>88</sup>Note that this is exactly the same conclusion as was drawn in The Moralists after the plenitude of nature was established. See above, pp. 101-103.

<sup>89</sup>Char., II, p. 15.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 16.



earth in turn is related to extra-terrestrial objects, then there must be a greater system, a system of the universe from which all things can be deduced. If there be such a universal system, "there can be no particular Being or System which is not either good or ill in that general one of the Universe." "THEREFORE if any Being be wholly and really ILL, it must be ill with respect to the Universal System; and then the System of the Universe is ill, or imperfect." But if the ill of one particular system be the good of the others, then that ill is no real ill in itself. "So that we cannot say of any Being, that it is wholly and absolutely ill, unless we can positively shew and ascertain, that what we call ILL is no where GOOD besides, in any other System, or with respect to any other Order or OEconomy whatsoever."<sup>91</sup>

Thus if there be any entire species destructive to all others, it may correctly be called an ill species; if in any species one individual is pernicious to the rest, he is justly called ill. However, if a man has plague-spots or is subject to convulsive fits, he is not justly called an ill man, for he is not wholly ill to the system of the Whole. Thus in sensible creatures "that which is not done thro' any Affection at all, makes neither Good nor Ill in the nature of that Creature."

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.

Accidental distempers are not due to affections, which operate only in relation to a system. Again, the man with plague-spots does not affect them, and hence is not ill with regard to the system of the Whole. Thus, the creature is "suppos'd Good, when the Good or Ill of the System to which he has relation, is the immediate Object of some Passion or Affection moving in him."<sup>92</sup> In other words, a creature is good if he affects the good of the system, and ill if he affects the ill of the system. Hence we must examine "which are the good and natural, and which the ill and unnatural Affections" to discover virtue.

Affections are of two kinds, those toward private good or self-interest and those towards public interest or good. If an affection toward private good contributes in any measure to public good, it is a good affection. If, however, an affection towards private good harms the public interest, it is an ill or unnatural affection.

WHEN in general, all the Affections or Passions are suited to the publick Good, or good of the Species, as above-mentioned; then is the natural Temper intirely good. If, on the contrary, any requisite Passion be wanting; or if there be any one supernumerary, or weak, or any-wise disserviceable, or contrary to that main End; then is the natural Temper, and consequently the Creature himself, in some measure corrupt and ill.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., pp. 26-7.

Goodness is attainable by all sensible creatures; "VIRTUE or MERIT" "is allow'd to Man only." A rational creature capable of forming general notions of things, affects not only the objects of the senses, but also emotions such as pity, kindness, and gratitude which are objects of the mind through reflection. "So that, by means of this reflected Sense, there arises another kind of Affection towards those very Affections themselves, which have already been felt, and are now become the Subject of a new Liking or Dislike."<sup>94</sup> Man has affections of a higher order than those of the sensible creatures.

THUS the several Motions, Inclinations, Passions, Dispositions, and consequent Carriage and Behaviour of Creatures in the various Parts of Life, being in several Views or Perspectives represented to the Mind, which readily discerns the Good and Ill towards the Species or Publick; there arises a new Trial or Exercise of the Heart: which must either rightly and soundly affect what is just and right, and disaffect what is contrary; or, corruptly affect what is ill, and disaffect what is worthy and good.

AND in this Case alone it is we call any Creature worthy or virtuous, when it can have the Notion of a publick Interest, and can attain the Speculation or Science of what is morally good or ill, admirable or blameable, right or wrong.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., pp. 30-1.

Thus virtue depends on a knowledge of right and wrong and on the use of reason. Reason must be used to ensure that the affections are properly or correctly applied. Virtue is the rational use of the affections for the good of the public interest. This, as has been seen before, is the natural affection of mankind.

The question, can this principle of virtue be eliminated or made ineffectual, is raised; the answer turns on the various opinions of Deity. The definition of virtue is again repeated: "THE Nature of VIRTUE consists (as has been explain'd) in a certain just Disposition, or proportionable Affection of a rational Creature towards the moral Objects of Right and Wrong."<sup>96</sup> First, then, can this principle of virtue be eliminated?--only if the natural sense of right and wrong is taken away.

IT will not surely be understood, that by this is meant the taking away the Notion of what is good or ill in the Species, or Society. For of the Reality of such a Good and Ill, no rational Creature can possibly be insensible. Every one discerns and owns a publick Interest, and is conscious of what affects his Fellowship or Community.<sup>97</sup>

That is, natural affection, which is innate, provides a rational creature, man, with his notion of right and wrong. Thus the "SENSE of Right and Wrong therefore

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

being as natural to us as natural Affection itself, and being a first Principle in our Constitution and Make; there is no speculative Opinion, Persuasion, or Belief, which is capable immediately or directly to exclude or destroy it."<sup>98</sup> Not even atheism, which does not acknowledge a designing principle, can destroy this innate "moral Sense"<sup>99</sup>--the natural sense of right and wrong.

Can the moral sense be made ineffectual? It can, if the belief or conception of a Deity is of a certain kind. Men may yield obedience to a Deity in two ways: "It must be either in the way of his POWER, as presupposing some Disadvantage or Benefit to accrue from him: or in the way of his EXCELLENCY and WORTH, as thinking it the Perfection of Nature to imitate and resemble him."<sup>100</sup> If the first case holds and a creature does good or is restrained from doing ill only through fear of punishment or hope of reward, then there is no virtue or goodness whatever, because no affection is allowed to operate. The moral sense is overridden: reason is not

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<sup>98</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>99</sup>Shaftesbury did not actually use the term "moral sense" in the text until two pages later (p. 46), but he used it in the marginal headings (pp. 40 and 42) to refer to the natural sense of right and wrong. It is clear that he intended the first part of the quotation to be a definition of the term--indeed it is the only definition of it that he gives in An Inquiry.

<sup>100</sup>Char., II, p. 54.

given a chance to operate.<sup>101</sup> But if the second case holds and the Deity is admired and revered for his worth and goodness, is understood to have the highest excellence of nature, making him amiable to all, then he serves as an example "to raise and increase the Affection towards Virtue, and help to submit and subdue all other Affections to that alone."<sup>102</sup>

NOR is this Good effected by Example merely. For where the Theistical Belief is intire and perfect, there must be a steddly Opinion of the Superintendency of a Supreme Being, a Witness and Spectator of human Life, and conscious of whatsoever is felt or acted in the Universe: So that in the perfectest Recess, or deepest Solitude, there must be One still presum'd remaining with us; whose Presence singly must be of more moment than that of the most august Assembly on Earth. In such a Presence, 'tis evident. that as the Shame of guilty Actions must be the greatest of any; so must the Honour be, or well-doing, even under the unjust Censure of a World. And in this Case, 'tis very apparent how conducing a perfect Theism must be to Virtue, and how great Defficiency there is in Atheism.<sup>103</sup>

Perfect theism aids the moral sense, for the Deity encourages by example and by its own affection for the world, natural affection in man.

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<sup>101</sup>Ibid., pp. 55-6.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., II, p. 57. I might add at this point that the other opinions of Deity, Polytheism and Daemonism, are never used by Shaftesbury in the discussion even though he promised to do so. They merely served to make his definitions logically complete.

One more example of the advantages of perfect Theism to virtue may be cited: all men are subject to misfortune and calamities. Atheists, of course, argue that it all happens by chance and hence nothing can be done. But a perfect theist understands "That whatever the Order of the World produces, is in the main both just and good."

Therefore in the Course of Things in this World, whatever Hardship of Events may seem to force from any rational Creature a hard Censure of his private Condition or Lot; he may by Reflection nevertheless come to have Patience, and to acquiesce in it. Nor is this all. He may go further still in this Reconciliation; and from the same Principle may make the Lot itself an Object of his good Affection; whilst he strives to maintain this general Fealty, and stands so well-dispos'd towards the Laws and Government of his highest Country.<sup>104</sup>

Virtue increases when man understands and accepts his role in Nature, for he has natural affection not just for mankind but also and more importantly for Nature itself and the governor of Nature, Deity. Virtue, then, is at its highest when man accepts the cosmic tory system.

In his rather discursive manner Shaftesbury, in The Moralists and An Inquiry concerning Virtue or Merit,<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>105</sup>None of the other treatises in the Characteristics add any new material to the picture of cosmic toryism drawn in these treatises, and thus I will not discuss them here. They do, however, show that they, too, are based on the same principles, thus further substantiating the ubiquity of Shaftesbury's cosmic toryism.

set forth a thorough statement and vindication of cosmic toryism. He also indicated its use to men of the world: it is the foundation of virtue and, as such, can and should be practiced by the governing classes.

The universe is a unitary system; the multitude of secondary systems that we can analyze leads us inevitably to the unity of the Whole. The unity and order of the Whole in turn indicate an intelligent governor and designer, Deity. The Deity's goodness is evident from the order and harmony of his creation. Hence the Whole is good. All ill is merely apparent, for our finite minds cannot comprehend the purpose of everything within the Whole. That is, the ends or purposes of all things are for the good of the Whole, but we are incapable of seeing this and hence some things appear ill to us. All creatures have natural affection for their species. Man alone has a natural affection greater than that for mankind, natural affection for the Deity. This affection for Deity enables man to submit to the Whole and to accept his place in the Whole. Thus man, who understands the unity and order of the Whole, the goodness of the Deity, accepts the status quo, including whatever ill comes his way.

Man's natural affection for mankind makes him a social animal. It also leads him to practice virtue, that is, a rational adherence to the public good. A virtuous



man will attempt at all times to make his actions conform to the good of the Whole, for in it lies his happiness. Politicians, too, should be virtuous. They should study philosophy so that they can understand man's role in nature and by working for the good of the Whole, can contribute to the general happiness of society.

It is this extension of cosmic toryism, with its inherent acceptance of the existing social order, to the political realm that distinguishes Shaftesbury's beliefs from similar contemporary systems. Therefore I want to turn now to a more detailed discussion of Shaftesbury's political beliefs and their relation to cosmic toryism.

### CHAPTER III

#### COSMIC TORYISM AND POLITICS

Although his active political career was extremely short, Shaftesbury's political stance is often characterized by such phrases as Rubini's "extreme whig" or "the rabid whig."<sup>1</sup> It is undeniable that he was a Whig: his reverence for his grandfather assured that.<sup>2</sup> Yet that very reverence makes Rubini's simplistic characterization doubtful, for the vagaries of the Whigs from the Revolution to the rise of Walpole indicate that Whiggery was not clear-cut. Shaftesbury adhered to the basic principles utilized by his grandfather, but these were generally outside the drift of post-Revolution Whiggism. Indeed they bear a marked likeness to the developing Toryism of Bolingbroke and his circle. In this chapter I wish to analyze Shaftesbury's political views in an effort to show that they follow from his cosmic toryism

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<sup>1</sup>Dennis Rubini, Court and Country, 1688-1702 (London: 1967), pp. 237 and 205 respectively.

<sup>2</sup>E.g., Letter to Peter King, January 1704/5, PRO 22/4 and Rand, pp. 325-6.

and that they, thus, do not conform to any facile concept of Whiggism.<sup>3</sup>

Considerable controversy surrounds the discussion of political parties in this period. Robert Walcott argues that the period is one of confused politics because the two-party system was absent.<sup>4</sup> Both J. H. Plumb<sup>5</sup> and Geoffrey Holmes<sup>6</sup> argue for the existence of a two-party system, although they acknowledge many divisions within each of the parties. All agree, however, that there was a court-country division and that this split, whether within or without parties, was a major factor in the politics of the day. The country element was largely one of opposition: it opposed the consolidation of central government with its consequent patronage,

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<sup>3</sup>The suggestion that there might be a relation between Shaftesbury's cosmic toryism and his politics was made to me in conversation by John Dunn of King's College, Cambridge. I found the suggestion most intriguing and began to look for evidence of it in my reading. I quickly decided that it was indeed there and that by seeing the Characteristics as a political work, it makes much greater sense and is a much more unified work than any other way of reading it would indicate.

<sup>4</sup>Robert Walcott, English Politics in the Early Eighteenth Century (Oxford: 1956), p. 160.

<sup>5</sup>J. H. Plumb, The Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725 (London: 1967), pp. 134-35.

<sup>6</sup>Geoffrey Holmes, British Politics in the Age of Anne (London: 1967), p. 6.

inefficiency, and corruption--real or imagined.<sup>7</sup> Its members were mainly back-bench gentry, who for the most part played little role in the actual government of the kingdom. The court element, on the other hand, readily accepted office and generally worked to strengthen the monarchy and its authority. Members of both factions have been classified with party labels: thus one can speak of court Whigs, country Whigs, court Tories, and country Tories. Our principal concern will be with the country Whigs and Tories.

Among the more important members of the country Whig group were the "commonwealthmen."<sup>8</sup> A circle formed around Robert Molesworth including John Toland, Walter Moyle, William Molyneux, John Trenchard, Thomas Gordon, and Matthew Tindal. These men, with the exception of

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<sup>7</sup>Rubini, pp. 23-25; J. G. A. Pocock, "Machiavelli, Harrington, and English Political Ideologies in the Eighteenth Century," The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, XXII (1965), 565.

<sup>8</sup>Caroline Robbins, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman (Cambridge, Mass.: 1959). Commonwealthmen accepted various philosophical positions growing out of the Cromwellian Commonwealth. More often than not their ideas were based on Harrington's Oceana (see Pocock's article). Miss Robbins' thesis is that these men kept radical and republican notions alive throughout the eighteenth century and that they were ultimately transmitted to the American colonies where they found their fruition in the new Constitution. In our period their primary effort was directed towards the maintenance of the Revolution Settlement and Protestant succession.

Molesworth and Trenchard, both intermittent officeholders, were political theorists and writers, who were primarily responsible for publicizing the country beliefs. Molesworth's circle also included several governmental figures: Lord John Somers, Sidney Godolphin, Robert Harley, Charles Montagu (later Earl of Halifax), and General James Stanhope.<sup>9</sup> None of them could be classified commonwealthmen, but all adhered more or less to the country party position. Significantly Godolphin and Harley had both Whig and Tory allegiances, for by the turn of the century the bulk of the country opposition had largely merged with the Tory party under the leadership of Harley<sup>10</sup> and his rising lieutenant, Henry St. John, later Viscount Bolingbroke, whose writings are usually considered to be the embodiment of country ideals.<sup>11</sup> Shaftesbury had connections with all these men. He was a "self-declared disciple"<sup>12</sup> of Molesworth, a patron to Toland, and corresponded with most of the others. Indeed even his publisher, John Darby, was the primary publisher of

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<sup>9</sup>Robbins, pp. 91-98.

<sup>10</sup>Plumb, pp. 139ff.

<sup>11</sup>Plumb, p. 133; and Isaac Kranmick, Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole (Cambridge, Mass.: 1968), which is the best analysis of Bolingbroke's political thought available. Kranmick details his country connections.

<sup>12</sup>Robbins, p. 6.

commonwealth and country tracts.<sup>13</sup> Thus his ties with the group were strong: when his political thought is analyzed it will become clear that both are from the same mold.

Unfortunately, but for reasons I hope to make clear, Shaftesbury did not write a treatise of political philosophy. His views must be gathered from brief statements in the Characteristics, the Second Characters, and his correspondence. Nonetheless a coherent political philosophy can be ascertained, one in which his country party position and its cosmic tory foundations are clear. The fact that one has to look to the Characteristics for it indicates an aspect of that work which has generally been overlooked by commentators on Shaftesbury. In Chapter I, it was pointed out that he considered the Characteristics to be a political work.<sup>14</sup> An analysis of his political thought will show why. He designed his treatises to be guides for practicing politicians: they would teach them to understand the nature of the Whole and would show them how to govern in accordance with the principles of Nature. His explicit political comments serve as examples of how to put his principles into action. He was concerned to raise the level of political activity:

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>14</sup> See above, Chapter I, pp. 37-38.

adherence to his ideals would do that.

The end of man in nature is society: that is, man is a social animal. We have already seen how Shaftesbury arrived at this conclusion from his concept of natural affection,<sup>15</sup> but perhaps it would be well to see how he develops the argument in other contexts for it lies at the heart of his political philosophy. It may be taken as an axiom, "That if any thing be natural, in any Creature, or any Kind; 'tis that which is preservative of the Kind it-self, and conducing to its Welfare and Support." "If Eating and Drinking be natural, Herding is so too. If any Appetite or Sense be natural, the Sense of Fellowship is the same." If affection between the sexes is natural, then certainly love of offspring and mutual affection between the offspring is also. In this way a "Clan or Tribe is gradually form'd." Pleasure is found in "social Entertainment, Language, and Discourse," hence strengthening the social ties. Indeed, to find no pleasure in these, to have no love of country or community is "to be insensible even of the plainest Means of Self-Preservation, and most necessary Condition of Self-Enjoyment."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Chapter II, pp. 64-68, 93-95, 118-19.

<sup>16</sup>Char., I, pp. 110-11. (Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour)

HOW the Wit of Man shou'd so puzzle this Cause, as to make Civil Government and Society appear a kind of Invention, and Creature of Art, I know not. For my own part, methinks, this Herding Principle, and associating Inclination, is seen so natural and strong in most Men, that one might readily affirm, 'twas even from the violence of this Passion that so much Disorder arose in the general Society of Mankind.<sup>17</sup>

Civil society, then, is a natural development from the instincts of self-preservation and herding. It does not require a contract or any other form of mutual agreement between the members. It is as old as man himself, since it is natural to him.

In the Miscellaneous Reflections Shaftesbury set forth another variation of the argument. "OF all human Affections, the noblest and most becoming human Nature, is that of LOVE to one's Country." Efforts by men to resolve this "generous Passion into a Relation to of mere Clay and Dust, exclusively of any thing sensible, intelligent, or moral" shows the most squalid aspect of mankind, for it is a denial of the highest degree of affection. To be sure, there are relations of a lower order. Each of us has a relation to the mere earth itself along with the other animals. It, however, is not all there is. If one happens to have been born at sea, is he still not properly called British? Is not the same true for

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 111.



those born in the colonies? Are they not fellow-citizens, and may they not love our country as heartily as island inhabitants? Even if the details of one's birth or parentage are unknown, would he not "joyfully embrace" some country and "by force of Nature" join the "general Society of Mankind?" "It may therefore be esteem'd no better than a mean Subterfuge of narrow Minds, to assign this natural Passion for Society and a Country, to such a Relation as that of a mere Fungus or common Excrescence, to its Parent-Mould, or nursing Dung-hill."18

THE RELATION of Country-man, if it be allow'd any thing at all, must imply something moral and social. The Notion it-self presupposes a naturally civil and political State of Mankind, and has reference to that particular part of Society, to which we owe our chief Advantages as Men, and rational Creatures, such as are naturally and necessarily united for each other's Happiness and Support, and for the highest of all Happinesses and Enjoyments; 'The Intercourse of Minds, the free Use of our Reason, and the Exercise of mutual Love and Friendship.'19

If any doubt remains that society and man's natural role in it are derived from cosmic tory principles, a statement summarizing An Inquiry concerning Virtue will remove it:

THIS is the main Problem which our Author in more philosophical Terms demonstrates, in this Treatise /An Inquiry/, 'That for a Creature

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18Char., III, pp. 143-46.

19Ibid., p. 146.

whose natural End is Society, to operate as is by Nature appointed him towards the Good of such his SOCIETY, or WHOLE, is in reality to pursue his own natural and proper GOOD.' And 'That to operate contrary-wise, or by such Affections as sever from that common Good, or publick Interest, is, in reality, to work towards his own natural and proper ILL.' Now if Man, as has been prov'd, be justly rank'd in the number of those Creatures whose OEconomy is according to a joint-Stock and publick-Weal; if it be understood, withal, that the only State of his Affections which answers rightly to this publick-Weal, is the regular, orderly, or virtuous State: it necessarily follows, 'That VIRTUE is his natural Good, and VICE his Misery and Ill.'<sup>20</sup>

Thus all discussion of man in society, that is, all discussion of political philosophy, is based on the philosophical principles of cosmic toryism. Man's social nature and his activities in society all derive from and conform to the interests of the Whole, which is Good. Man lives in the best of worlds: the problem for the political philosopher is to indicate the proper activities for man to enable him to practice virtue and hence be happy.

Before a positive political schema could be set forth, however, it was necessary to refute the prevailing notions of political and social organization, notably the

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 223. In the Miscellaneous Reflections Shaftesbury writes as a third person commenting on the earlier treatises. Hence the phrase "our Author" is a reference to himself.

idea of a state of nature. In a lengthy and closely-woven passage which was added to the 1709 edition of The Moralists, Shaftesbury gave a convincing confutation of the Hobbesian and Lockean hypothesis.<sup>21</sup> It follows immediately after the demonstration of man's social nature<sup>22</sup> in response to a mentioning of the dictum that the state of nature was a state of war. If it be allowed that the state of nature and that of society are perfectly distinct, then such a principle follows, for if man could endure to live without society, and if he actually did for a period, then he cannot be said to be sociable by nature. Thus having no natural affection or "friendly Inclination" he was forced into a social state. But why? If he lived without society, his existence must have been tolerable. Thus it probably occurred "from such Inconveniences as arose chiefly from himself, and his own malignant Temper and Principles." Certainly it is not surprising that such unsociable creatures would be troublesome, that they would fight for their own in-

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<sup>21</sup>It may seem somewhat unfair to link Locke with Hobbes in this discussion since Locke felt himself in disagreement with Hobbes. Nonetheless Shaftesbury believed that Locke's thought was derivative from Hobbes's and hence he lumped his criticisms of the two together. In a group of "Moral and Theological Citations and Maxims" included in the Second Characters, Shaftesbury explicitly pairs the two men: "Hence Hobbes, Locke, etc. still the same man, same genus at the bottom." (p. 178).

<sup>22</sup>See above, Chapter II, pp. 93-95.

terests. Hence such a state of nature "in all likelihood" was a state of war. However, there cannot be "naturally any Human State which is not social," which means that the premise of the argument is false.<sup>23</sup> Shaftesbury then goes on to demonstrate the validity of this last proposition.

It would not be proper to speak of an infant in the moment of birth as a state, for a state must be of some duration. Likewise it is improper to speak of a state of man "ere yet he enter'd into Society, and became in truth a Human Creature." Until then all that existed was "the Essay or first Effort of Nature, a Species in the Birth, a Kind as yet unform'd," but not man. When man is finally formed one cannot without absurdity say that it is his natural state to live separately. "For sooner may you divest the Creature of any other Feeling or Affection, than that towards Society and his Likeness." But if it be allowed that he can be so divested, could you strip him of his members and parts and still call him a man? "Yet better might you do this indeed, than you could strip him of his natural Affections, separate him from all his Kind, and inclosing him like some solitary Insect in a Shell, declare him still a MAN. . . . For tho

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<sup>23</sup>Char., II, pp. 310-12.

his outward Shape were human, his Passions, Appetites, and Organs must be wholly different. His whole inward Make must be revers'd, to fit him for such a recluse OEconomy, and separate Subsistence."<sup>24</sup>

What then is the foundation of "this pretended State of Nature?" Either man must have been from eternity or not. If from eternity, there could be no primitive or original state different from what we see at present. If not from eternity, then he arose either all at once, in which case he has never been different than he is now, or by degrees and through several stages until he became settled in the condition as he is now. If by degrees, what superfluities did Nature first give him? "They dropt off, it seems, in time; and happily have left things at last, in a good posture, and (to a wonder!) just as they should be." Surely this is the "lowest view" of the beginning of mankind, but it is a view that a certain sort of philosophers take. For them Nature had no intention, no meaning or design at all. "So how any thing can be call'd natural in the Case; how any State can be call'd a State of Nature, or according to Nature, one more than another, I know not." But for the sake of argument, let us agree that there can be and consider "Which State we

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 313-14.

may best call Nature's own."

'She has by Accident, thro' many Changes and Chances, rais'd a Creature, which springing at first from rude Seeds of Matter, proceeded till it became what now it is; and arriv'd where for many Generations it has been at a stay.' In this long Procession (for I allow it any length whatever) I ask, 'Where was it that this State of Nature cou'd begin?' The Creature must have endur'd many Changes: and each Change, whilst he was thus growing up, was as natural, one as another. So that either there must be reckon'd a hundred different States of Nature; or if one, it can be only that in which Nature was perfect, and her Growth compleat. Here where She rested, and attain'd her End, here must be her State, or no-where.<sup>25</sup>

Surely Nature would not stop in that "desolate State" before society. How would it be possible to maintain and propagate the species without "Fellowship or Community?" Will the society required to preserve the species be denied to man, when it is known to be proper to all other creatures?

And can we allow this social Part to Man, and go no further? Is it possible he shou'd pair, and live in Love and Fellowship with his Partner and Offspring, and remain still wholly wild, and speechless, and without those Arts of Storing, Building, and other OEconomy, as natural to him surely as to the Beaver, or to the Ant, or Bee? Where, therefore, shou'd He break off from this Society, if once begun? For that it began thus, as early as Generation, and grew into a Household and OEconomy, is plain. Must not this have grown soon into a Tribe? and this Tribe into a Nation? Or tho it remain'd a Tribe only; was not this still a Society for mutual Defense and common

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 316.

Interest? In short, if Generation be na-  
tural, if natural Affection and the Care  
 and Nurture of the Offspring be natural,  
 Things standing as they do with Man, and the  
 Creature, being of that Form and Constitu-  
 tion he now is; it follows, 'That Society  
 must be also natural to him;' And 'That out  
 of Society and Community he never did, nor  
 ever can subsist.'<sup>26</sup>

Thus there is no natural human state that is not social,  
 and hence there can never have been a state of nature  
 distinct from society.

Talk of the state of nature, though, can be useful,  
 particularly if it is of a vile and ill state. Since it  
 is unsocial, let it be as uncomfortable and as frightful  
 as possible. Let it be considered much worse than the  
 worst government in being. "The greater Dread we have of  
Anarchy, the better Country-men<sup>27</sup> we shall prove, and  
 value more the Laws and Constitution under which we live,  
 and by which we are protected from the outrageous Vio-  
 lences of such an unnatural State. In this I agree  
 heartily with those Transformers of Human Nature, who  
 considering it abstractedly and apart from Government

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 318-19.

<sup>27</sup>This term, I think, is intended to have a double  
 meaning: the obvious one in the context of a person who  
 loves his country and the meaning of "country party" be-  
 cause of its use in conjunction with maintenance of the  
 constitution and implied rejection of corruption.

or Society, represent it under monstrous Visages of Dragons, Leviathans, and I know not what devouring Creatures."<sup>28</sup> Thus Hobbes's work has at least a negative value: while his state of nature cannot be accepted as a reality, discussion of it is useful for the creation and maintenance of good government.

A less formal, but equally effective, argument against the state of nature was used in the Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour. Because it is less abstract, it is more immediately clear that Hobbes and Locke are the targets. "'Tis ridiculous to say, there is any Obligation on Man to act sociably, or honestly, in a form'd Government; and not in that which is commonly call'd the State of Nature." For, using the fashionable language of contemporary philosophers, society is founded on a compact, whereby every man's private rights are surrendered into the hands of the majority or their representatives. The surrender occurs by free choice and by promise. Now the promise was made in the state of nature and "that which cou'd make a Promise obligatory in the State of Nature, must make all other Acts of Humanity as much our real Duty, and natural Part. Thus Faith, Justice, Honesty, and Virtue, must have been as early as

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<sup>28</sup>Char., II, p. 319.



the State of Nature, or they cou'd never have been at all." Civil union or government could never make right or wrong if they did not exist before. Thus he who was free to be a villain before his contract, ought to be as free under his contract when he thinks fit. "The Natural Knave has the same reason to be a Civil one; and may dispense with his politick Capacity as oft as he sees occasion: 'Tis only his Word stands in his way.---- A man is oblig'd to keep his Word. Why? Because he has given his Word to keep it.----Is not this a notable Account of the Original of moral Justice, and the Rise of Civil Government and Allegiance!"<sup>29</sup>

In rejecting the notion of a state of nature Shaftesbury also rejected the contract theory of government, as the last argument made clear. What he substituted for that theory to explain the origins of society and government appeared in his arguments for man's social nature. Society arises out of familial relationships: that is, as the family grows it develops into a clan or tribe uniting for "mutual Defense and common Interest." Since "social Entertainment, Language, and Discourse" are the benefits of this tribal society, the social ties within it are strengthened and it continues to grow. Ultimately

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<sup>29</sup>Char., I, pp. 109-110.

it becomes a nation, based still on the mutual benefits that the society provides for all its members. Thus society and government are founded on the common good of all its members.<sup>30</sup>

Hobbes had argued that society and government were formed out of self-interest--an argument that Bolingbroke would later use in part. Shaftesbury took some pains to counter this notion which so manifestly violated his own principles. It is a common saying that interest governs the world. Those who hold this notion, however, overlook such things as passion, humor, zeal, and faction which are all contrary to self-interest. The machine of society and government is too complex to be explained by one simple view, especially since it leaves out the better affections of generosity, kindness, friendship. "MODERN projectors" want to be rid of these "natural Materials" in order to build more uniformly. "They wou'd new-frame the human Heart; and have a mighty fancy to reduce all its Motions, Balances and Weights,<sup>31</sup> to that one Principle and Foundation of a cool and deliberate Selfishness." The revivers of the materialist philosophy want to equate all social passion and natural affection with self-interest.

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., I, pp. 110-11; II, pp. 318-19.

<sup>31</sup>Shaftesbury has been using the analogy of a clock mechanism to describe society and is continuing it here.

To do so they change the meanings of words: civility and hospitality become deliberate selfishness; and an honest heart becomes a cunning one; love of kindred, children, and posterity become purely love of self and of one's own immediate blood; and love of country and mankind also become self-love. "Now if these Gentlemen, who delight so much in the Play of Words, but are cautious how they grapple closely with Definitions, wou'd tell us only what Self-Interest was, and determine Happiness and Good, there wou'd be an end of this enigmatical Wit." We all agree that happiness is what is being pursued: the question is, would it be sought by following Nature and common affection or by supressing it and turning everything to narrow self-ends?<sup>32</sup>

"'Tis the height of Wisdom, no doubt, to be rightly selfish." For to be "rightly selfish" is to act according to natural affections which are "intrinsically valuable and worthy."<sup>33</sup> It is at bottom, then, a matter of public versus private good. There are, it will be recalled, two sorts of natural affection, that towards the common nature or system of the species and that towards the private nature or self-system. Oftentimes following the public affections causes a person to go against his

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<sup>32</sup>Char., I, pp. 115-122.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

private affections. "It may therefore be imagin'd, perhaps, that there is a plain and absolute Opposition between these two Habits or Affections," and therefore "that which is of a social kind in us, shou'd of right be abolished." But, acting in accordance with public affection is to be virtuous and virtue is a person's "natural good." Thus one who pursues the good of society is in reality pursuing "his own natural and proper good." Again, "to be well affected towards the Publick Interest and one's own, is not only consistent, but inseparable: and that moral Rectitude, or Virtue, must accordingly be the Advantage, and Vice the Injury and Disadvantage of every Creature."<sup>34</sup> Hobbes, by advocating self-interest, ignored virtue and the public interest. Thus his society cannot achieve happiness, which, while Shaftesbury did not explicitly say so, raises the point that there is no reason then for forming the contract and leaving the state of nature at all, since society will be as anti-social as the state of nature.

Civil society and government, then, develop out of the natural operations of the affections. Public and private affections work conjointly to ensure private happiness, for the public interest is synonymous with virtue

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<sup>34</sup>Char., II, pp. 79-81; III, p. 223.

and virtue is synonymous with private good or happiness. Thus the purpose of government must be to provide for the public good or interest, which will in turn promote the good of the individual members of the society. "A PUBLICK Spirit can come only from a social Feeling or Sense of Partnership with human Kind." There can be none who are partners in this sense, who do not consider themselves subject to the law of fellowship and community. Thus morality and good government go together. "There is no real Love of Virtue, without the knowledge of Publick Good."<sup>35</sup> Or to put it more succinctly: "Reason and Virtue alone can bestow LIBERTY."<sup>36</sup> Hence good government is that which promotes reason and provides liberty: such a government will be virtuous.

No people in a civil state can possibly be free unless they are governed by such laws as they have themselves drawn up and approved. If they are governed by mere fancy, where the rules of government vary each day and are "without respect to any antient Constitution or Establishments," their life will be "as certain Slavery, as it is Violence, Distraction, and Misery."<sup>37</sup> That is,

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<sup>35</sup>Char., I, pp. 106-7.

<sup>36</sup>Char., III, p. 313.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 312.

if self-interest rules or if the nature of the public good is not understood, freedom cannot exist. Thus the governors must comprehend the nature of the Whole, so that their leadership will conform to the public good. This can happen only if the people also are educated and are rational, for "he alone is free who has within himself no Hindrance, or Controul, in acting what he himself, by his best Judgment, and most deliberate Choice, approves."<sup>38</sup> In such a free society the arts of "PERSUASION," "Poetry, Rhetorick, Musick," will flourish, for the governors will use these arts to reason with the people and thus guide society. These arts also ensure that the country will be "led by Men of Science and Erudition,"<sup>39</sup> who understand the workings of the system of the Whole.

In this regard, the state of affairs in Britain is a happy one for the "just Princes of our Island" are "surrounded with the best of Counsellors, the LAWS" and they "annually receive Advice and Aid, in the most effectual manner, from their good People."<sup>40</sup>

AS for us BRITONS, thank Heaven, we have a better Sense of Government deliver'd to us

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Char., I, pp. 237-39.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

from our Ancestors. We have the notion of A PUBLICK, and A CONSTITUTION; how a Legislative, and how an Executive is model'd. We understand Weight and Measure in this kind, and can reason justly on the Balance of Power and Property. The Maxims we draw from hence, are as evident as those in Mathematicks. Our increasing Knowledge shews us every day, more and more, what COMMON SENSE is in Politics: And this must of necessity lead us to understand a like Sense in Morals; which is the Foundation.<sup>41</sup>

The British constitution is an example of wise and virtuous government: it stands as a model of liberty. But this has not always been the case. "I must take the liberty to say, I think OLD ENGLAND to have been in every respect a very indifferent Country: and that Late ENGLAND, of an Age or two old, even since QUEEN BESS'S days, is indeed very much mended for the better." In her grandfather's era England was ruled by a sort of "Polish Nobility" in which self-interest reigned supreme, liberty hardly existed, and "we were highly fam'd" as "the best Tributarys and Servants to the Holy See abroad." Time and monarchs changed things for the better and the Revolution made the country "better still."<sup>42</sup> All, though, is not secure. "'TIS scarce a quarter of an Age since such a happy Balance of Power was settled between our Prince and People, as has firmly secur'd our hitherto

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>42</sup>Char., III, pp. 150-51.

precarious Libertys." And yet Britain must, at present, fight to preserve its free government against "the Terror of that Power, which . . . has again threaten'd the World with a Universal Monarchy, and a new Abyss of Ignorance and Superstition."<sup>43</sup>

The external threat posed by the Sun King, however, was not the only one: corruption and the consolidation of power in the hands of the court also menaced English liberties. All too often countrymen of worthy character entered into public and court life and became venal. "Equipages, Titles, Precedencys, Staffs, Ribbons, and other such glittering Ware, are taken in exchange for inward MERIT, HONOUR, and a CHARACTER,"<sup>44</sup> because it is the nature of a court to corrupt taste.<sup>45</sup> Such people may have descended from glorious ancestors who suffered for the nation's liberty and welfare, but they have sacrificed their friends and honest measures to private interest. Such corruption, because it favored self-interest, can only work against the good of the state. Indeed, it undermines the laws and hence puts the people at the mercy of the court's whims, thus increasing the powers of the court. If this process were to continue for any period,

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<sup>43</sup>Char., I, pp. 216-17.

<sup>44</sup>Char., III, p. 169.

<sup>45</sup>Second Characters, p. 23.



that is, if the representatives of the people can not overcome the corruption and consolidation of power, it will lead to "the Establishment of an irretrievable State of Tyranny, and absolute Dominion."<sup>46</sup> Thus these "placemen"<sup>47</sup> must be removed or the liberties of the English, so recently confirmed by the Revolution, will be destroyed.

Shaftesbury cited two contemporary examples of the change from honesty to venality. Since he wrote about them in the Miscellaneous Reflections of 1711 their identity is obvious even though he mentioned no names. The two were Harley and Bolingbroke, both of whom had been identified with the country party, but had, to gain power in 1710, become High Church Tories. Shaftesbury considered them apostates. His characterization of the two men so clearly identifies the menace of corruption and consolidation of power felt by the country party that I feel the passage merits quotation in its entirety, especially since, as we shall see, Shaftesbury earlier felt Harley to be an ally.

'TIS not in one Party alone /Whigs/ that these Purchases and Sales of HONOUR are carry'd on. I can represent to my-self a noted PATRIOT, and reputed Pillar of the

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<sup>46</sup>Char., III, p. 312.

<sup>47</sup>Shaftesbury does not use this term in any of his published works, but it was the standard term for anyone who held office and usually connoted corruption.

religious Part of our Constitution /Harley7, who having by many and long Services, and a steddly Conduct, gain'd the Reputation of thorow Zeal with his own Party, and of Sincerity and Honour with his very Enemy's, on a sudden (the time being come that the Fulness of his Reward was set before him) submits complacently to the propos'd Bargain, and sells himself for what he is worth, in a vile detestable Old-Age, to which he has reserv'd the Infamy of betraying both his Friends and Country /i.e., the country party as well as the nation7.

I CAN imagine, on the other side, one of a contrary Party; a noted Friend to LIBERTY in Church and State /Bolingbroke7; an Abhorrer of the Slavish Dependency on Courts, and of the narrow Principles of Bigots: Such a one, after many publick Services of note, I can see wrought upon, by degrees, to seek Court-Preferment; and this too under a Patriot-Character. But having perhaps try'd this way with less success, he is oblig'd to change his Character, and become a royal Flatterer, a Courtier against his Nature; submitting himself, and suing, in so much the meaner degree, as his inherent Principles are well known at Court, and to his new-adopted Party, to whom he feigns himself a Proselyte.

THE greater the Genius or Character is of such a Person /he is still referring to Bolingbroke7, the greater is his Slavery, and heavier his Load. Better had it been that he had never discover'd such a Zeal for publick Good, or signaliz'd himself in that Party /country party7; which can with least grace make Sacrifices of national Interests to a Crown, or to the private Will, Appetite, or Pleasure of a Prince. For supposing such a Genius as this had been to act his Part of Courtship in some foreign and absolute Court; how much less infamous wou'd his Part have prov'd? How much less slavish, amidst a People who were All Slaves? Had he peradventure been one of that forlorn begging Troop of Gentry extant in DENMARK, or SWEDEN, since the time that those Nations lost their Libertys; had he liv'd out of a free Nation, and happily-balanc'd Constitution; had he been either conscious of no Talent in the Affairs of

Government, or of no Opportunity to exert any such, to the advantage of Mankind: Where had been the mighty shame, if perhaps he had employ'd some of his Abilities in flattering like others, and paying the necessary Homage requir'd for Safety's sake, and Self-preservation, in absolute and despotick Governments? The TASTE, perhaps, in strictness, might still be wrong, even in this hard Circumstance: But how inexcusable in a quite contrary one! For let us suppose our Courtier not only an English-man, but of the Rank and Stem of those old English Patriots, who were wont to curb the Licentiousness of our Court, arraign its Flatterers, and purge away those Poisons from the Ear of Princes; let us suppose him of a competent Fortune and moderate Appetites, without any apparent Luxury or Lavishment in his Manners: What shall we, after this, bring in Excuse, or as an Apology, for such a Choice as his? How shall we explain this preposterous Relish, this odd Preference of Subtlety and Indirectness to true Wisdom, open Honesty, and Uprightness?<sup>48</sup>

One of the most striking aspects of Shaftesbury's characterization of Bolingbroke is how it anticipated his later career. He believed that Bolingbroke's activities might have been appropriate in France, and at least one year of the Tory's exile in France was spent in such activity. His genius could have been more effectively used in efforts to maintain freedom and Bolingbroke's period of opposition from 1725 to 1735 was directed toward that end. It makes one wonder how Shaftesbury would have received The Craftsman.

I have tried to outline what I believe a Treatise

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<sup>48</sup>Char., III, pp. 170-72.

on Government by Shaftesbury would have said if it had been written. It is clear that enough material exists in the Characteristics to formulate a coherent political philosophy. Why then did Shaftesbury not write a Treatise on Government? The answer I feel lies in the title I have used. Any such treatise would have to be directed against John Locke. Shaftesbury disagreed fundamentally with Locke's philosophical principles, as we shall see in the next chapter, but, and this is the important point, he never disagreed publically. All his objections to the state of nature, to government by self-interest, and so on, are seemingly against Hobbes--whom he privately described as "a genius, and even an original among these latter leaders in philosophy."<sup>49</sup> A casual reader might suspect some anti-Locke bias, but without the aid of his private notes and correspondence, it would have to remain a suspicion. The reader would never find anything in the published writings to confirm it.

Why was Shaftesbury so careful to avoid saying anything against Locke in public? In my opinion, it was simply because of his personal relationship with the man: Shaftesbury revered him as a father. His own father was a very weak character, so much so that his grandfather

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<sup>49</sup>Letter to Stanhope, 7 November 1709, PRO 22/7.

adopted him and immediately put him into Locke's care. After the first Earl's death, Shaftesbury's relations with his parents were never more than correct. His real affection was reserved for Locke--an affection that can be seen in a series of letters to him dating primarily from the 1690's. If it would not suggest an impropriety that did not exist, they could best be described as love letters. Shaftesbury continuously bemoaned the fact that he could not be with Locke and acknowledged repeatedly that he was "more obleidg'd and more yett to be obleidg'd to You than anybody."<sup>50</sup> Or again, "I needed nothing to convince mee, y<sup>t</sup> what Good I was able to doe in y<sup>e</sup> world, was better and more worthly bestow'd in serving a Person . . . in a corner of Essex."<sup>51</sup> It was this affection, I believe, which prevented him, no matter how much he might disagree with Locke--and at least two of the letters indicate this disagreement--from opposing him in public. Hence he not only could not write a Treatise on Government, but he also could not overtly oppose him in the Characteristics.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Bodleian Library, MSS Locke, c. 7, f. 89, 15 November 1689.

<sup>51</sup>Bodleian Library, MSS Locke, c. 7, f. 114, 27 November 1694. Locke was living in Essex at the home of Sir Francis Masham.

<sup>52</sup>It is for this reason that epistemology is largely omitted from the Characteristics.

Let us now turn to practical politics and briefly look at Shaftesbury's country party beliefs in the light of some of the events of the day. The country party position is usually understood to include demands for frequent parliaments, preferably annual, the exclusion of placemen to eliminate corruption, and the limitation of parliamentary membership to men of substance.<sup>53</sup> A contemporary pamphlet by Charles D'Avenant, The True Picture of a Modern Whig (1701), more picturesquely describes the country Whig's stance:

What have we in us /as Modern Whigs/ that resembles the Old Whigs /Country Whigs/? They hated arbitrary government, we have been all along for a standing army: they desired triennial parliaments, and that trials for treason might be better regulated; and it is notorious that we opposed both those bills. They were for calling corrupt ministers to an account; we have ever countenanced and protected corruption to the utmost of our power. They were frugal for the nation, and careful how they loaded the people with taxes; we have squandered away their money as if there could be no end of England's treasure. The Old Whigs would have prevented the immoderate growth of the French empire, we Modern Whigs have made a partition-treaty, which unless Providence save us, may end in making the King of France universal monarch.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Plumb, pp. 143-44.

<sup>54</sup>Charles D'Avenant. The Political and Commercial Works, ed., by Sir Charles Whitworth (London: 1771), IV, p. 152. D'Avenant's pamphlet is a sledge hammer attack on the corruption of the Modern Whigs.

By these definitions Shaftesbury's political philosophy is obviously consistent with the country party: he spoke in favor of annual parliaments;<sup>55</sup> parliaments were to be made up of good men and the government was to be entrusted to "Men of Science and Erudition;"<sup>56</sup> corruption was to be opposed;<sup>57</sup> a balanced constitution was to be preserved and the government should function in the public's interest.<sup>58</sup> And it is worth recalling that Shaftesbury's maiden speech in the Commons was in support of the Treason Act.<sup>59</sup>

If his political philosophy does not provide enough evidence of Shaftesbury's country party position, a retrospective letter to Robert Molesworth states it explicitly:

You may think me melancholy, if you will.  
I own there was a time in publick affairs  
when I really was: for, saving your self,  
and perhaps one or two more (I speak the  
most) I had none that acted with me, against  
the injustice and corruption of both parties:  
each of them enflam'd against me, particu-  
larly one /the Tories/, because of my birth  
and principles; the other /the Whigs/, be-  
cause of my pretended Apostacy, which was  
only adhering to those principles on which

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<sup>55</sup>See above, pp. 140-41.

<sup>56</sup>See above, p. 140.

<sup>57</sup>See above, pp. 142-43.

<sup>58</sup>See above, pp. 139-40.

<sup>59</sup>See above, Chapter I, p. 8.

their party was founded.<sup>60</sup>

Shaftesbury was not an apostate from the Whig party: he remained faithful to the principles of the party of his grandfather. This, of course, meant that he was largely out of step with the party of the turn of the century.<sup>61</sup>

At the time he had great hopes of bringing the "Modern Whigs" back to their rightful position. In November 1700, shortly before he began to take active part in the work of the Lords, he commented on the situation and the hopefulness of it. There were fears of a dissolution, which ultimately took place, but at this time Shaftesbury wanted the parliament to continue for its work was not complete. The bill excluding excise-office placemen had been passed, but more was yet to come which would amount "to the thorough purgation of the Parliament, and reducing it solely and wholly to the country bottom." Furthermore, the Whigs who had been "shamefull in their over great condescensions to the Court" had been scared by the rise of the Tories. A new parliament would probably be

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<sup>60</sup>4 November 1708, PRO 25/22 and Letters . . . Shaftesbury . . . Molesworth, p. 13.

<sup>61</sup>John Toland's introduction to his edition of the Letters . . . Shaftesbury . . . Molesworth provides an account of Shaftesbury's political activities and principles. He clearly indicates his acceptance of the "Old Whig" ideals and specifically mentions his support of the country party legislation. It is a fascinating account: unfortunately space does not permit use of it.



Tory, and hence, he believed that a continuation of the present one would give the Whigs an opportunity to mend their ways, "so that they may approve themselves to their countrye, and wash off the court stain."<sup>62</sup>

Shaftesbury took his seat in the House of Lords at the beginning of William's penultimate parliament. It was to be a most significant and contradictory session for the country party, for it included both the impeachment of Somers and the passage of the Act of Settlement. As would be expected Shaftesbury was vitally interested in both cases. His Whig heritage, as well as his friendship, shone through in the Somers case, where he resolutely supported Somers against what he considered a Tory or Church Party "extremity,"<sup>63</sup> even though the case might have been considered a country party one. He worked diligently for the passage of the Act of Settlement and provided Furly with a running account of its progress. "The settlement of the Succession will go on well, and care will be taken to confirm and enlarge our Bill of Rights, in the same Act of Settlement."<sup>64</sup> "Besides this,

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<sup>62</sup>Letter to Furly, 15 November 1700, PRO 20/57 and Forster, pp. 107-12.

<sup>63</sup>Letter to Furly, 27 February 1702, PRO 20/57 and Forster, pp. 171-75. Also see above, Chapter I, p. 12.

<sup>64</sup>Letter to Furly, 4 March 1701, PRO 20/19 and Forster, p. 123.

they have pushed on the Bill of Succession, and carried it through the committee, so that we shall now soon see it pass'd. . . ."<sup>65</sup> "The Succession Bill is (I thank God) pass'd both Houses and ready for the royal assent."<sup>66</sup> He summed up his participation during his subsequent retirement in Rotterdam:

I kept in them public affairs as long as I was able; but by a constitution unfitted for the fatigue of business, I had long since been forced to quit, but that I chose to suffer anything rather than not come in heartily and with all my strength at that last hour when I apprehended not my country only, but mankind, was sinking, had not the Prince, then alive, been supported, a war entered into, and an English Protestant Succession established.

I have lived to see the chiefest of those ends compassed, and those good laws passed for the establishment of our constitution, which I wished for at the Revolution. . . .<sup>67</sup>

In his only political tract, Paradoxes of State (1702), Shaftesbury called for nonpartisan support of the war against France. The excuses for political division had been eliminated during William's reign: the country party had achieved its major desires:

All the natural Disunion since King WILLIAM's reign, so dextrously improv'd by designing Men, has proceeded from the ill Balance still left in

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<sup>65</sup>Letter to Furly, 6 May 1701, PRO 20/23 and Forster, p. 135.

<sup>66</sup>Letter to Furly, 23 May 1701, PRO 20/25 and Forster, p. 142.

<sup>67</sup>Letter to Sir Rowland Gwinn, 23 January 1704, PRO 22/4 and Rand, pp. 318-19.

the State by the Insufficiency of our hasty Bill of Rights. But this is now for the most Part (if not altogether) remedy'd by passing of the Treason Bill, the Triennial Bill, and those other parliamentary Regulations which are not less valuable, tho Hast will not give me leave to mention 'em. We have in Reversion a Security for the Judge's Bill, the Self-denying Bill (which is already got in part) and the transacting of State Matters in the privy Council. There is also a Provision made against employing of Foreners, pleading of Pardons against Impeachments, our Princes leaving the Realm without Consent of Parliament, or being of the Popish Communion, or any other than that of the Church establisht by Law. Finally, by a Clause in the late Act of Succession, and by som proceedings of the last Parlament (approv'd and comply'd with by the King) the power of Peace and War is so far lodg'd in our Senat, that the best Patriots wou'd hardly wish it more.<sup>68</sup>

A more concise statement of the country party's platform and achievements could hardly be imagined. Clearly Shaftesbury favored them in their entirety.

It remains to comment on Shaftesbury's relations with Harley, a man whom he found very frustrating, and Bolingbroke, which will indicate why Shaftesbury could never support the Tories, even though their beliefs were so alike. Robert Harley began his political career as a Whig<sup>69</sup> and adhered throughout most of it to ideals and principles which were generally the same as those of the

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<sup>68</sup>PRO 20/68, pp. 1-2.

<sup>69</sup>Angus McInnes, "The Political Ideas of Robert Harley," History, N. S. L (1965), 311.

country party.<sup>70</sup> Yet he oscillated in his party allegiances, finally ending up in the camp of the High Church Tories. We have already seen Shaftesbury's opinion of him at that time--a most unfavorable one.<sup>71</sup> He regarded him as a man who would sell himself to anyone for the sake of office, thus betraying all principles as well as the country. This was Shaftesbury at his most disillusioned. Previously he had always been willing to give Harley the benefit of the doubt, considering him an honest and able man who would benefit the country cause. He had been an early supporter of Harley believing that his abilities were "of greater moment to the publick, than my own, or family's could ever be."<sup>72</sup> Repeatedly during the period 1700-02, he expressed his optimism that Harley would ultimately remain true to the Whigs, even though he seemed to be on the Tory side. "This behaviour of Mr. Harley extremely troubles me, for he looses all reputation and trust among us. . . ."<sup>73</sup> "Your judgment about

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<sup>70</sup>McInnes, pp. 315ff. and R. B. Ballinger, The Early Political Life and Connexions of Robert Harley, unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1954.

<sup>71</sup>See above, pp. 143-45.

<sup>72</sup>Letter to Harley (Oxford), 29 March 1711, PRO 25/22. It is a letter of congratulations upon Harley's elevation to the Earldom of Oxford.

<sup>73</sup>Letter to Furly, 27 February 1702, PRO 20/57 and Forster, p. 174.

R. Harley is perfectly right. He is ours at the bottom. . . . This gentleman and others will then soon come over. God grant that he, I mean, may be so wise. . . ."74 He recognized that Harley was the only reason that the Tories were having any success: ". . . it is by him alone that that party has rais'd itself to such a greatness as almost to destroy us."75 "'Tis he and he alone that wounds us; for all the strength of the Tories or Church party is nothing, but by that force which he brings over to them from our side. . . ."76 Shaftesbury could never trust the Tories, even though they, under Harley's leadership espoused many of the aims he himself was working for. He always feared--and here he remained true to his grandfather--that if the Tories had a clear shot at office they would revert "to what they naturally belong to, a high and absolute court and church interest."77 It would lead to absolute government and the loss of

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<sup>74</sup>Letter to Furly, 30 January 1702 or 1703, PRO 20/55 and Forster, pp. 192-93. The copy of the letter in the PRO is dated 1701/2 and is so cataloged. Forster, who had the original letters for his edition, gives the date as 1702/3. Since both (this and PRO 20/57) are from "Chelsea," and Shaftesbury was in Chelsea in 1701/2, I suspect Forster's date is incorrect, especially since the two letter express similar sentiments.

<sup>75</sup>PRO 20/55.

<sup>76</sup>PRO 20/57.

<sup>77</sup>Letter to Furly, 15 November 1700, PRO 20/15 and Forster, p. 110.

freedom. This, of course, accounted for the outspoken attack on Harley and Bolingbroke in the Miscellaneous Reflections, for he believed them not only to be violating his own political principles, but theirs as well. His distrust of the Tories remained unmitigated to his death. Had he witnessed Bolingbroke's activities in 1714-15 he surely would have seen them as confirmation of his attitudes. Yet their philosophies were remarkably similar.

There is no evidence that Shaftesbury ever met or corresponded with Bolingbroke; nonetheless he certainly knew of him and followed the development of his career, as the attack in the Miscellaneous Reflections attests. Some controversy exists about the question of Shaftesbury's influence on Bolingbroke.<sup>78</sup> I think, however, that there can be no question but that Bolingbroke read Shaftesbury and that in some of his writings he adopted positions analogous to those of the senior philosopher,

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<sup>78</sup>Alfred Owen Aldridge in "Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke," Philological Quarterly, XXXI (1952), 5, says that their philosophical opinions are "not at all sympathetic." Kranmick, on the other hand, devotes considerable attention to the similarity of their views. I tend to find Kranmick's arguments more convincing, but without a more thorough study of Bolingbroke than I have been able to make, I would not want to make a definite judgment.

most notably in political philosophy.<sup>79</sup> A brief summary of Bolingbroke's thought will indicate this and will demonstrate the impossibility of easy party classification in the period, at least among those who adopted country positions.

Bolingbroke wrote to refute Locke and Plato and to uphold the Stoic tradition.<sup>80</sup> He began by vindicating natural law, which must have had prior existence if civil society is to exist. Hobbes had argued that moral obligations derive from the Leviathan, but Bolingbroke countered that they come only from an anterior law of nature, for society, because of human fallibility, cannot establish right and wrong. The laws of nature are the product of Divine will and are the origin of all positive law. Thus natural law is God's basic law and it determines the morality of men's actions. But it is not simply God's law: it is also reason's law and is therefore available to all rational creatures. This is because God is a "gracious and beneficent lord and master . . . who commands

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<sup>79</sup>Aldridge cites examples of Bolingbroke's use of Shaftesbury which clearly indicate his knowledge of the *Characteristics*. Without mentioning Shaftesbury, D. G. James, *The Life of Reason: Hobbes, Locke, Bolingbroke* (London: 1949), quotes passages from Bolingbroke that could come directly from Shaftesbury.

<sup>80</sup>I am following Kranmick's account throughout (pp. 84-105). The quotations are from Bolingbroke and unless otherwise cited are used by Kranmick.

us nothing which it is not our interest to perform." Rational creatures eventually realize that certain actions contribute to the happiness of individuals and society and hence label these actions virtuous. In this way man arrives at the principles of morality, which are the laws of nature. It is, then, an a posteriori procedure. Among the obligations imposed by natural law is universal benevolence, for "God has made benevolence to all rational beings the fundamental law of our nature."

That civil laws and society do not always live up to the standards set by the natural law is evident. This is because civil laws are not always made with a sufficient regard for reason and natural law. Man has passions and appetites which often prevail over his rational nature. This is to say that God determined that the state of mankind would be less than perfect. Man must accept this: he must submit to God's incomprehensible order. Not to do so would be to overlook man's assigned place in the chain of being. For "if our reasoning faculties were more perfect than they are, the order of intellectual beings would be broken unnecessarily, and man would be raised above his proper form. . . . The reason he has is sufficient for him in the state allotted to him."

Man is by nature a social animal. "We are designed to be social, not solitary creatures. Mutual wants unite



us; and natural benevolence and political order, on which our happiness depends, are founded in them. This is the law of our nature. . . ."81 Thus political society finds its origins in natural law. Here Bolingbroke is at one with Shaftesbury, but he did not accept the notion of Shaftesbury's that men are sociable because of natural affection. Rather sociability comes from "self love" which leads man to seek his pleasure and utility in society. God, however, wanted men to be social also and hence endowed them with instincts, notably sexual instincts. These led to offspring and the development of family life, which gradually widened to yield communities and countries. As these larger societies were formed instinct gave way to reason and man sought long-term happiness in society. Hence the virtues of benevolence, justice, and concern for the public good evolved as man came to see that private good depended upon the happiness of society. "These virtues, therefore, are the foundations of society; and thus men are led, by a chain of necessary consequences, from the instinctive to the rational law of nature, if I may speak so. Self love operates in all these stages. We love ourselves, we love our families,

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<sup>81</sup>The Philosophical Works of the late Right Honorable Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke (London: 1754), IV, p. 388.

we love the particular societies to which we belong, and our benevolence extends at last to the whole race of mankind. Like so many different vortices, the center of them all is self love. . . ."82 Shaftesbury, of course, vehemently denied that self love could lead to happiness.<sup>83</sup> Otherwise he and Bolingbroke agreed on the formation of society and, perhaps, more significantly, on the end of society--happiness. Bolingbroke is as forthright in declaring that public and private good are synonymous as Shaftesbury: ". . . since the author of our nature has determined us irresistably to desire our own happiness, and since he has constituted us so, that private good depends on the public, and the happiness of every individual on the happiness of society, the practice of all the social virtues is the law of our nature, and made such by the will of God, who, having determined the end and proportioned the means, has willed that we should pursue one by the other."<sup>84</sup>

There was no state of nature, no contract to form government. Some form of government has existed ever since men and women first lived together in pursuit of instinc-

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<sup>82</sup>Bolingbroke, Works, IV, p. 11.

<sup>83</sup>See above, pp. 136-38.

<sup>84</sup>Bolingbroke, Works, IV, p. 11.

tual pleasure. Political society originated with families and paternal authority. On these grounds Bolingbroke attacked Locke's doctrines, particularly his individualism, which led to notions of equality. Such notions subvert the established order. The principle of a hierarchical ordering of society was threatened by natural equality. Locke's notion of the perfect freedom of individuals made him, as Shaftesbury suggested, at one with Hobbes, for it would result in chaos and anarchy.

". . . the state of mankind under the law of nature, according to Locke, would have been very little, if at all, better than the state of nature before there was any such thing as law, according to Hobbes." Hierarchy is necessary for social well-being and any efforts to remove it are contrary to nature. "Our real nature demands that there always be authority; if it were ever lacking men would live in the nightmare world of the Hobbesian state of war."

Thus Bolingbroke's political philosophy is aristocratic and paternal. His "political thought is the ideology of a family-centered aristocracy and gentry. Fathers, paternal authority, subordination, rank, cooperation, and public service are the dimensions of this ideology's superstructure."<sup>85</sup> Clearly it is almost identical to

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<sup>85</sup>Kranmick, p. 98.

Shaftesbury's. Both men adopted cosmic tory philosophies<sup>86</sup> and derived their political ideas from them.

Bolingbroke is often, if not always,<sup>87</sup> considered one of the founders of "modern" Toryism. His political thought provided a foundation for it. He certainly considered himself a member of the Tory party most of his life. Shaftesbury considered himself a Whig. Yet their doctrines do not oppose one another. Why? It is largely because both espoused country party principles and "with each passing year country and Tory became increasingly closely identified."<sup>88</sup> While Shaftesbury could never trust the Tories and always feared that they would revert to their old ways, by 1712 he recognized the change that was taking place: ". . . for my own part I am so contented with the present balance of power in our nation, and with the authority and prerogative of the Crown, such as the Tories have reduced it, that I can say from the bottom of my heart, I am as an Englishman the most truly

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<sup>86</sup>I have not attempted to illustrate Bolingbroke's optimistic philosophy. I think that all students of Bolingbroke agree that he was an optimist and since he, as Shaftesbury, carried it into the political realm, he can be called a cosmic tory. That cosmic toryism lies behind his social thought should be clear from the references to acceptance of God's will and the chain of being.

<sup>87</sup>In part Kranmick's book is concerned to question this contention.

<sup>88</sup>Plumb, p. 139.

monarchical in my principle."<sup>89</sup> Thus the distinction between Whig and Tory, which Plumb and Holmes properly argue is there, is not an easy one to make. It is there simply because contemporaries saw it and could make it. But we, with the advantage of hindsight, can see its vagueness.

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<sup>89</sup>Letter to John Molesworth, 29 March 1712, PRO 23/9 and Rand, p. 481. Geoffrey Holmes cites this remark and comments "The contrast with 1679 or with 1689 is forcibly brought home to us when we find an Ashley-Cooper, no less" making it. (p. 96)

## CHAPTER IV

### ORIGINALITY OF SHAFTESBURY'S THOUGHT

Cosmic toryism, as has been shown, was something more than just a philosophical outlook. Its authors were attempting to incorporate a set of philosophical principles into ordinary life. As such they sought to provide a viable alternative to the fashionable English philosophies based on the works of Newton and Locke. In formulating his cosmic toryism Shaftesbury relied heavily on earlier writers. Ancients such as Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius figured most prominently in his writings. Though he was clearly versed in contemporary thought as well, he generally preferred to disregard it unless he was specifically criticizing some aspect of it. Thus one finds few references to seventeenth-century authors in Shaftesbury. All this raises questions about the originality of his thought, and about his relationship to his age. Did he borrow his ideas wholesale from the ancients, specifically the Stoics? Or did he add his own contributions to their systems? What were his relations with such contemporary thinkers as Locke, Spinoza, Bayle, and the Cambridge Platonists? In

this chapter, I hope to answer these questions in an effort to determine his place in the history of ideas.

Among ancient works Shaftesbury cited the Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius more often than any other work. By doing so he indicated his enormous debt to the Stoics; a debt which can most readily be seen through a brief account of Stoic ideas. Stoicism originated in the late fourth century B. C. and continued to be an influential philosophy until the firm establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Throughout its history its proponents adhered remarkably closely to the ideas of its founder, Zeno. Thus the works of the two most influential late Stoics, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, may be taken as representative of the whole movement. The Emperor was primarily concerned to set forth the Stoic cosmological system and man's relation to it, whereas Epictetus concerned himself with elaborating the ethical consequences of the system.

The Stoics found it impossible to accept the Epicurean notion that the world was a result of a fortuitous combination of matter and atoms. Rather they looked to the scientific work of Plato and Aristotle and saw the world as ordered, obeying the laws of nature. That is, it has a rational order due to the fact that God produced it. The universe, then, is a Whole and is good, because

God is benevolent.

The substance of the universe is obedient and compliant; and the reason which governs it has in itself no cause for doing evil, for it has no malice, nor does it do evil to anything, nor is anything harmed by it. But all things are made and perfected according to this reason.<sup>1</sup>

For there is one universe made up of all things, and one god who pervades all things, and one substance, and one law, one common reason in all intelligent animals, and one truth.<sup>2</sup>

It is not just an ordered macrocosm, for man is a part of the order and of the Whole. "I am a part of the whole which is governed by nature . . . I am in a manner intimately related to the parts which are of the same kind with myself."<sup>3</sup> But if all things are so wisely ordered, why is the world so full of what we call evil? It is an illusion, since nothing can happen in the Whole which would be harmful to the Whole. Hence individuals must be content with everything that is assigned to them out of the Whole. "For the whole contains nothing which is

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<sup>1</sup>Marcus Aurelius, Meditations, VI, 1. For a description of his system see George Long, "The Philosophy of Antonius," Postscript to his translation of the Meditations in Plato, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, The Harvard Classics (New York: 1937), pp. 320-45. For an excellent account of Stoicism in general see Ludwig Edelstein, The Meaning of Stoicism (Cambridge, Mass.: 1966).

<sup>2</sup>Meditations, VII, 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., X, 6.



not for its advantage; and all natures indeed have this common principle, but the nature of the universe has this principle besides, that it cannot be compelled even by any external cause to generate anything harmful to itself."<sup>4</sup>  
 "Nothing is evil that is according to nature."<sup>5</sup>

The end of man is to live according to Nature, both his own nature and that of the universe or the Whole. "To the rational animal the same act is according to nature and according to reason."<sup>6</sup> Reason causes man to be social, thus he must tailor his life and actions to the good of the social community. "To act against one another then is contrary to nature. . . ."<sup>7</sup> Man's well-being comes not through selfish practices, but by living according to the universal nature, that is, by always working for the good of the Whole. The Emperor sums up the Stoic vision of man succinctly in a passage stating his own relationship to the world:

If the gods have determined about me and about the things which must happen to me, they have determined well, for it is not easy even to imagine a deity without forethought; and as to doing me harm, why should they have any desire

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., II, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., VII, 11.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., II, 1.

towards that? For what advantage would result to them from this or to the whole, which is the special object of their providence? But if they have not determined about me individually, they have certainly determined about the whole at least; and the things which happen by way of sequence in this general arrangement I ought to accept with pleasure and to be content with them. But if they determine about nothing--which it is wicked to believe, or if we do believe it, let us neither sacrifice nor pray nor swear by them nor do anything else which we do as if the gods were present and lived with us--but if however the gods determine about none of the things which concern us, I am able to determine about myself, and I can inquire about that which is useful; and that is useful to every man which is conformable to his own constitution and nature. But my nature is rational and social; and my city and country, so far as I am Antonius, is Rome; but so far as I am a man, it is the world. The things then which are useful to these cities are alone useful to me.<sup>8</sup>

The direct object of life for the Stoics, then, is not happiness; rather it is simply to live in conformity with nature. That this will lead ultimately to happiness is not denied, but even if it did not, man's task would still be to conform to the dictates of the Whole.

The social nature of mankind led the Stoics to an enunciation of a rudimentary political philosophy. Such a philosophy is necessary since man can perfect himself only within the community of men. The initial social unit is the family--a unit which is natural, because it preserves the species.<sup>9</sup> Even within the family, which in-

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., VI, 44.

<sup>9</sup>I am following Edelstein's discussion, Chapter IV, "The Stoic Way of Life," pp. 71-98.

cludes slaves as members, Stoic respect for individuals is found. All human beings are equal and have inalienable rights. Thus no member of the family can subjugate the other members: all can and do bestow benefits upon the whole family.

Beyond those to his family, man has duties to the state. First he must obey the laws of the state. Yet some of those laws may conflict with morality, for positive law is morally right only if it agrees with the law of nature, that is, if it is rational. For example, by nature all men are equal. There are no slaves, no castes, no nobilities by nature. Thus rational law must confirm individual rights to be morally correct. In such a case individual rights or freedoms are superior to the laws of the state and man must uphold these natural rights, even to the point of following the example of Socrates. Normally, however, he will not go so far, but will attempt to bring reason to bear upon the laws, so that they will conform with the higher law, for "Law is not what any fool can do."<sup>10</sup> Thus man's highest duty is to resist wrong.

The form of government was not a major concern of the Stoics. Any type--kingship, oligarchy, or democracy--which worked for the good of the society was acceptable.

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<sup>10</sup>Epictetus, Discourses, IV, 7, 33.

A king, for example, who understands that his duty is service will be a good king. He will know what is good and evil, he will exercise self-control and cultivate reason so that he can choose properly among the advice given him. He will not only educate himself, but he will surround himself with educated, and thus good, advisors. He will appeal to his subjects for cooperation and he will refrain from violence. In short, he will be the fountain-head of law, because of his obedience to divine law or reason. Reason and virtue, then, form the basis of the state and bring it into agreement with the Whole.

Clearly the foundations and much of the superstructure of cosmic toryism are Stoic. Yet it must be noted that Shaftesbury diverged from the Stoics on at least two major points. First, he insisted that happiness was the primary end of life. Private happiness, according to him, was attainable only through virtue, which was the rational adherence to the public good or the Whole. Thus virtue is the primary aim of man's life, for it alone yields happiness. The Stoics found individual happiness only incidental: to them, the purpose of life was to conform to the dictates of the Whole. This may appear to be a subtle distinction but it is nonetheless real, and it indicates that Shaftesbury was more concerned with life in the immediate world than were the Stoics. This is not at

all surprising when one remembers both that the purpose of his works was to provide guidance for the men of affairs of the day and that his was not a transcendental age.

Second, while Shaftesbury never explicitly denied the equality of men, the whole thrust of his political philosophy negated the principle. For him society was based on familial relationships which were carried forward into the larger state. That is, a paterfamilias relationship obtained. If there were not authority, if there were complete individualism, society would be anarchical and most certainly would not conform to the laws and order of the Whole. Hence, men could not be equal.

Other parts of his cosmic toryism confirm this. Nature operates on hierarchical principles as seen in the chain of being. All parts of nature were graded and ordered from the lowest to the highest. If man were not also hierarchical in his social order, then the chain of being would be broken and the order of nature destroyed. Thus again, men cannot be equal. Finally, one of the purposes of cosmic toryism would be violated if equality or individualism existed. Shaftesbury set out to defend the status quo, which was an aristocratic society. He certainly could not then conclude that all men are equal.

Thus Shaftesbury adopted much from the Stoics, but

he tailored Stoicism to meet his own needs. This can perhaps best be seen by remembering how he used Platonic arguments in The Moralists. There he utilized the myths of the Timaeus to account for the order and goodness of the universe.<sup>11</sup> The Platonic explanation provided further evidence of the goodness of the Deity and its creation, as well as providing a firmer foundation for the chain of being principle. Thus Plato enabled Shaftesbury to fill out the materials he adopted from the Stoic authors.

But his use of Plato raises another question: where did his knowledge of Plato come from? Did it come through his knowledge of the Cambridge Platonists or did Shaftesbury know Plato's works firsthand? It has already been pointed out that a set of reading notes on Plato dated 1707 exists and that the most significant Platonic parts of The Moralists were added after that date.<sup>12</sup> The notes themselves are extremely concise and are largely concerned with ethics. They indicate an immediate and fairly broad knowledge of the dialogues. These are the only direct references to Plato in Shaftesbury's notes, but the evidence contained in them is corroborated by his

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<sup>11</sup>See above, Chapter II, pp. 94-97.

<sup>12</sup>See above, Chapter II, pp. 97-8. The notes are in PRO 27/13.

library catalogs<sup>13</sup> and an inventory of books purchased in Holland.<sup>14</sup> Both list several copies of Plato's works in Greek, Latin, and contemporary translations, and commentaries on Plato, including ones by Proclus, Ficino and Causabon.

An interesting anomaly occurs, however, when one searches for comments about the Timaeus. It is not mentioned in the reading notes and it is not included in any of the lists of contents of the collected editions. This is surprising since the passages in The Moralists bear enough resemblance to that dialogue to indicate direct knowledge. The Earl did purchase both Proclus's commentary on the Timaeus and Chalcidius's early, but incomplete, Latin translation of the work in Holland. So he certainly knew it, but whether he actually owned a complete copy is open to question.

In a letter to Michael Ainsworth he urged him to learn the Greek language, for it opened the "source and fountain" of all learning. But even if he did not yet know the language, he should read "the divine PLATO."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>The library catalogs are items PRO 23/10, 23/11, 23/12 and are dated 1708-9.

<sup>14</sup>PRO 27/14 includes a list of books purchased during his 1698 and 1703-4 visits to Holland.

<sup>15</sup>28 January 1709, PRO 25/22.

Thus Shaftesbury's admiration for Plato is clear and there can be no doubt that his knowledge of the Greek philosopher was firsthand.

All this does not say, however, that his knowledge of the Cambridge Platonists did not lead him to the study of Plato. It remains a possibility, but as will be seen later, no definite evidence either way can be given.

That Shaftesbury had a thorough knowledge of and respect for the Cambridge Platonists cannot be doubted. Indeed, it will be recalled that his first publication was the preface to an edition of Benjamin Whichcote's Sermons in 1698. To demarcate the influence of the Cambridge men on Shaftesbury, particularly on his cosmic toryism, is much more difficult. Students of "the Platonic Renaissance in England" almost unanimously assert that "Shaftesbury was fundamentally a Cambridge Platonist:"<sup>16</sup> most students of the Earl's writings agree that "it was from this tradition that Shaftesbury sprang."<sup>17</sup>

Certainly Henry More and Ralph Cudworth receive

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<sup>16</sup>J. A. Passmore, Ralph Cudworth: An Interpretation (Cambridge: 1951), p. 99; Ernst Cassirer, The Platonic Renaissance in England, trans. by James P. Pettegrove (Edinburgh: 1953), p. 159.

<sup>17</sup>Brett, p. 13; also C. A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England," PMLA, 31 (1916), 266; R. S. Crane, "Suggestions toward a Genealogy of the 'Man of Feeling,'" ELH: A Journal of English Literary History, I (1934), passim; and William E. Alderman, "The Significance of Shaftesbury in English Speculation," PMLA, 38 (1923), 176.



favorable recognition from him, even though he did not ordinarily acknowledge contemporary sources. In The Moralists he coupled Cudworth's The True Intellectual System of the Universe with his own An Inquiry concerning Virtue, noting that both works were considered offensive because they seemed to support atheism.

You know the common Fate of those who dare to appear fair Authors. What was that pious and learned Man's Case, who wrote the Intellectual System of the Universe? I confess it was pleasant enough to consider, that tho the whole World were no less satisfy'd with his Capacity and Learning, than with his Sincerity in the Cause of Deity; yet was he acus'd of giving the upper hand to the Atheists, for having only stated their Reasons, and those of their Adversarys, fairly together. And among other Writings of this kind, you may remember how a certain Fair INQUIRY (as you /Theocles/ call'd it) was receiv'd, and what offence was taken at it.<sup>18</sup>

More recieved a somewhat critical notice in a letter to Ainsworth:

Dr. MORE'S Enchiridion Ethicum, is a right good piece of sound morals; tho' the doctor himself, in other english pieces, could not abide by it; but made different excursions into other regions, and was perhaps as great an enthusiast, as any of those, whom he wrote against. However, he was a learned and a good man.<sup>19</sup>

The fact that he singled More out and recommended him to Ainsworth to read mitigates the criticism, however. Also

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<sup>18</sup>Char., II, pp. 262-63.

<sup>19</sup>30 December 1709, PRO 25/22.

his own use of More's Enthusiasmus Triumphatus in his Letter concerning Enthusiasm indicates his agreement with the Platonist's views on the subject of enthusiasm.<sup>20</sup> Still none of this would confirm or deny Shaftesbury's debt to the Cambridge Platonists.

It is not possible to set forth a system as was done for the Stoics to juxtapose to cosmic toryism. The most that can be done is to point to a few similarities and differences of views. Shaftesbury's thinking is wholly in agreement with that of the Cambridge men with respect to the importance of reason. It is the supreme power of man in nature and is the foundation of his existence. Virtue, based on reason, is the means to happiness or the good life. It is distinct from religion and thus forms the basis of "natural" morality, what Shaftesbury called the "moral sense." The Cambridge philosophers did not agree as to whether happiness is the end of man's life or not: Whichcote argued that it was, whereas his pupil, Cudworth, said it was merely a product of a virtuous life. There was also disagreement between the earlier thinkers and Shaftesbury about the role of evil in the world. The Cambridge group generally agreed that God bore no re-

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<sup>20</sup>Many of the themes and examples, including that of ridicule, used by Shaftesbury came directly from More's earlier work. Indeed in his Miscellaneous Reflections he acknowledged his borrowings from More. Char., III, pp. 63-68.

sponsibility for evil in the world but nevertheless accepted the doctrine of rewards and punishments to explain its purpose. Shaftesbury, of course, rejected the notion of rewards and punishments and adopted a Stoic attitude towards evil. Further analysis and comparison would indicate that much of Shaftesbury's ethical theory agrees with the doctrines of the earlier thinkers, but the problem of the relation of his cosmic toryism to their ideas remains enigmatic. Thus from the point of view of cosmic toryism, it is not possible to agree that Shaftesbury was "fundamentally a Cambridge Platonist." And since cosmic toryism serves as the foundation for his ethical system, it must be concluded that it, too, was derived from other sources, such as the Stoics and Plato. This, however, is not to say that the Cambridge Platonists did not influence Shaftesbury; rather it is to say that the influence is not readily definable.

Further problems arise in considering Shaftesbury's relations with his contemporaries. Only with Leibniz is it possible to make a definite statement: the two men worked wholly independently although their sources and conclusions were similar. Leibniz himself verified this when he commented that "If I had seen this book /The Moralists before the publishing of my Theodicee, I should have made that use of it I ought to have done,

and borrowed from thence very considerable passages. . . .<sup>21</sup> Leibniz's purpose was different from that of Shaftesbury. He wished to create a metaphysical system that would provide a foundation for the new thought of the seventeenth century.<sup>22</sup> His system, commonly known as monodology, required a pre-established harmony and divine ordering of the universe.<sup>23</sup> Thus the Theodicy describes how and why God created this, the best of all possible worlds. It is a world in which evil exists, but good predominates. Since evil could not be entirely eliminated if man were to have free will, God, being good, chose to create that world in which it was minimal. When the consequences of these premises are spun out, the fabric of the world is seen to be quite analogous to Shaftesbury's. It is in purpose that the two men differed, for the Earl wished to defend a set of ideas contrary to those developed earlier in the century. He could not accept, as will become more evident shortly, the implications of empirical rationalism, and since he could not accept scholasticism--"the gibberish of the

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<sup>21</sup>See above, Chapter I, p. 30; PRO 26/9.

<sup>22</sup>G. W. Leibniz, Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil, ed. with intro. by Austin Farrer (London: 1952), p. 12.

<sup>23</sup>Leibniz, p. 27.

schools"<sup>24</sup>--either, he turned to the idealism of Plato and the Stoics. Thus although the conclusions and methods of Leibniz are similar, their aims were divergent.

A word about Shaftesbury's philosophical abilities might be in order at this point, for when he is compared with Leibniz the reasons for his secondary position in the history of ideas and his popularity in the eighteenth century became clearer. Their differing objectives go most of the way to explain the status of the two men. Leibniz, as already noted, was writing for a philosophical audience and hence took great care to ensure that his arguments were sound without worrying greatly about their popularity, although his record of controversies could be said to contradict this. Shaftesbury, on the other hand, was writing for men of affairs who were unlikely to be versed in the intricacies of formal philosophy. His arguments are usually quite sound, although they are often truncated, assertive, and frequently do not answer all possible questions. His basic argument for the existence of the Deity, the argument from design, is perhaps the soundest of all those available,<sup>25</sup> and is indicative of his approach. Thus his

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<sup>24</sup>PRO 25/22.

<sup>25</sup>Bertrand Russell comments to this effect in his History of Western Philosophy (London: 1946), p. 612.

works are cogent philosophically, although they were designed for popular consumption and occasionally remind one of the "philosophy for the ladies" genera, which was so popular in the early eighteenth century. It is precisely this simplicity which downgraded Shaftesbury's place in the history of ideas and which made him popular in the eighteenth century, a period given to dilettantism. Thus the differing objectives and styles of the two men have largely determined their status, for their systems have both subsequently been judged to be generally incorrect.

A slightly less definite statement can be made about the connection between Locke and his pupil. The affection Shaftesbury felt for his master has already been observed. Their philosophical differences have been noted but not explored. When that is done it will become clear that their ideas were fundamentally opposed: unfortunately the reasons for Shaftesbury's rejection of Locke's principles can only be surmised.

The objections began early. When only eighteen, shortly after both had returned to England and before the Essay concerning Human Understanding appeared in the bookshops,<sup>26</sup> Shaftesbury wrote Locke to continue an earlier

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<sup>26</sup>The first edition of the Essay went on sale in December 1689. Cranston, p. 327.

conversation about the Essay. The letter raised many technical questions concerning the status of ideas and their relation to material objects. He clearly could not accept the implicit nominalism of the Essay, for he repeatedly asked how ideas could exist without matter (material objects) unless they had some independent existence of their own, that is, unless a form of idealism pertained.<sup>27</sup> Already he was convinced that there were innate ideas and that any epistemology omitting them was suspect.

It is not possible to say what reading Shaftesbury had done by 1689 to convince him of the validity of innate ideas. There can be no question about his ability in the classics: Mrs. Birch taught him Greek and Latin, even though Locke did not recommend Greek for a gentleman's education. Locke's tuition also ensured that he was well-grounded in contemporary authors, but the Earl tended to dismiss contemporary learning, particularly empiricism, with such statements as "It is not with me as with an empiric. . . ."<sup>28</sup> His learning of Greek seems to

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<sup>27</sup>Bodleian Library, MSS Locke, c. 7, f. 85, August 1689. Also Lord Peter King, The Life and Letters of John Locke, with Extracts from His Journals and Common-Place Books (London: 1858), pp. 182-85. King comments, referring to this letter, that "the reader will probably be of opinion /sic/ that the friends of the author of the Essay gave him as much trouble as his public adversaries." (p. 182).

<sup>28</sup>Bodleian Library, MSS Locke, c. 7, f. 112, 29 September 1694, and King, pp. 186-88.

have been the crucial deviation from the Lockean principles of education, rather than his antipathy towards contemporary knowledge, for he censured his tutor for not having an adequate understanding of Greek philosophy, which he believed would have saved him from error. "But if . . . he had known but ever so little of Antiquity, or been tolerably Learn'd in the state of Philosophy with the Antients, he had not heap'd such Loads of Words upon Us. . . ."<sup>29</sup>

One has to assume that the study of the Greek Language led Shaftesbury to his love of that ancient civilization. It is possible that his study of the Cambridge Platonists or of the Stoics might have done it, but no direct evidence can be produced to confirm the possibility, other than the fact that Locke had certain connections with the Cambridge group.<sup>30</sup> It makes little difference, however, because his knowledge of the Greeks was direct; his library contained many volumes in Greek, including all the major authors, and his notebooks are full of Greek passages. Indeed, Shaftesbury seems to me to fall directly

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<sup>29</sup>Letter to General Stanhope, 7 November 1709, PRO 22/7.

<sup>30</sup>Lady Masham, in whose house Locke spent his last years, was the daughter of Ralph Cudworth. Locke knew, but generally rejected, the ideas of the Platonists. (Cassirer, p. 159).



into the tradition of Renaissance Platonism.<sup>31</sup> His breadth of knowledge, his love of classical antiquity, and his interest in ethics and aesthetics<sup>32</sup> are much more characteristic of the Florentine humanist than of the seventeenth-century empiricist or even of the Augustan poet. It is ironic, however, for most intellectual historians agree that Renaissance Platonism led, in part, to that empiricism which Shaftesbury deprecated.

Another letter to Locke, dated 1694 towards the end of his period of intense study, shows that the philosophical principles which he held for the remainder of his life were formulated by this time. In the letter<sup>33</sup> he raised no questions about Locke's ideas; rather he simply stated his own view of philosophy and let it stand in opposition to his master's. Philosophy should teach one "how to be

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<sup>31</sup>Cassirer's thesis is that there was a direct line between the Florentine Academy and Shaftesbury via the Cambridge Platonists. As I stated above, I question the conclusion that Shaftesbury was a Cambridge Platonist, but I do not feel that these qualms necessarily prevent my classifying him in the tradition of Renaissance Platonism.

<sup>32</sup>The role of aesthetics in cosmic toryism was pointed out in Chapter II. Shaftesbury, as Plato, equated the good with the beautiful (see pp. 76-9 and 103-6 above). Also, it will be remembered that the last years of his life were devoted to working out his aesthetic theories, a project he considered the culmination of all his work. See Rand, Second Characters.

<sup>33</sup>Bodleian Library, MSS Locke, c. 7 f. 112, 29 September, 1694, and King, pp. 185-89.

more sociable, and more a friend. . . ." "For my part, I am so far from thinking that mankind need any new discoveries, or that they lie in the dark, and are unhappy for want of them, that I know not what we could ask of God to know more than we do, or easily may do. The thing that I would ask of God should be to make men live up to what they know. . . ." and that is that "all things in the universe are done for the best, and ever will go on so. . . ."

What is philosophy, then, if nothing of this is in the case? What signifies it to know (if we could know) what elements the earth was made from, or how many atoms went to make up the round ball we live upon, though we know it to an atom? What signifies it to know whether the chaos was cast in Dr. Burnet's<sup>34</sup> mould, or if God did it a quite different way? What if we knew the exact system of that of our frames; should we learn any more than this, that God did all things wisely and for the best?

Contemporary natural philosophy was wrongheaded: it added nothing to true knowledge.

What I count true learning, and all that we can profit by, is, to know ourselves; what it is that makes us low and base, stubborn against reason, to be corrupted and drawn away from virtue, of different tempers, inconstant, and inconsistent with ourselves; to know how to be always friends with Providence, though death and many such dreadful businesses come in the way; and to be sociable and good towards all

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<sup>34</sup>Thomas Burnet, The Sacred Theory of the Earth (London: 1681). Burnet's theory was a controversial, but significant, milestone in the history of geological theory. See C. C. Gillispie, Genesis and Geology (New York: 1959, first published 1951).

men, though they turn miscreants, or are injurious to us.

What Locke's reply to this tirade was will never be known, for Shaftesbury preserved no letters from the elder man.<sup>35</sup> Nonetheless it clearly indicates how divergent their philosophical paths had become.

The year 1709, during which The Moralists was published, saw Shaftesbury break his public silence about his opposition to Locke. In two letters he "ventur'd" to disclose "the greatest Confidence in the World, which is that of my Philosophy, even against my old Tutor and Governour, whose Name is so established in the World: but with whom I ever conceal'd my Differences as much as possible."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>It is a noteworthy hiatus in the Shaftesbury papers. Generally Shaftesbury preserved most of his correspondence, incoming and outgoing, but there are no letters from Locke or copies of letters to Locke in his papers. The same is true for Pierre Bayle. Professor Voitle feels that it is because Shaftesbury's domestic life was not very systematic much before 1700 (personal letter, 29 April 1972). While this may explain the absence of correspondence with Locke, it will not suffice for the Bayle letters--most of which would have been written after 1700. Since the remainder of Shaftesbury's papers contain very few (no more than a dozen) letters on philosophical subjects--and those preserved were clearly considered important for there is more than one copy of most--I suspect that Shaftesbury may have destroyed all others. Why, I do not know. The only explanation seems to lie in their paucity. It is only reasonable to assume that a philosopher of some reputation would have corresponded with other thinkers. That Shaftesbury did is indicated by the few surviving letters; that some have been destroyed or lost is clear from other minor gaps in the papers.

<sup>36</sup>Letter to General Stanhope, 7 November 1709, PRO 22/7 and PRO 27/23.

The first letter, to Michael Ainsworth, is more direct and outspoken in defense of innate ideas, which were so important to his own system. He began by asserting that Locke's work was a continuation of "those principles, which Mr. HOBBS set a foot in this last age. Mr. LOCKE, as much as I honour him on account of other writings (viz. on government, policy, trade, coin, education, toleration, &c.) . . . did however go in the self same track."<sup>37</sup> Indeed his former tutor was even more insidious than Hobbes:

'Twas Mr. LOCKE, that struck the home blow:  
for Mr. HOBBS'S character and base slavish  
principles in government took off the poyson  
of his philosophy. 'Twas Mr. LOCKE that struck  
at all fundamentals, threw all order and virtue  
out of the world, and made the very ideas of  
these (which are the same as those of GOD) un-  
natural, and without foundation in our minds.

By rejecting innate ideas the author of the Essay destroyed the foundation of cosmic toryism. There could be no natural understanding of the order and administration of the universe, no natural affection, no moral sense: in a word, all would be anarchy.

THUS virtue, according to Mr. LOCKE, has no other measure, law, or rule, than fashion and custom: morality, justice, equity, depend only on law and will: and GOD indeed is a perfect free agent in his sense; that is, free to any thing, that is however ill;

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<sup>373</sup> June 1709, PRO 25/22. The eighteenth century knew this letter since the series of letters from Shaftesbury to Ainsworth was published in 1716 under the title Several Letters, written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the Uni-  
versity.

for if he wills it, it will be made good; virtue may be vice, and vice virtue in its turn, if he pleases. And thus neither right nor wrong, virtue nor vice are any thing in themselves; nor is there any trace or idea of them naturally imprinted on human minds. Experience and our catechism teach us all!

If there were no innate ideas or instincts how would the species propagate itself?

Your THEOCLES, whom you commend so much . . . as modestly as he can, asks a Lockist, whether the idea of a woman (and what is sought after in woman) be not taught also by some catechism, and dictated to the man. Perhaps if we had no schools of Venus, nor such horrid lewd books, or lewd companions; we might have no understanding of this, till we were taught by our parents: and if the tradition should happen to be lost; the race of mankind might perish in a sober nation.-----This is very poor philosophy.

But surely Locke was intelligent enough to see such consequences: why, then, did he ignore them? Because he was "credulous." He was willing to believe stories of barbarian nations. He had "more faith, and was more learn'd in modern wonder-writers, than in antient philosophy. . . ."

The other letter was to General Stanhope.<sup>38</sup> It makes the same basic points and arrives at the same conclusion.

As for Innate Principles, which You mention, 'tis in my Opinion one of the Childeshest disputes that ever was. Well it is for our friend Mr. Lock and other modern Philosophers of his size, that they have so poor a Specter as the Ghost of Aristotle to fight with. A ghost,

indeed! Since 'tis not in reality the Stagirite himself nor the original Peripatetick Hypothesis, but the poor Secondary tralatitious System of modern and barbarous Schoolmen which is the Subject of their continual Triumph. Tom Hobbs whom I must confess a Genius, and even an Original among these Latter Leaders in Philosophy, had already gather'd Lawrells enow and at an easy rate, from this field.

Shaftesbury went on to defend the innateness of natural affections and their role in society, again making the points that society would be anarchical without an innate sense of right and wrong and that without instincts the species would not survive. But before administering the final coup de grace, he perversely found a use for Locke's Essay: "For as ill a Builder as he is, and as Little able to treat the home-points of Philosophy; he is of admirable Use against the Rubbish of the Schools; in which most of Us have been bred up. But if instead of the Phantom he oppos'd, and had allways before his Eyes, he had known but ever so little of Antiquity, or been tolerably Learn'd in the state of Philosophy with the Antients, he had not heap'd such Loads of Words upon Us. . . ." Neither of these condemnations were published in Shaftesbury's lifetime and thus he never put his objections into print. Once again, I would assert it was because of his personal affection for Locke.

At first it seems extraordinary that such a brilliant pupil could develop a system so contrary to that of his

master, but it had happened before. Once need only cite the case of Plato and Aristotle for confirmation. As with the more famous master and pupil, Locke and Shaftesbury had antithetical minds. To use the epithets of a contemporary controversy, Locke was a modern, Shaftesbury an ancient.

Whether or not two other late seventeenth-century figures influenced Shaftesbury is open to question. The evidence concerning his use of Bayle and Spinoza is nebulous. The eulogies which the Earl wrote after Bayle's death have already been quoted.<sup>39</sup> They indicate an intimate relationship and frequent conversation. They also show that Shaftesbury often tested his ideas in those conversations. To say more than this, however, is difficult. In the sketch of his father's life, the fourth Earl says that the two men "never ceased" to correspond "till Mr. Bayle's death" in 1706.<sup>40</sup> Yet there are no traces of the correspondence in the Shaftesbury papers: as with Locke, the Earl neither kept incoming letters nor made copies of outgoing ones.<sup>41</sup> Hence that potential source of information is closed off and the published works of the two philosophers must be examined for traces of influence.

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<sup>39</sup>See above, Chapter I, pp. 15-17.

<sup>40</sup>Rand, p. xxiii.

<sup>41</sup>See note 35 above.

Parallel passages can be cited, but they are not conclusive. Bayle's Miscellaneous Thoughts on the Comet of 1680, a copy of which was in Shaftesbury's library,<sup>42</sup> argues that morality is independent of religion and that an atheist can be a moral person. A similar argument forms a major portion of An Inquiry concerning Virtue, but, it will be recalled, Shaftesbury cited Ralph Cudworth's The True Intellectual System of the Universe as a work with much the same aim as his Inquiry when he defended it in The Moralists.<sup>43</sup> Thus, even though Bayle argues that friendship is the true principle of men's actions, it cannot be said that the Miscellaneous Thoughts provided Shaftesbury with these notions, although Bayle's use of them might well have reinforced them in his own mind.

There can be little doubt that the passages in The Moralists refuting Manicheanism were intended as answers to the theses promoted in the Historical and Critical Dictionary. Shaftesbury's "optimistic" solution of the problem of evil could in no way be reconciled with any Manichean system of two principles, although, as was point-

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<sup>42</sup>"Catalogus Librorum Anglicorum, Gallicorum, Italicorum &c. utriusque Bibliothecae viz<sup>t</sup> AEgidianae & Chelseyanae Comitum de Shaftesbury AEgidiis Anno Aerae Christianae 1709," PRO 23/12.

<sup>43</sup>See above, p. 175.



ed out in Chapter II,<sup>44</sup> he seemed to toy briefly with the possibility. Still this use of Bayle is not indicative of major influence, for the concept of two principles merely provided Shaftesbury with a straw-man argument to strengthen his own. And it was one which he would logically have to answer even if he did not know the Dictionary.

Even less can be said about Spinoza. It seems unlikely that Shaftesbury did not know the works of the great Jewish philosopher, for if he did not read them independently, he would have found lengthy passages concerning them in Bayle's Dictionary, which he did read.<sup>45</sup> The Earl apparently did not own copies of any of his works, for none are listed in the library catalogs. Cryptic comments in both the notebooks and the Characteristics referring to a philosopher who believed in multiple intelligences governing nature would seem to refer to Spinoza, but he is never actually named. J. M. Robertson in his edition of the Characteristics (1900) indicated what he considered to be Spinozean passages in his footnotes. They do indicate a similarity of ideas, but they provide no real evidence of immediate knowledge on Shaftesbury's part. Given the third Earl's attitude toward contemporary

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<sup>44</sup>See above, Chapter II, pp. 57-58 and 101.

<sup>45</sup>Various letters to Le Clerc, Des Maizeaux and other mutual acquaintances indicate that Shaftesbury read each volume of the Dictionary as Bayle sent it to him.

works, it is probably safe to conclude that he was not significantly, if at all, indebted to Spinoza.

Thus Shaftesbury does not seem to have been notably influenced by any seventeenth-century authors. He was familiar with most of their works, but he generally rejected them in favor of his beloved ancients. He was greatly inspired by the latter's works and borrowed heavily from them, particularly Plato, the Stoics, and the neo-Platonists. But he did not simply parrot their ideas. Rather he modified and adapted them to his age--such as the Renaissance Platonists had done two centuries earlier. That he was wholly conscious of what he was doing is confirmed by his letter to Lord Somers accompanying the first edition of The Moralists.<sup>46</sup> Here he argued that statesmen should be philosophers as they were in antiquity. His purpose in writing was to provide a guide to philosophy: he could do it because he had the leisure, not being able to participate in the affairs of state. Thus the ancients provided the ideal: it was the job of the moderns to achieve it. The Characteristics provided a means of doing so.

The preponderant influence of the ancients is further illustrated by Shaftesbury's reading, although his

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<sup>46</sup>20 October 1705, PRO 22/4. See above, Chapter I, pp. 35-37.

thorough knowledge of contemporary works is also made clear. What he read may, in part, be determined by an analysis of his library catalogs and lists of books purchased. The Shaftesbury Archive in the Public Record Office contains three library catalogs, one dated 1708 and two 1709.<sup>47</sup> The latter two contain all the items listed in the first one and thus only they need be considered. The 1709 catalogs are divided according to languages involved: one contains only Greek and Latin items; the other only English, French and Italian works. Both are approximately 100 pages long, with a varying number of items--an average of five--on each page. Since the Greek and Latin catalog lists, almost exclusively, works of the ancients and the modern language catalog contains mostly contemporary works, it is clear that Shaftesbury's library was fairly evenly divided between the two groups. The ancients, however, do predominate since many of the contemporary works are translations and editions of classical authors. All the major writers of philosophy and literature, Greek and Latin, are included. It is a thoroughly balanced list in which no single group of authors stands out. The ancients' catalog can be supplemented by a lengthy list of some 160 volumes, all in

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<sup>47</sup>PRO 23/10, 23/11, and 23/12 respectively. I have been unable to determine if any of the library remains at Wimborne St. Giles.

Greek and Latin, which were purchased during the Earl's two periods of residence in Holland.<sup>48</sup> If these are the only books he purchased while there, and the lists contain no hint that they might be incomplete, his passion for ancient literature is fully confirmed.

The modern language catalog is equally significant for it shows that he was aware of almost all of the most important seventeenth-century authors. He knew, for example, the continental political theorists, Grotius, Pufendorf, Guy de Balzac, and Machiavelli, as well as the major English theorists, Hooker, Harrington, Hobbes, Filmer, Molesworth, Temple, Locke, and Tyrrell. He knew the major Latitudinarian writers, Burnet, Stillingfleet, and Tillotson, as well as the Cambridge Platonists. And the library included the works of Bacon, Descartes, Boyle, Grew, and Sprat, which indicates that his anti-empiricism was not the result of ignorance of the new science. There are, however, notable omissions: none of the works of Isaac Newton is included, even though there is evidence that Shaftesbury knew him personally;<sup>49</sup> Spinoza, as has already been pointed out, is missing; and so is John Dryden,

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<sup>48</sup>PRO 27/14. The list is found in the back of a notebook containing his "Design of a Socratic History" and commonplace notes.

<sup>49</sup>At least two letters from Naples refer to Newton in a manner which indicates that they were acquainted. PRO 23/8 and 23/9.

even though most other contemporary poets are included. The last omission is perhaps explained by family pique, for "Absalom and Achitophel" must surely have offended the Shaftesburys greatly. The least that can be said about the third Earl is that he was well-read. He was a philosopher in the original sense of the term.

Where, then, does the third Earl of Shaftesbury stand in the history of ideas? Cosmic toryism is, to a significant degree, derivative. Yet it is remarkably fresh and original in its effort to bring about a renaissance of ancient ideas. Several writers, particularly the Cambridge Platonists, had already expressed many of the sentiments found in the Characteristics, most notably, the emphasis on reason and virtue as the means of attaining the good life. Their sources were often the same as Shaftesbury's. Yet none formulated a system as complete, as unitary, and as compelling as cosmic toryism. It was a viable system simply because it met many of the needs of the age. It offered an alternative to the extremes of empiricism. It defended the hierarchical social and cosmological systems. And, most importantly, it resisted pessimistic views of mankind by accepting the natural goodness of man and exploiting it for the benefit of society. In this manner, the Characteristics opened the way for the eighteenth century's quest for happiness. It

offered a formula to mitigate the extremes of the seventeenth century and to promote the sense of balance and proportion which dominated the eighteenth. Thus Shaftesbury stood on the bridge between the two centuries.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>David Ogg (pp. 542-43) uses the bridge analogy to describe Shaftesbury. I have purposely borrowed it since it seems to me to be the most apt description of Shaftesbury's place in the history of ideas.

CHAPTER V  
EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY VIEWS OF COSMIC TORYISM

The generous Ashley, thine, the friend of man;  
Who scanned his nature with a brother's eye,  
His weakness prompt to shade, to raise his aim,  
To touch the finer movements of the mind,  
And with the moral beauty charm the heart.

James Thomson, "Summer"

Among the works that any educated man of the eighteenth century could be expected to know was the Characteristics.<sup>1</sup> Its popularity has been well documented. Eleven English editions of the work were published between 1711 and 1790, and it was translated into French and German. Aldridge has compiled an "incomplete" bibliography containing over 200 English and French items which referred to Shaftesbury in the course of the century.<sup>2</sup> The list indicates that the Characteristics was controversial, for most of the notices are of polemical works either defending or opposing Shaftesbury. It also shows that the Scottish moralists, notably Hutcheson, Hume and Smith, found inspiration for their treatises in the

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest Tuveson, "The Importance of Shaftesbury,"  
ELH: A Journal of English Literary History, 20 (1953), 267n.

<sup>2</sup>Aldridge, "Deist Manifesto," pp. 371-382.

Earl's theories. The catalog does not, however, adequately illustrate the assimilation of cosmic toryism into eighteenth-century thought.

Within twenty years after the first edition of the Characteristics, the scope of Shaftesbury's influence had clearly emerged. Not only did he inspire a school of academic philosophy, but cosmic toryism also provided a basis for the self-confident attitudes of the age of Walpole. It buttressed the position of the aristocracy and reinforced the inertia of the social system.<sup>3</sup> As is often the case, the literature of the day most clearly reflected the promise and frustrations of the system. The zenith of cosmic toryism was reached in Pope's An Essay on Man. In his imposing work Pope reiterated the universality, as well as the anti-empirical nature, of the concept. Other writers with a more limited perspective, such as Addison and Fiddes, accepted the system but emphasized only the role of virtue in the quest for happiness. Mandeville, on the otherhand, demonstrated the impracticality of it. All, however, reflected the significance of cosmic toryism in the Augustan Age.

Mr. Spectator, whose essays were the rage of London and the country in 1711 and 1712, promoted many of the doctrines of the Characteristics. But neither Shaftesbury

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<sup>3</sup>Plumb, p. 187.



nor the Characteristics were ever mentioned in The Spectator. It seems unlikely that Addison did not know the Earl's work, especially since both authors dedicated their works to Lord Somers and were both active in the Whig party. Still one recalls Shaftesbury's plaintive remarks on the quiet reception of his works in 1712.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps among other things he was bemoaning the fact that Mr. Spectator had not acknowledged them. Be that as it may, many of the ideas found in The Moralists and An Inquiry are also found in Addison's contributions to The Spectator and here they reached a far larger audience. Indeed, Addison's biographer says that The Spectator was second only to the Bible in influencing English morals and manners in the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

Addison's version of cosmic toryism was nowhere as systematic or complete as Shaftesbury's. It was presented in snippets at odd intervals, rather than as a sustained argument. Still it is possible to see that the essayist's aims and beliefs were substantially the same as the philosopher's. The dedication to Lord Somers said that the purpose of the paper was "to Cultivate and Polish Human

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<sup>4</sup>See above, Chapter I, pp. 32-34.

<sup>5</sup>Peter Smithers, The Life of Joseph Addison, Second Edition (Oxford: 1968), p. 254 and The Spectator, ed. by G. Gregory Smith, intro. by Peter Smithers, 4 vols. (London: 1906-7, reprinted 1957), I, p. viii.

Life, by promoting Virtue and Knowledge, and by recommending whatsoever may be . . . Useful . . . to Society."<sup>6</sup>

In issue ten Mr. Spectator said he was "ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell . . . at Tea-Tables and in Coffee-Houses."<sup>7</sup> Philosophy, and it soon became clear that the term meant the promotion of virtue, was to be made available to the public, so that society as a whole could be improved.

There can be no doubt that the world is an ordered one, that God created a unified and rational universe. Indeed, "The Supream Being has made the best Argument for his own Existence, in the Formation of the Heavens and the Earth, and these are Arguments which a Man of Sense cannot forbear attending to. . . ."<sup>8</sup> Nothing is more pleasant for man than to contemplate the order and proportions of the universe, to compare "the Body of Man to the Bulk of the whole Earth, the Earth to the Circle it describes round the Sun, that Circle to the Sphere of the fixt Stars, the Sphere of the fixt Stars to the Circuit of the whole Creation, the whole Creation it self to the Infinite Space that is every where diffused about it. . . ."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Spectator, I. p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>Spectator, no. 10.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., no. 465.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., no. 420.

Such activities not only exercise the "Understanding," but they also confirm the order and hierarchical nature of the world. Consideration of the "Creation is a perpetual Feast to the Mind of a good Man, every thing he sees cheers and delights him," for it indicates the beneficence of the creator.<sup>10</sup>

Yet, "Man is subject to innumerable Pains and Sorrows by the very Condition of Humanity," that is, evil or ill exists in the world. Man compounds his misery by his own malice, treachery, and injustice. But if he were benevolent and compassionate in his relations with his fellow man, "half the Misery of Human Life might be extinguished."<sup>11</sup> Addison called this disposition "Good-nature" and his exposition of it parallels that of Shaftesbury on natural affection. "Good-nature is generally born with us. . . ." It is "an Overflowing of Humanity, such as an exuberant Love of Mankind. . . ."<sup>12</sup> Good-nature is a "Moral Virtue" if it is rational, that is, if it operates as something more than an instinct. To determine this, it must be measured against three rules:

First, Whether it acts with Steadiness and Uniformity in Sickness and in Health, in Prosperity and in Adversity. . . ; The next

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., no. 393.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., no. 169.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

way of a Man's bringing his Good-nature to the Test is, to consider whether it operates according to the Rules of Reason and Duty. . . ; The third Tryal of Good-nature will be the examining our selves, whether or no we are able to exert it to our own Disadvantage, and employ it on proper Objects, notwithstanding any little Pain, Want or Inconvenience which may arise to our selves from it: In a word, whether we are willing to risque any part of our Fortune, our Reputation, our Health or Ease, for the Benefit of Mankind.<sup>13</sup>

Since man is a "Sociable Animal"<sup>14</sup> and Good-nature is the natural love of mankind, a man who has accepted his place in nature will be conscious of it and will use moral virtue for the public good. In a passage that could have been written by Shaftesbury, Addison summarized all this:

A Person, therefore, who is possessed with such an habitual good Intention as that which I have been here speaking of, enters upon no single Circumstance of Life without considering it as well-pleasing to the great Author of his Being, conformable to the Dictates of Reason, suitable to human Nature in general, or to that particular Station in which Providence has placed him. He lives in a perpetual Sense of the Divine Presence, regards himself as acting, in the whole Course of his Existence, under the Observation and Inspection of that Being. . . .<sup>15</sup>

In perhaps the most famous of the Spectator papers Addison discussed "Chearfulness."<sup>16</sup> Chearfulness is an-

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., no. 177.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., no. 9.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., no. 213.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., no. 381.

alogous to Good-nature and virtue and is the foundation of happiness. A man who possesses cheerfulness is "not only easy in his Thoughts, but a perfect Master of all the Powers and Faculties of his Soul. . . . He comes with a Relish to all those Goods which Nature has provided for him, tastes all the Pleasures of the Creation which are poured about him, and does not feel the full Weight of those accidental Evils which may befall him." His relations with his fellow-men will produce "Love and Goodwill." He is grateful to the "Author of Nature," for cheerfulness "is a kind of Acquiescence in the State wherein we are placed, and a secret Approbation of the Divine Will in his Conduct towards Man. . . ." A man who endeavors to live according to the principles of virtue and reason has "two perpetual Sources of Chearfulness." The first is his own existence, for his very being "spreads a perpetual Diffusion of Joy through the Soul of a virtuous Man." The second is the contemplation of the perfection and amiability of "that Being on whom we have our Dependence." Man finds himself "every where upheld by his Goodness, and surrounded with an Immensity of Love and Mercy."

Such Considerations, which every one should perpetually cherish in his Thoughts, will banish from us all that secret Heaviness of Heart which unthinking Men are subject to when they lie under no real Affliction, all that Anguish which we may feel from any Evil

that actually oppresses us, to which I may likewise add those little Cracklings of Mirth and Folly that are apter to betray Virtue than support it; and establish in us such an even and chearful Temper, as makes us pleasing to our selves, to those with whom we converse, and to him whom we were made to please.

Even if the first edition of the Characteristics met with a slow response, the notions of Good-nature and Chearfulness popularized the basic ideas of cosmic toryism. Both Shaftesbury and Addison sought to sustain the social order by promoting virtue and happiness within it. Both saw the Revolution Settlement as a vindication of that order.<sup>17</sup> It had its flaws, but the banishment of "Vice and Ignorance,"<sup>18</sup> which Mr. Spectator set out to do, would rectify them and ensure its continuation. On a less exalted plane, then, Addison, too, promoted a cosmic tory system.

There is nothing to suggest that Addison derived his ideas from Shaftesbury. Indeed the fact that both published almost simultaneously weighs against such a possibility. What is indicated, however, is that cosmic toryism was "in the air." Shaftesbury's role was that of systematizer; Addison's was that of popularizer.

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<sup>17</sup>Spectator, no. 287, and T. B. Macaulay, "The Life and Writings of Addison," Critical and Historical Essays contributed to 'The Edinburgh Review' (London: 1883), pp. 738-39.

<sup>18</sup>Spectator, no. 58.

Without doubt the finest poetic expression of cosmic toryism was Alexander Pope's An Essay on Man (1733). From the beginning controversy has swirled about the origins of the work. Voltaire, among others, asked "pourquoi M. Pope en fait uniquement honneur à M. de Bolingbroke, sans dire un mot du célèbre Shaftesbury, élève de Locke."<sup>19</sup> Pope freely admitted his debt to Bolingbroke but never acknowledged the Characteristics. The problems posed by this have been discussed by several scholars with varying results. R. L. Brett concluded that Pope was in the tradition of Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, but that the ideas originated in the rational theory of the Cambridge Platonists.<sup>20</sup> Because of my qualms about their role in Shaftesbury's thought, I find C. A. Moore's earlier analysis more convincing.<sup>21</sup> He argued that Pope was indebted to the Earl in three ways: first, many of the ideas attributed to Bolingbroke originated in the Characteristics; second, that some of Pope's phrasing indicates direct borrowing from The Moralists; and third, that the poet's acceptance of instinctive social affection is at variance with Bol-

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<sup>19</sup>Lettres sur les Anglais, no. 22, quoted in Brett, p. 190; also Fowler, p. 152.

<sup>20</sup>Brett, p. 195.

<sup>21</sup>Moore, pp. 300-8; Fowler also remarks that "several lines, especially of the First Epistle, are simply statements from the Moralists done into verse." (p. 151).

ingbroke's theories and is wholly in accord with Shaftesbury's. Thus, according to Moore, "Pope's Essay on Man . . . becomes a conspicuous proof of the literary ascendancy attained by the Characteristics."<sup>22</sup> The affinity of the two works will be clearly illustrated by an examination of the Essay.

Pope embarked on the task of studying the "Nature and State of MAN, with Respect to the UNIVERSAL SYSTEM" to find his "proper end and purpose of . . . being" so that he could enunciate a system of ethics.<sup>23</sup> The First Epistle establishes that this is the best of worlds to "vindicate the ways of God to Man."<sup>24</sup>

Of Systems possible, if 'tis confest  
That Wisdom infinite must form the best.<sup>25</sup>

The universe is immense and nicely ordered. It is full,<sup>26</sup> as it must be for coherence. Its order is expressed in a "vast chain of being" which reaches from God to nothing

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<sup>22</sup>Moore, p. 307.

<sup>23</sup>The Poems of Alexander Pope: A one-volume edition of the Twickenham Text with selected Annotations, ed. John Butt (London: 1963), Essay on Man, "To the Reader" and "The Design," pp. 501-2.

<sup>24</sup>Essay, I, 16.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

<sup>26</sup>The principle of plenitude. Lovejoy gives a lengthy analysis of the Essay as the strongest statement of the chain of being principle in the eighteenth century, pp. 189-207.



and encompasses the full creation.<sup>27</sup> Man is but one creature on the scale; yet he believes that he occupies a special place, that the earth is for him. "In Pride, in reas'ning Pride, our error lies."<sup>28</sup>

But if the end of man is happiness, right reasoning will teach him to forego pride and to submit. "The bliss of Man (could Pride that blessing find)/ Is not to act or think beyond mankind."<sup>29</sup> Man must consider his true place in nature and see it in relation to the Whole.

Then say not Man's imperfect, Heav'n in fault;  
Say rather, Man's as perfect as he ought;  
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place.<sup>30</sup>

Having done this, man will understand that he cannot comprehend the entirety of things; that those things that appear wrong to him are not so, but are part of God's design.

All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;  
All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;  
All Discord, Harmony, not understood;  
All partial Evil, universal Good:  
And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,  
One Truth is clear, 'Whatever IS, is RIGHT.'<sup>31</sup>

Thus the First Epistle established two of the basic principles of cosmic toryism, that there is unity of the Whole

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<sup>27</sup>Essay, I, 233-46.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 123.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 189-90.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 69-71.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 289-95.

and that all ill is merely apparent.

As Shaftesbury, Pope then turned to man's relationship with himself and other men, that is, to formulating his system of ethics.

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;  
The proper study of Mankind is Man.  
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,  
A being darkly wise, and rudely great:  
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,  
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,  
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest,  
In doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast;  
In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer,  
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;  
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,  
Whether he thinks too little, or too much:  
Chaos of Thought and Passion, all confus'd;  
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd;  
Created half to rise, and half to fall;  
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;  
Sole judge of Truth, in endless Error hurl'd;  
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!<sup>32</sup>

How like Shaftesbury's rant deploring the state of mankind:

O WRETCHED State of Mankind!--Hapless Nature,  
thus to have err'd in thy chief Workmanship!  
----Whence sprang this fatal Weakness? What  
Chance or Destiny shall we accuse? . . . that  
wretched Mortal, ill to himself, and Cause of  
Ill to all.<sup>33</sup>

Man on his own is miserable. He cannot help but err for he is helpless. Only by knowing himself, and thus his position in nature, can he overcome his innate handicaps. Both Pope and Shaftesbury devote their works to elaborating a means whereby man can do just that.

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<sup>32</sup>Essay, II, 1-18.

<sup>33</sup>Char., II, pp. 192-93.

Pope found two principles in human nature, self-love and reason.<sup>34</sup> Alone, neither is capable of properly guiding man, but together they can lead man to his end--happiness.<sup>35</sup> At this early stage, Pope's self-love is not yet Shaftesbury's natural affection: it is more akin to Hobbes's self-interest, but as the Essay unfolds the identity of the two notions becomes apparent.

Ev'n mean Self-love becomes, by force divine,  
The scale to measure others wants by thine.<sup>36</sup>

Selfish man often thinks that God works solely for his good, but reason teaches the contrary, that all is not made for one, but "one for all." Comprehending this, we see that "God, in the nature of each being, founds/ Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds."<sup>37</sup> And thus, instinct, common to all beings, binds them together for mutual sustenance:

Not Man alone, but all that roam the wood,  
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,  
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,  
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.  
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;  
They love themselves, a third time, in their race.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Essay, II, 53-54.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 87-88.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 291-92.

<sup>37</sup>Essay, III, 109-10.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 119-24.

Self-love thus is the same as the Earl's natural affection. It is more pronounced in man because of his natural weakness and his reason.

A longer care Man's helpless kind demands;  
That longer care contracts more lasting bands:  
Reflection, Reason, still the ties improve.<sup>39</sup>

Man's self-love leads directly to the establishment of society, just as natural affection did in The Moralists: here too no state of nature existed prior to it.

Nor think, in NATURE'S STATE they blindly trod;  
The state of Nature was the reign of God:  
Self-love and Social at her birth began,  
Union the bond of all things, and of Man.<sup>40</sup>

Nature instructed man to learn how to govern this society from the creatures. Thus he created a patriarchal state where the common interest "plac'd the sway in one" and "A Prince the Father of a People made."<sup>41</sup> Within the state self-love had two faces. It could drive man's ambition and lust, in which case tyranny would prevail, or it could direct him to the public good, in which case virtue would prevail.

Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,  
And found the private in the public good.<sup>42</sup>

. . .

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 131-33.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 146-50.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 209-14.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 281-82.

Thus God and Nature link'd the gen'ral frame.  
And bade Self-love and Social be the same.<sup>43</sup>

As Shaftesbury's natural affection is at its best when it adheres to the public good, so self-love is greatest when it embraces social good.

Happiness, "our being's end and aim!"<sup>44</sup> is the goal of society. It can be found by taking nature's path and remembering that

. . . 'the Universal Cause  
Acts not by partial, but by general laws;  
And makes what Happiness we justly call  
Subsist not in the good of one, but all.<sup>45</sup>

Riches, honors, nobility, fame are all sought by many as tangible evidence of happiness. But these things cannot yield real happiness, for what satisfies one does not satisfy all. Nor can they overcome accidents and ills.

Only he

Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,  
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.<sup>46</sup>

He who understands the great scheme knows that "Virtue alone is Happiness below."<sup>47</sup> The virtuous man

Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine;  
Sees, that no being any bliss can know,

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 317-18.

<sup>44</sup>Essay, IV, 1.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 35-38.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 95-96.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 310.

But touches some above, and some below;  
 Learns, from this union of the rising Whole,  
 The first, last purpose of the human soul;  
 And knows where Faith, Law, Morals, all began,  
 All end in LOVE of GOD, and LOVE of MAN.<sup>48</sup>

Thus virtue enables man not only to understand, but also to fulfill, his place in the world. It links him to all other beings and guides him to the common good.

Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,  
 Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing  
 thine.

. . .

Grasp the whole worlds of Reason, Life, and Sense,  
 In one close system of Benevolence:

. . .

God loves from Whole to Parts: but human soul  
 Must rise from Individual to the Whole.  
 Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,  
 As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
 The centre mov'd, a circle strait succeeds,  
 Another still, and still another spreads,  
 Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,  
 His country next, and next all human race,  
 Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind  
 Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind;  
 Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,  
 And Heav'n beholds its image in his breast.<sup>49</sup>

Self-love, as natural affection, in its widest manifestation gives man the means to live in this best of worlds by teaching him to know himself.

Whether Pope actually knew the Characteristics or not, and certainly the Essay on Man bears remarkable sim-

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 334-40.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 353-72.

ilarity to the earlier work, he set forth a cosmic tory system almost as complete as Shaftesbury's. The actual origins of the Essay make little difference. What is important is that the system was presented once again as an alternative to empiricism. At least part of the eighteenth century was not yet ready to yield to the new philosophy.

Cosmic toryism was not without its critics, however. The critics generally objected to parts of Shaftesbury's system rather than to it as a whole. Its ethical implications were most often rejected--notably by Mandeville. Such criticism, while apparently limited, actually struck at the whole since the concept of virtue enunciated by the Earl is entirely derivative from the principles of cosmic toryism. It was not possible to destroy one section of the structure without destroying the whole structure.

Bernard Mandeville was by far the best known of Shaftesbury's critics in the eighteenth century. His Fable of the Bees was often considered to be solely directed against the Characteristics. But his modern editor, F. B. Kaye, contravenes this by pointing out that the first explicit mention of Shaftesbury came only in the 1723, or third, edition of the Fable.<sup>50</sup> In 1723 Mande-

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<sup>50</sup>Bernard Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, ed. with commentary by F. B. Kaye, 2 vols. (Oxford: 1924), I, p. lxxii. Mandeville published the poem "The Grumbling Hive" in 1705. In 1714 he added prose commentary to it and entitled the expanded work The Fable of the Bees.

ville added an essay, "A Search into the Nature of Society," specifically intended to refute Shaftesbury's moral theories. Mandeville's understanding of man's nature was wholly in opposition to the Earl's: indeed he himself admitted "that two Systems cannot be more opposite than his Lordship's and mine."<sup>51</sup> The poet saw man as naturally selfish and wholly egoistic. He was concerned with man in the everyday world, not as a part of some greater whole. Thus he saw vice as the benefactor of society, arguing that a virtuous people would be unable to achieve the material benefits that make for a contented and progressive society. Clearly Mandeville was not interested in the larger philosophical questions which exercised the author of the Characteristics and other cosmic tomes. He focused his attention upon society as it really is, that is, he took an utilitarian or "empirical" approach to the questions of morality.

"A Search into the Nature of Society" proposed to show that the "good and amiable" qualities of man were not due to his being a social animal, and, moreover, that "it would be utterly impossible, either to raise any Multitudes into a Populous, Rich and Flourishing Nation, or when so rais'd, to keep and maintain them in that Condition, without the assistance of what we call Evil both

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<sup>51</sup>Mandeville, I, p. 324.



Natural and Moral."<sup>52</sup> Immediately we see that evil not only exists, but that it has an important role to play in the creation of man's well-being.

Shaftesbury had argued that there were immutable standards of virtue, that all men, due to their social nature, had a natural affection for society, and thus a man of reason would readily govern himself to lead a virtuous life. Hence Mandeville began with a demonstration of the relativity of taste and equated this with moral standards. Judgments about works of art differ according to time and place; fashions are known to run in cycles; religious architecture depends on the doctrines of the religion. "In Morals there is no greater Certainty." For example, polygamy is anathema to Christians, but is accepted and practiced by Mahometans. Thus hunting for immutable standards "is not much better than a Wild-Goose-Chace."<sup>53</sup>

But what is even worse is that the notion that virtue may come without self-denial leads to hypocrisy. For "we must not only deceive others, but likewise become altogether unknown to our selves, and in an Instance I am going to give, it will appear, how for want of duly examining himself this might happen to a Person of Quality, of

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 325.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 330-31.

Parts and Erudition, one every way resembling the Author of the Characteristicks himself." With that, Mandeville launched into an attack on Shaftesbury, saying his aristocratic upbringing enabled him to curb his passions and to shun everything that was troublesome. Thus he wrote of virtue from his closet rather than from experience of the world. He then asked whether it was right for a man of parts to remain closeted when his country needed his talents.

It is probable he would answer that he lov'd Retirement, had no other Ambition than to be a Good Man, and never aspired to have any share in the Government, or that he hated all Flattery and slavish Attendance, the Insincerity of Courts and Bustle of the World. I am willing to believe him: but may not a Man of an Indolent Temper and Un-active Spirit say, and be sincere in all this, and at the same time indulge his Appetites without being able to subdue them, tho' his Duty summons him to it. Virtue consists in Action, and whoever is possess'd of this Social Love and kind Affection to his Species, and by his Birth or Quality can claim any Post in the Publick Management, ought not to sit still when he can be Serviceable, but exert himself to the utmost for the good of his Fellow Subjects.<sup>54</sup>

In this Mandeville was unfair to the Earl, but it is more than probable that he did not know of the Earl's efforts to take part in public affairs and the reasons why he did not. How would the poet have had access to the letters which indicated Shaftesbury's profound interest in poli-

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 332-33.

tics and the belief that the Characteristics should serve as a guide to men of affairs? This is fully borne out when Mandeville cited Cicero as the epitome of a philosopher-politician, not realizing that Cicero was Shaftesbury's model also.

The remainder of "A Search into the Nature of Society" was devoted to demonstrating that men are not sociable by nature, but on the contrary prefer solitude and that they join society only because of their "Bad and Hateful Qualities," most notably, self-love.

How necessary our Appetites and Passions are for the welfare of all Trades and Handicrafts has been sufficiently prov'd throughout the Book, and that they are our bad Qualities, or at least produce them, no Body denies. It remains then that I should set forth the variety of Obstacles that hinder and perplex Man in the Labour he is constantly employ'd in, the procuring of what he wants; and which in other Words is call'd the Business of Self-Preservation: While at the same time I demonstrate that the Sociableness of Man arises only from these Two things, viz. The multiplicity of his Desires, and the continual Opposition he meets with in his Endeavours to gratify them.<sup>55</sup>

He admits that the fewer desires a man has, the more active he is in supplying his own wants, the better relations he has with his family and neighbors, all lead to real virtue and make him more "acceptable to God and Man." "But let us be Just, what Benefit can these things be of, or

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 344.

what earthly Good can they do, to promote the Wealth, the Glory and worldly Greatness of Nations?"<sup>56</sup> The concern of man in society is only to add to its material prosperity and hence to increase his own. For this end skillful politicians manage private vices to turn them to public benefits.<sup>57</sup>

Some of Mandeville's ideas appear to be similar to those of cosmic toryism, such as the desire for public benefits, but in reality he rejected the premises used by cosmic Tories. He was not concerned with the Whole in any way, either its origins or its composition. He believed that evil was a real and a positive force in the world. And he saw man as being wholly animated by self-love, rather than natural affection. As Hobbes, he believed that society existed to protect man from himself. His desire was not to practice virtue for the benefit of the Whole, but to exploit evil for the benefit of men, both as individuals and as members of society. Thus he attacked Shaftesbury for rejecting evil and for his altruistic use of virtue for the good of the Whole. His pragmatic or cynical approach to morality represented one of the possible attacks on cosmic toryism. It was an easy

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 369.

attack, for it appealed to the baser instincts of man. It was not original, since most of it could be found in Shaftesbury's primary antagonist, Hobbes. Nor was it a successful counter-argument, because Mandeville failed to address himself to the fundamental ideas set forth by Shaftesbury.

A reply to The Fable and partial defense of the Characteristics was given by Richard Fiddes in the preface to his treatise Of Morality.<sup>58</sup> Fiddes was a churchman, but he generally adhered to the tenets of natural theology fashionable in his day. His preface, which is the only part of his book that need concern us, indicates that he adopted much of his thought from Shaftesbury, although he does not appear to have been a thorough-going cosmic tory. He accepted and used aspects of the cosmic tory system but modified them with Lockean and Christian principles, yielding a most interesting melange of ideas.

Since Fiddes was primarily concerned to rebut Mandeville's "A Search into the Nature of Society," his preface parallels it and hence begins by arguing for im-

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<sup>58</sup>Richard Fiddes, A General Treatise of Morality, Form'd upon the Principles of Natural Reason only with a Preface in Answer to two Essays lately published in the "Fable of the Bees." And some incidental REMARKS upon an "Inquiry concerning Virtue," by the Right Honourable Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury (London: 1724). The preface is 144 pages long and contains a point-by-point reply to Mandeville's "A Search into the Nature of Society."

mutable standards of virtue. "It is sufficient to establish the Truth of Morality, that Men, in all Ages, have agreed in the general Notion of it."<sup>59</sup> Indeed if the names virtue and vice can be transposed with regard to particular subjects, as Mandeville had done, this alone is sufficient demonstration of the reality of the two notions, "for what is not cannot be misapplied." So using the term virtue to apply to certain vices does not prove that there is no real virtue, only that man is capable of mistaking the nature of things and of drawing false conclusions from true principles.<sup>60</sup>

There are two degrees of morality according to the source of their obligation. The primary order of morality encompasses those things which come

from the immutable Reason and Order of Things, and do not depend even upon the Will of the Supreme Legislator, but are founded in those eternal and essential Perfections of his Nature, whereby his Will itself is regulated; and which, in the natural Order of our Ideas, are therefore antecedent to his Will; such Things as are not merely good by Virtue of his Command, or of any Circumstances, wherein Man may accidentally be placed; but such, as are commanded, because they are absolutely good, and, under all Circumstances, in their own Nature.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Fiddes, p. liv.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. lv.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., pp. lviii-lix.

Hence pride, which is counted as a virtue in The Fable of the Bees, cannot be a virtue in man, who is rational, for it is contrary to reason and the nature of man. The secondary order includes those duties man has as a social creature and which are regulated by "good and proper Ends of Society." For example, marriage is necessary for the propagation of the species and thus polygamy would be moral if it were necessary to increase the population. But if the population were sufficient or too great, then, in the interests of society, restraints would have to be placed upon this liberty and such marriages would become immoral. Generally humans have no opportunity to determine these duties for God modelled human society and in the process established man's obligations to it.<sup>62</sup> Fiddes's concept of morality, then, generally conforms to Shaftesbury's, since it is based on the natural order of things, which establishes both immutable standards of virtue and allows the good of society to dictate individual morality.

As Mandeville, Fiddes then turned to the question of the immediate relations of man to society. Here he went beyond Shaftesbury in his defense of him and included notions from Locke and Christianity that Shaftesbury

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<sup>62</sup>Fiddes, pp. lx-lxiii. The examples used by Fiddes both here and above were specific answers to examples used in "A Search into the Nature of Society."

specifically rejected, but the cosmic tory foundation continued to show through. The problem of the conflict of public and private duties was of primary concern. It is an "acknowledged Truth" that God designed man to be a social creature: proof comes from the fact that nature, which does nothing in vain, has given man the "proper Capacities" and the "proper Dispositions" necessary for a social life. Society satisfies many of man's wants and removes many ills that a solitary life could not. Thus it is clear that the social nature of man is part of God's design of the Whole, and that man's happiness is dependent on his public activities.<sup>63</sup> Yet man did not enter society immediately. A contract had to be formed first and man had to surrender certain of his individual liberties and accept those new obligations imposed on the whole community. Only then could he be truly said to be social.<sup>64</sup>

Still there are times when a man's private interests will conflict with those of the public good and when he will suffer personal injustice if he adheres to the social interest.

The great Difficulty, which I shall not dis-  
semble, relating to the Matter in question,  
has been thought to lie here. The End of Man,  
that for which God created him, and which he

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid., pp. lxxii-lxxv.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., pp. lxxxvi-xc.



invincibly desires and pursues, is Happiness. Now it is said, the publick Good of Society often requires that Man should sacrifice his private Happiness to it. Here, therefore, seem to be two different Ends, both of them, by Confession, agreeable to divine appointment, and which yet directly interfere, and tend to destroy one another. In this case, we are asked, What Method of Reconciliation can be proposed, that the Author of human Nature, and of human Government, may appear to have acted according to his essential Characters of Wisdom and Goodness, in these two different Constitutions? Since, according to these Attributes, he could not have so acted, if the respective Duties, or Interest of them should be found absolutely incompatible.<sup>65</sup>

The answer, which is wholly contrary to Shaftesbury's arguments, is that public interests must prevail and that losses sustained by the individual will be rewarded by God in the future life.<sup>66</sup> Shaftesbury, of course, followed the Stoic rather than the Christian tradition and argued that man must subordinate himself entirely to the good of the Whole regardless of the consequences to him as an individual. The only reward involved was that the interests of the Whole would be confirmed and that no harm could occur to the individual if he considered himself in terms of the Whole. Thus Fiddes's defense of Shaftesbury did not wholly conform to the master's beliefs. Nonetheless he provides a good example of how cosmic toryism came to

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., pp. xcv-xcvi.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., pp. xcvi-ciii.

be used in the eighteenth century and how it quickly lost its purity.

In this chapter we have seen how the principles of cosmic toryism were reiterated, vilified, and defended. They underlay the philosophy espoused in the most renowned periodical ever published. The best-known philosophical poem in the English language was an exposition of the system. And one of the most controversial works of the period argued the antithetical position.

Cosmic toryism, then, occupied a significant position in early eighteenth-century thought. It appealed to those who found the political, social and intellectual framework of the age satisfactory, because it provided a philosophical justification for their beliefs. Clearly Shaftesbury's was a conservative philosophy: he stood up against the liberal notions of the "new philosophy and science." Moreover, he offered something that they did not, a formula for the betterment of society and for human happiness. It is little wonder, then, that the Characteristics was so widely read and commented upon.

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