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GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE NATURALISTIC HUMANISM OF MATTHEW ARNOLD: A CRITICAL REINTERPRETATION OF HIS IMAGINATIVE VISION

A DISSERTATION

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BY

DALE W. DAVIS

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1968

THE NATURALISTIC HUMANISM OF MATTHEW ARNOLD:

A CRITICAL REINTERPRETATION OF

HIS IMAGINATIVE VISION

APPROVED BY

Jack L. Kendall

Bruce Granger

A. J. Fatz

Robert M. Davis

Geoffrey Marshall

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

THE NATURALISTIC HUMANISM OF MATTHEW ARNOLD:

A CRITICAL REINTERPRETATION OF HIS IMAGINATIVE VISION

by Dale W. Davis

Major Professor: Jack L. Kendall

The thesis of this dissertation is that the essential unity both in the variety of literary works and in the life of Matthew Arnold is to be apprehended in his dedication as a humanist to the humanization of his countrymen by a program of humanistic education, which he effected through his poems and his essays in criticism (literary, educational, religious, social, and political)--wherein he created an imaginative vision of the human condition in a naturalistic universe and advocated the actualization of an ideal of the good man and of the good society--so that his countrymen would be enabled to assume the social responsibilities and to pursue the personal opportunities involved in the inevitable development of the modern world as an industrial and as a democratic civilization.

Chapter I, "Introduction," contends that Arnold's imaginative vision of naturalistic humanism was intended to supersede the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity, the original basis of the traditional Victorian cultural ideology, which was adapted to an agricultural economy and to an aristocratic society. Inevitably, the consequence of his endeavor was to create an imaginative vision that, although grounded in naturalistic assumptions and animated by humanistic principles, is essentially religio-mythic in its effect: providing an explanation for natural phenomena, supplying sanctions for the social institutions and for the cultural life-style, and resolving the anxiety implicit in the human condition (our conscious involvement in the mortal situation of peculiar creatures in a strange universe) by suggesting answers to the great questions of human existence--those concerning the nature, purpose, and relations of God, of nature, of society, and of man. That Arnold deliberately dedicated himself to transforming the cultural ideology in England is indicated by evidence from various sources.

Chapter II, "The Images of God and of Nature," examines Arnold's concepts of nature and of God, then, as projected in his poems and essays, concluding that (for him) God is but an aspect of nature as experienced from the perspective of the moral viewpoint. Chapter III, "The Image of Society," proceeds to analyze the humanist ideal of the good society that Arnold applied as a standard in his social criticism of Victorian institutions. And Chapter IV, "The Image of Man," traces the humanist ideal of the good man as reflected in Arnold's works.

Finally, Chapter V, "Conclusion," asserts that Arnold's naturalistic humanism is in effect a religious vision, satisfying religio-mythic needs, and (in order to substantiate this assertion) compares and relates it to the religious attitude in the contemporary movement of naturalistic humanism, especially as articulated in the writings of John Herman Randall, Jr.

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THE NATURALISTIC HUMANISM OF MATTHEW ARNOLD: A CRITICAL REINTERPRETATION OF HIS IMAGINATIVE VISION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose, Approach, and Procedure

> With the passage of time, Matthew Arnold's eminence in English literature becomes increasingly plain. Both as a transitional figure linking his era to our own and as the central man of letters in his own period he fully deserves the thorough, searching study he has been receiving in recent years.[1]

Matthew Arnold has always excited critical controversy and elicited sympathetic commentary. But the recent acceleration of serious scholarly interest in his works received its initial impetus with the publication of H. F. Lowry's edition of The Letters of Matthew to Arthur Hugh Clough in 1932. "No single work has contributed more to the Arnold revival of the last several decades."[2] Its presentation of new information and material, with a judicious "Introduction," stimulated a response in literary scholars. They returned

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[1]Leon Gottfield, Matthew Arnold and the Romantics (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 1.

[2]Frederic E. Faverty, The Victorian Poets: A Guide to Research (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 112.

to the literary works of Arnold with renewed interest. Along with the other eminent Victorians, he had suffered from the general scorn and neglect accorded all things Victorian in the natural reaction of the early twentieth century to the previous age--despite the enthusiasm of a minority, like the American Neo-Humanists, for his classical and ethical emphasis. Landmarks in Arnoldian scholarship were established in successive decades: Lionel Trilling's "intellectual biography," Matthew Arnold (1939); C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry's The Poetry of Matthew Arnold: A Commentary (1940), which presented more unpublished primary source material, and their subsequent standard edition of the poetry itself, The Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold (1950); and an edition of his private notebooks, by H. F. Lowry, Karl Young, and W. H. Dunn, The Notebooks of Matthew Arnold (1952). And now, in the present decade of the sixties, this scholarly attention has reached its culmination in the projected ten-volume standard edition of Arnold's prose works edited by Professor R. H. Super, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, of which five handsome volumes have already appeared. Finally, a new edition of his letters is projected, for many more have been found since G. W. E. Russel's early edition, "censored" by the Arnold family, was published in 1895.

Purpose

Needless to say, the literary criticism of Arnold has proceeded space with the literary scholarship. Yet the completeness and success of Arnoldian scholarship has perhaps not been fully matched in Arnoldian criticism. An adequate understanding and appreciation of Matthew Arnold's intention and achievement as a man of letters remains, I think, to be fully realized. The purpose of this dissertation, as a critical reinterpretation of Arnold's imaginative vision, is to make a contribution towards a fuller and more adequate criticism of his literary works as a whole.

Any reader of Arnold is soon impressed with the catholicity of his interests as revealed in the multiplicity of his literary works. He was a man of letters who interpreted broadly the province of literature. Collectively, his literary works constitute, as it were, a "criticism of life." Besides poetry, his canon includes essays in literary, educational, religious, social, and political criticism. The variety of his literary activity is impressive. And it is also rather puzzling to the student of literature and to the literary critic. How is this variety to be accounted for? Why was Arnold moved to produce it? What does it all mean?

Yet, despite the impression of diversity, the reader of Arnold is also impressed with the sense of a unity that seems to pervade the multiplicity of his literary works. Somehow his works seem more or less related, beyond the mere

fact of their having been composed by a single author. Beneath the variety of appearance, surely there must be a reality of unity. But to discern and to define the subtle and elusive principle that unites them (if there be one) is a complex critical process. The critical studies of Arnold, as of any man of letters, have usually attempted to impose a principle of order upon his literary productions by tracing in them a number of consistently recurring themes. But a satisfying comprehensive interpretation remains, I think, to be achieved. The question of unity, like that of variety, has yet to be answered in a convincing manner. Unless Arnold's works are merely the miscellaneous productions of an entirely undisciplined curiosity, he must have been impelled by a unifying purpose to undertake the variety of literary activities represented in his canon. Yet he was anything but undisciplined and undirected, either in his life or in his works.

Any hypothesis that proposes to resolve the problem of unity and of variety in the life and works of Arnold must certainly, among other matters, account for his movement from poetry to criticism and from literary criticism in particular to criticism in general--educational, religious, social, and political. Such a hypothesis must, it would seem, account for this variety of occupation in terms of a unity of vocation--the call of a single purpose. The particular hypothesis of the present study is that the literary works of Arnold

express and create the imaginative vision of naturalistic humanism, whose intended effect was to supersede the traditional Victorian cultural ideology (based originally on the mythology of a supernaturalistic Christianity and adapted to an argicultural economy and to an aristocratic society), an ideology which had become increasingly incredible both to Arnold and to his age; the unity of his works, then, stems from his consistent endeavor to reflect an adequate and acceptable vision of life for modern man, and the variety springs from his comprehensive endeavor to extend the implications of his vision to human life in general. The thesis of this dissertation, then, is that the essential unity both in the variety of literary works and in the life of Matthew Arnold is to be apprehended in his dedication as a humanist to the humanization of his countrymen by a program of human istic education, which he effected through his poems and his essays in criticism (literary, educational, religious, social, and political)--wherein he created an imaginative vision of the human condition in a naturalistic universe and advocated the actualization of an ideal of the good man and of the good society--so that his countrymen would be enabled to assume the social responsibilities and to pursue the personal opportunities involved in the inevitable development of the modern world as an industrial and as a democratic civilization.

Approach

In an article entitled "Victorian Study: An Interdisciplinary Essay," Michael Wolff has suggested that, generally,

anything is best understood in its organic context as a part of a whole and that, specifically, a Victorian figure is to be understood best in his relation to the change which Victorian culture was undergoing. Wolff contends that the culture of Victorian England was shaped by a complex of revolutionary forces operating between 1750 and 1830, with the consequence that "the aristocratic mode in political life, the rural mode in social life, the Christian mode in personal life . . . were put on the defensive . . . ."[3] He asserts that most Victorian public figures are to be understood, then, "as a pre-technologically educated elite in a newly technological society."[4]

With Mr. Wolff's general suggestion one readily agrees. Surely a broad but clearly defined cultural approach offers the best perspective for understanding a man in relation to his age. Although one may disagree with Mr. Wolff's specific theory for understanding particular Victorian men, it is now clear that the culture of Victorian England was indeed undergoing a revolutionary change. In its broadest aspect, I think, the change involved the shift in the culture of western civilization from an essentially supernaturalistic ideology, aristocratic society, and agricultural economy to an essentially naturalistic ideology, democratic society, and

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[3]Michael Wolff, "Victorian Study: An Interdisciplinary Essay," Victorian Studies, VIII (September, 1964), p. 60.

[4]Ibid., p. 62.

industrial economy. Against this cultural background, the significance of Matthew Arnold may be apprehended most clearly.

Arnold strove to replace the "religious mythology" of supernaturalistic Christianity with the "imaginative vision" of naturalistic humanism. Insofar as he intended for his naturalistic humanism to usurp, to assume, and to fulfill certain of the functions previously performed by a religious mythology, his own imaginative vision may be recognized as itself essentially mythic in function or religious in effect. Inevitably, the consequence of Arnold's endeavor to supersede a system of religious mythology was to create an imaginative vision that--although grounded in naturalistic assumptions and animated by humanistic principles--is nonetheless to a large extent religio-mythic in character.

Now the essential effect of a comprehensive system of religious mythology, serving as the primary source of the cultural ideology in a society, is to provide an explanation for natural phenomena, to supply sanctions for the social institutions and for the cultural life-style, and to resolve the anxiety implicit in the human condition--our conscious involvement in the mortal situation of peculiar creatures in a strange universe. These mythic and religious functions account for the unity and variety of Arnold's imaginative vision. His competitive endeavor to replace supernaturalistic Christianity inevitably involved him in the effort to fulfill the needs that the religious mythology had previously satisfied. And the effort to cope with these religio-mythic

functions necessarily determined the depth and breadth of his own imaginative vision. In creating his naturalistic humanism, Arnold so shaped his imaginative vision that ultimately it reflected a relatively consistent and fairly comprehensive view of reality with certain focal images or central concepts. Thus the unity and variety of Arnold's imaginative vision correspond to the consistency and comprehensiveness of a system of religious mythology.

The content of a religio-mythic vision--whether it be supernaturalistic or naturalistic, primitive or sophisticated--centers in its imaginative conceptions of God, of nature, of society, and of man. Collectively, these constitute a complex of basic concepts. For the images used to express these concepts reveal the fundamental assumptions and ultimate implications involved in the vision. And the effect of these images within the context of a religio-mythic system is to suggest satisfactory answers to the great questions of human existence--those concerning the nature, purpose, and relations of man, of society, of nature, and of God.

Insofar as an imaginative vision in modern literature strives to suggest answers to these great questions, it may be regarded as essentially mythic in its function or religious in its effect, even though its assumptions be naturalistic rather than supernaturalistic. Thus the view of the human condition that is expressed and created in the poems and

essays of Arnold may be regarded as the religio-mythic vision of a Victorian man of letters.

Procedure

As a critical reinterpretation of Arnold's imaginative vision (rather than a specifically "scholarly" investigation), this study does not undertake to establish any new factual material. Instead, its object is to propose a new generalization to account for the existing facts already available, to offer a new interpretation of them. Consequently, the procedure used to support the basic generalization in this study is that used to substantiate any hypothesis--an inductive analysis of the extant facts: in this case, the internal evidence of primary sources and the external evidence of secondary sources.

Some explanation of the principle of organization in this study is required. The organization used in the body of this dissertation is not chronological and historical but topical and analytical. This approach departs from the usual practice of examining the canon of an author's works in the order of their composition or publication. In so doing, I have striven to explicate Arnold's imaginative vision through exploring selected ideas--specifically, his concepts of God, of nature, of society, and of man. The rationale for this organization is that the analysis of these selected topics should lead to a comprehensive understanding of his vision. To abstract and to analyze this complex of basic concepts will clearly reveal the fundamental assumptions and ultimate

implications of his vision. Although the element of stylistic texture may be neglected in the process, the structural unity of his vision (with which this study is primarily concerned) is thus emphasized and clarified. This is deemed a distinct advantage.[5]

The disadvantage of topical and analytical organization is intricately interrelated with its advantage. Abstracting simplifies and clarifies, but it may also distort or misrepresent the complexity that a subject assumes when viewed in a concrete setting with its contextual associations. But the advantage to be gained in this instance--a clarifying of the essentially religio-mythic effect of Arnold's imaginative vision in the Victorian age--seems to warrant the taking of the risk. Moreover, the risk has been minimized by analyzing the development of the basic concepts as they emerge in the chronological sequence of the works. For example, the idea of God is treated by tracing its development within Arnold's poems and essays, from

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[5]After every chapter in this dissertation except the last had been composed, I discovered that G. Robert Stange in his Matthew Arnold: The Poet As Humanist (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967)--just published--had adopted the same topical and analytical approach in a study of Arnold's poetry. His selected topics ("The Idea of Poetry," "The Idea of Nature," "The Idea of the Self," and "The Idea of Love") are not the same as mine, and his analysis is restricted to the poems alone. Yet, in the few places where our topics do touch, I am pleased to say, our treatments largely agree. However, I was even more pleased to note that Stange's reason for adopting the topical and analytical approach is identical with mine: simply, it is a new and illuminating approach to apply to Arnold's works.

the earliest to the latest, so that a sense of its complexity as an evolving concept has been preserved.

The present study is, of course, indebted to the host of previous studies on Arnold, which have contributed to illuminating his life, art, and vision. The significant early books on Arnold by George Saintsbury (1899), by Herbert W. Paul (1902), by G. W. E. Russell (1904), and by Stuart P. Sherman (1914), were surpassed by Lionel Trilling's monumental study, Matthew Arnold (1939), for which all students of Arnold must be grateful. It has since been supplemented by E. K. Chamber's factual biographical sketch (1947) and by the psychologically oriented studies of Louis Bonnerot (1947) and of E. K. Brown (1948). Other studies have explored particular aspects of Arnold's works with scholarly thoroughness and critical competence: Poetry and the Criticism of Life (1931), which includes essays on Arnold's esthetic theory and practice, by H. W. Garrod; The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold (1950), by W. F. Connell; Matthew Arnold the Ethnologist (1951), a study of his typically nineteenth-century racial notions, by Frederic E. Faverty; The Touchstones of Matthew Arnold (1955), a study of his standards of literary criticism, by John S. Eells, Jr.; The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold (1959), a study of his religious and moral ideas, by William Robbins; Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill, (1965), a comparative study of his political thought, by Edward Alexander; Matthew Arnold and the Classical

Tradition (1965), by Warren D. Anderson; and two recent and excellent studies of Arnold's poetry--Imaginative Reason (1966), by A. Dwight Culler, and Matthew Arnold: The Poet as Humanist (1967), by G. Robert Stange. From among many such books (as well as numerous scholarly and critical articles in literary journals), these at least must be singled out and acknowledged as outstanding contributions to the criticism of Arnold's ideas and works.

However, none of these previous studies has sufficiently grasped and analyzed in a concentrated treatment the continuity, consistency, and centrality of the naturalistic assumptions and humanistic principles that not merely inform but actually dominate the imaginative vision of Arnold. That Arnold's views were influenced by naturalistic and by humanistic notions has, it is true, been acknowledged to a certain extent; but that his imaginative vision may be defined, interpreted, and apprehended most clearly as a unified and coherent naturalistic and humanistic ideology has not been generally recognized. Nor has any of the previous studies of Arnold sufficiently conceived that, because he created and expressed his naturalistic humanism in order to supersede a religious mythology, much of the character of his imaginative vision is determined and explained by the circumstantial requirement that inevitably it had to assume and to perform certain religio-mythic functions. The contribution of this dissertation towards a more adequate criticism of Arnold,

then, lies in its endeavor, first, to reinterpret his imaginative vision as a comprehensive and consistent naturalistic humanism and, second, to elucidate its religio-mythic effect. Hence, in its relation to previous studies, the present study may be regarded as partly a synthesis, assimilating what has been established as valid in the preceding interpretations of Arnold within the larger context of a critical reinterpretation.

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the remainder of this "Introduction" will be devoted to background material, designed to make clear the extent of Arnold's awareness of the condition of his age and his conception of his own role in changing that condition. The three chapters in the body of the text will then be devoted to an analysis of the naturalistic assumptions and humanistic principles that consistute the foundation for Arnold's concepts of God, nature, society, and man. And, finally, the "Conclusion" will be devoted to the elucidation of the religio-mythic effect of Arnold's imaginative vision by a comparison of his position with the consciously religious perspective of the twentiety-century movement of naturalistic humanism, especially as apprehended and articulated in the writings of John Herman Randall, Jr.

Background Information: Historical and Biographical

The Function of Myth in Life and Art

In the popular or common sense, of course, the word myth is used simply to denote an idea that is false, such as the "myth" of racial superiority. But in the more technical or scholarly sense, the term myth is used to denote a story that explains the origin and operation of a natural or social phenomenon not in scientific but in supernatural or imaginative terms. The genesis of such a myth is explained by the processes of primitive psychology. For the primitive imagination operated in accordance with the psychological principal of analogical association: the unknown or unfamiliar was apprehended in terms of its resemblance to the familiar and known. Myths are thus the result of anthropomorphic projections and imaginative personifications of natural phenomena by early man. The natural was interpreted in terms of the human. The activities of nature were explained as the workings of spirits or gods, who were like men but supernaturally (or superhumanly) great. Hence the thundering clouds were conceived as being manned by an angry god--Yahweh or Zeus.

The ultimate consequence of the myth-making imagination in primitive man was the creation of a system of mythology, a cycle of numerous and interrelated myths. After a specific version of the creation myth had established the centrality of certain images, themes, and figures, the ensuing

cycle of myths collectively explained for primitive man the origin and operation of all things in his universe, both in the heavens above and on the earth below, through supernatural agents of causation--the gods.[6] Primitive theology, cosmology, sociology, and psychology were all interpreted by reference to the cycle of myths, which provided fairly comprehensive and relatively consistent images of man, society, nature, and the gods.

Primitive man regarded his system of mythology as extremely significant, for it supplied the ideological basis of his culture. To the anthropologist, as a student of primitive man, the term culture signifies the totality of human inventions and creations, both technological and ideological. The culture of early man included, therefore, not only his tools, weapons, utensils, shelters, ornaments, and clothing; it also included his weltanshauung--the ideology of imaginative conceptions that he held concerning the nature, purpose, and relations of man, nature, and the gods and, consequently, concerning the structure and function of his social institutions. This cultural ideology had its source in the mythos, or mythic world-view, embodied in his system of mythology. As an imaginative vision of reality, the mythos provided an acceptable explanation of the entire universe in which

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[6]On the central significance of a creation myth in determining the structure of mythic belief, see Mircea Eliade, "Cosmogonic Myth and 'Sacred History,'" Religious Studies, II (April, 1967), 171-183.

primitive man lived and moved and had his being; and it supplied the sanction for the modes and forms of his social life. The cultural ideology embodied in a mythos was thus the world-view to which early man strove to adapt his life and institutions as to reality itself, for to him it was reality. The cultural technology (the material inventions of the culture) was but the actualization of potentialities assumed, implied, or envisioned within the cultural ideology. Hence, from the viewpoint of anthropology, the mythology of primitive man performed an extremely significant role in his culture as the primary source and embodiment of his ideology.[7]

In recent decades, the concept of "myth" has been assuming increasing significance in literary criticism. In a sophisticated and literary sense of the term myth, William Van O'Connor, a modern critic, has written of "the Shakespearean or Elizabethan myths: that of divine and earthly governance, with the accompanying belief in man's dignity and potential nobility, and that of the transcendant importance and power of love, with the accompanying belief in plenitude and ripeness."[8] O'Connor's use of the alternative adjectives, "Shakespearean or Elizabethan," suggests

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[7]See Ralph L. Beals and Harry Hoijer, "The Nature of Culture," An Introduction to Anthropology (second edition; New York: Macmillan Co., 1959), pp.223-48.

[8]William Van O'Connor, "Modern Literary Criticism," Contemporary Literary Scholarship: A Critical Review, ed. Lewis Leary (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1958), p. 229.

his recognition that the "myth" of Shakespeare is indeed that of his age, or at least a private version of it. The Elizabethan myth itself (as described by E. M. W. Tillyard in The Elizabethan World-Picture) was a Renaissance modification of the Medieval world-view. And the Medieval view of reality, in turn, had been a synthesis of the ancient Greek idea of the chain of being (as described by Arthur O. Lovejoy in The Great Chain of Being) and of the mythos of primitive Christianity. What all of this suggests is that the literary artists in the ancient, medieval, and renaissance epochs, no less than the myth-makers in primitive cultures, continued to reflect or to create a mythic imaginative vision of the human condition in their art.

Ancient classical culture was grounded in the mythos of pagan mythology, originally inherited from more primitive times, although considerably modified. The emergence and development of rationalism amoung the ancient sophists, sceptics, and philosophers then led ultimately to a generally incredulous attitude toward pagan mythology. Subsequently the mythos of primitive Christianity was gradually established and accepted as more valid in a large part of the ancient world. Classical culture was consequently accommodated to the Christian mythology. Since the advent and triumph of Christianity, the successive epochs in the history of western civilization--ancient, medieval, renaissance, and even the Enlightment--have been characterized by the accommodation of

secular cultural advances to a basically Christian mythos, which has served as the ideological foundation upon which the structure of western civilization has been reared. It is in this sense that the culture of western civilization has been continuously and fundamentally Christian. Of course, the secular advances also gradually modified the mythos of Christianity, but ultimately it was the latter which always assimilated the former.

The climax of Christian culture surely occurred in the high middle ages. The medieval religious mythology was essentially an accommodation of the greek concept of the chain of being to the primitive Christian mythos, resulting in the monolithic structure of Medieval Catholic Christianity. This religious mythology was crystallized in the Divine Comedy of Dante. But then the mythology of Christianity began to disintegrate. With the rediscovery of the classical culture of antiquity, the Renaissance emerged: the same rationalism that had dissolved the mythology of paganism was reintroduced into western civilization; and the seeds that would sprout, grow, blossom, and ripen as the modern world-view were first planted. In his intellectual history of modern western civilization, The Shaping of the Modern Mind, Crane Brinton has discussed the successive ideologies or "cosmologies" that have attempted to provide answers to the "big questions" about God, nature, society, and man, as the cultural ideology that constituted the foundation for the

monolithic structure of Medieval Catholic Christianity gradually disintegrated. This movement--beginning in the Renaissance, advancing in the Enlightenment, and accelerating in the scientific revolution of the nineteenth century--has caused the mythos of supernaturalistic Christianity to become increasingly incredible to the educated. As J. Hillis Miller notes in The Disapperance of God; "Post-medieval literature records . . . the gradual withdrawal of God from the world," and "an important group of nineteenth and twentieth-century [including Matthew Arnold] represent the culmination of a long process."[9]

In the nineteenth century the consequence of this development was that the man of letters was losing the mythos that, accommodated to the cosmologies of successive cultures, had afforded a relatively unified vision of reality for men in western civilization. The ultimate effect of this loss was to be the emergence of multiple visions of reality and the accompanying confusion that we recognize as characteristic of our own contemporary culture. Lacking a basis of generally accepted myth to reflect in his art, the man of letters must create his own "myth." One thinks immediately of W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, and James Joyce, in whose works the imaginative use of myth, if not its actual creation, is certainly

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[9] J. Hillis Miller, The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth-Century Writers (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1963) p. 1.

pervasive. The modern literary artist, like the primitive myth-maker, must create an original "myth" or use the tradition of broken myths in a novel manner.

Like the man of letters, the modern man in the street, who may suppose that he has shed all the illusions of ancient myth, has nevertheless a modern mythos by which he lives. He has inherited or constructed an imaginative vision that provides his answers to the great questions of human existence. In nearly every respect, his modern imaginative vision is the equivalent of an ancient mythos. Its function is essentially religio-mythic. However, in order to accommodate itself to contemporary conditions, the modern imaginative vision is "displaced," to a greater or lesser degree, from the unadulterated mode of the purely mythic, in the sense that Northrop Frye uses the term "displacement" in his Anatomy of Criticism.[10] Modern man is still endowed with the same symbol-creating, myth-making, analogical imagination as primitive man. But it has been checked and corrected by the subsequent development of the analytical intellect, which breaks down the syntheses of the imagination. There is tension between the literal and metaphorical modes of apprehending the world in modern man--unlike primitive man, whose imagination was not so inhibited.

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[10]Northrop Frye, "Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths," Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 131-239.

In order to be intellectually respectable, the structure of a modern religio-mythic vision must be reared upon a foundation of scientific knowledge. It must not be incompatible with the empirically, pragmatically, or mathematically verified facts of science. But the interpretation of these facts, the elucidation of their significance in relation to human life, is essentially a religio-mythic exercise. Thus the moment when even a scientist speculates on the human significance of the knowledge that he has discovered or established, he is forsaking his role as a scientist and acting as a man--conceiving religio-mythic images of God, nature, society, or man. The images that he conceives emerge from his creative imagination. And if he were to give effective expression to his image-concepts in an esthetic medium, such as poetry, he would be recognized as an artist. As Joseph Campbell asks in The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology, "Can mythology have sprung from any minds but the minds of artists?"[11]

The Cultural Crisis in Victorian England

Perhaps every age regards itself as a transitional age. And in a very real sense, of course, every age is indeed an age of transition: in any period, the present is always involved in a process of change from the condition of the past

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[11]Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology (New York: The Viking Press, 1959), p. 472.

to the condition of the future. So it was in Victorian England, except that the pace of change had accelerated. In the Victorian period, perhaps the most significant development in the history of human culture reached its climax--the shift in western civilization from a culture whose ideology was originally based on supernaturalistic mythology and adapted to an aristocratic society and an agricultural economy to a culture whose ideology is essentially based on naturalistic assumptions and adapted to a democratic society and an industrial economy.

The history of this shift in ideology from supernaturalism to naturalism is long. But the time when this movement reached its crisis and climax was in the Victorian period. For religious scepticism then became general and pervasive, even among the working classes. The break-up of supernaturalism reached such proportions in the Victorian period that it constituted a crisis, for it threatened to dissolve the ground of the cultural ideology that was ultimately derived from it. All of the institutions of a society--politics, economics, religion, the family, morality, recreation, education, and the arts--are ultimately grounded in the cultural ideology that the society accepts. This cultural ideology (with its basic concepts of God, nature, society, and man) provides the theoretical basis that determines the practical structure and function of the institutions in a society. The working form of the various institutions is an implementation of the implications involved

in the view of reality expressed in the ideology. It is true that the ideology is partly a rationalization for the structure and function of the social institutions; but it is also true that once it is established (however it was formulated), the cultural ideology operates as the primary determining force in shaping and perpetuating the forms of social institutions and the patterns of individual lives. These traditional forms direct the members of a society in activity that is vital to their well-being, with the authority and sanction of their supposed ground in the very nature of reality.

The situation in Victorian England was approaching a critical juncture. The inherited cultural ideology was riddled with confusion, uncertainty, and inconsistency. The relatively stable cultural ideology of eighteenth-century Neo-Classicism (the accommodation of classical culture and Christian ideas to the Newtonian world-machine) had afforded a rational authority and sanction for the structure and function of its institutions and for the pattern of its social life. But as the cultural ideology of eighteenth-century Neo-Classicism disintegrated under the pressure of technological and ideological innovations, it was not succeeded by a uniformly acceptable view of reality. The complex of basic concepts about God, nature, society, and man were not re-established in an adequate and unified cultural ideology. Insofar as the imaginative vision of Romanticism constituted the basis for a cultural ideology, its organic images of God,

nature, society, and man were either too reactionary or too radical for most men to accept. The Romantic concepts were influential for only a short time in the lives of only a few men and in no uniform way, as the varied epithets of the time--the Lake School, the Satanic School, and the Cockney School--attested and as our continuing quest to define Romanticism, issuing in such varied definitions, continues to attest. If anything, the effect of the Romantic movement was to compound the confusion in the cultural ideology even more by offering other alternatives, much as the multiple sects of a religion must confuse the seeker of absolute truth.

The consequence of confusion in the cultural ideology of Victorian England was, of course, confusion in the theory and practive of its social institutions. As perhaps never before, the institutions of politics, religions, economics, education, and the arts were struggling to cope with new conditions and problems with no sure definition of their structure and function in a generally accepted cultural ideology. In politics, the development of democracy created a crucial situation. In economics, the continuing spread of industrialism brought many problems in its wake. In religion, the source of Protestant authority, the Bible, was being widely discredited and, concurrently, the influence of the churches was declining. And the function of the arts was also in question, as the various schools of esthetic theory advanced their several

claims. Institutional confusion is inevitably the accompaniment of a loss of faith in the cultural ideology.

Of course, when the theoretical basis of a social culture begins to be questioned by its own members or when the institutional and individual activity greatly diverge from the generally held theoretical basis, then the conservative and preservative forces in the society begin to generate counter-active agents. Prophets, or social critics, appear. What may be called the "prophetic response" to a condition of social danger varies with the situation. If the threat to the well-being of the society seems to reside in a failure to practice a basically sound ideology, then the role of the prophet is simply to exhort reform. He may first urge the leaders to require more strict observance of traditional forms by the people. If the rulers will not listen, then he may turn to the people. If the danger is ideological in nature, then the prophet may pursue one of several courses, depending on his analysis and interpretation of the threat. If a rival but "evil" ideology is establishing itself, the prophet may urge a reactionary return to the good old ideas of yesteryear. If the cultural ideology is outworn and inadequate, then he may urge the acceptance of a novel imaginative vision of the human condition--a vision that, if generally accepted, would become central in the newly emerging cultural ideology. For once a new cultural ideology is accepted, once a new view of reality is established, the forms

of institutions and the patterns of human life will inevitably conform to it as the ground of their practical activity.

The prophetic response to the crisis of Victorian England--its loss of an established and accepted cultural ideology, with the consequent institutional confusion--was plentiful. It is represented by many voices in the discord-and choir of Victorian sages,including among others Thomas Carlyle, John Henry Newman, John Stuart Mill, John Ruskin, Thomas Henry Huxley, William Morris, Walter Pater, and Matthew Arnold. All of these men, each in his own way, responded to the cultural crisis in Victorian England, concerning themselves with what they thought were the greatest problems of the time and proposing solutions that range from a reactionary conservatism to a radical liberalism. Emery Neff has described the conditions in Victorian England, referring to "the stress and strain of a society in often bewilderingly rapid change, trying desperately to preserve in a life increasingly industrial and urban the human values of the past. Into this effort every form of literature, even art criticism and superficially 'pure' poetry, was drawn."[12]

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[12]Emery Neff, "Social Background and Social Thought," The Reinterpretation of Victorian Literature, ed. Joseph E. Baker (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 9.

The Personal Crisis of Matthew Arnold

> One wonders if our literary criticism and biography do not often underestimate the force of what really takes place in a man who, like Arnold, once thought of himself, even in childhood, as a Christian--a Christian believing in personal immortality, in the full significance of Christ as the son of a loving God, dying for mankind and rising from the dead . . . .Will he . . . ever quite escape the memory of that first mind-filling and heart-filling commitment?[13]

In Matthew Arnold's first volume of poetry, The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems, published in 1849, there is clear evidence of the young man's departure from the dogmatic orthodoxy of traditional Christianity, with its supernaturalistic orientation. The assumptions, assertions, and implications of these published poems concerning nature and God will be examined in the next chapter. Our immediate concern is the private history of Arnold's conversion from orthodox Christianity to more heterodox, if not heretical, religious views.

The history begins, of course, when Matthew was a boy in the home of his father. During the first half of the nineteenth century, Dr. Thomas Arnold was perhaps the most prominent leader of the Broad Church movement in the Anglican church. He was notorious for his liberalism in religion. However, the question of the nature and degree of Dr. Arnold's

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[13]Professor H. F. Lowry, as quoted by William A. Madden in "A Review of Imaginative Reason, by A. Dwight Culler," Victorian Studies, X (March, 1967), 301.

liberalism has been the subject of several recent studies. Discussing the influence of the father on the son in Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes, Patrick J. McCarty interprets the stance of Dr. Arnold as essentially conservative. Much the same conclusion is reached by Edward Alexander in his Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill. Dr. Arnold was not so liberal as his reputation may lead one to suppose. Although he was radical in urging the application of Christian principles to contemporary social problems, his Christianity remained relatively conservative and orthodox. The doctrinal questions that disturbed him in his youth were concerned more with the accuracy of the historical transmission of Christianity, not so much with its ultimate validity. As Lionel Trilling described him, Dr. Arnold was an historical relativist but a religious absolutist.[14] Although he believed that the discovery of God was historically determined, conditioned, and expressed in forms accommodated to the primitive culture and consciousness of the scriptural writers, he nevertheless accepted the Bible as indeed a divine document--the progressive revelation of the essential and eternal truths of human life.

As J. M. Robertson declared in A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century, "The intellectual process by which the son of the devout Dr. Arnold of Rugby became the debonair mocker of the creed of miracles, Trinity, Protestantism, and

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[14]Lionel Trilling, Matthew Arnold (second edition; New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 42.

the anthropomorphic Diety, is matter for speculation."[15] It is unlikely that Matthew Arnold absorbed his heterodoxy from his father. It is much more likely that the orthodox beliefs of the son were dissolved during his years in Balliol College at Oxford. When Arnold entered the university in 1841, the Oxford Movement was still active, and involvement in religious controversies continued to constitute an important element in the academic experience of students. The classic pattern of the influence of higher education in unsettling traditional religious beliefs in young men, as in the case of Arthur Hugh Clough, is surely also applicable to the case of young Matt Arnold. There is no clear documentary evidence about the immediate effect of the course of study at Oxford on Arnold during these so-called "unknown years." But in the letters of Arnold to A. H. Clough after both had left Oxford, it is clear what the ultimate effect of his university career had been: a loss of faith in the orthodox supernaturalism of traditional Christianity.

The first two letters in Arnold's correspondence to Clough were actually written near the end of the Oxford period in their relationship. However, even in these two earliest letters, the new cast of his ideas and attitudes is already indicated. The first of the letters, dated by the editor H. F. Lowry as "shortly before, March 28, 1845," includes a

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[15]J. M. Robertson, A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century (London: Watts and Co., 1929), II, 400-01.

delightfully irreverent parody of "true Xtian Simplicity" in Matthew's mock confession of his academic shortcomings to Clough.[16] The second letter, written during the same period as the first, contains enthusiastic references to George Sand and includes an admired quotation from a letter in one of her novels. In an editorial note, Lowry identifies the novel as Indiana and describes the letter as "a passionate statement of a free, non-conforming religious idealism. Apparently it affected Arnold deeply."[17] Arnold's second letter also describes certain of his more conventional friends and acquaintances as "born-to-be-tight-laced"; refers to a "misguided Relation," whom again Lowry identifies as "most likely Tom Arnold Matthew's brother, who already at Oxford was revealing the tendencies that turned him to the Roman Church"; and speaks of Clough and of Matthew himself as being "fellow worshippers of Isis."[18]

From the mood of light-hearted irreverence in these early letters (rather natural for a youth who assumes his superior enlightenment to the mass of men), the letters developed into a serious interchange of ideas and attitudes over the ensuing years. It is interesting to note, near the end of the series of letters, the apparently settled attitude

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[16]The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, ed. H. F. Lowry (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p.55.

[17]Ibid., p. 58.

[18]Ibid., p. 59.

toward conventional religion that Arnold had formulated. Some insight into his attitude is afforded by the following passage, in which he reports on his visit to a mutual friend, who had published an irreligious book entitled Nemesis of Faith:

> I should like you to see Froude--quantum mutatus! He goes to church, has family prayers--says the Nemesis ought never to have been published, etc. etc.--his friends say that he is altogether changed and re-entered within the giron de l'Eglise--at any rate within the giron de la religion chretienne; but I do not see the matter in this light and think that he conforms in the same sense in which Spinoza advised his mother to conform--and having purified his moral being, all that was mere fume and vanity and love of notoriety and opposition in his proceedings he has abandoned and regrets. This is my view.[19]

One suspects that Arnold's own stance enabled him to see or imagine a kindred attitude in another. And the next letter to Clough more or less confirms this suspicion by an explicit statement of his attitudes and actions with respect to religious conformity. The statement is apparently in answer to a question by Clough, who must have remarked on the passage quoted above.[20]

> As to conformity I only recommend it in so far as it frees us from the unnatural and unhealthy attitude of contradiction and opposition--the Qual der Negation as Goethe calls it. Only positive convictions and feeling are worth anything--and the glow of these one can never feel so long as one is pugnacious and out of temper. This is my firm belief.[21]

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[19] Ibid., p. 140

[20] The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough contains only the letters written by Arnold, which were preserved by Clough. The letters written by Clough to Arnold were not kept or have since been lost or destroyed.

[21] Ibid., p. 48.

This attitude toward religion--public conformity with private reservations--Arnold formulated early in his adult life and practiced throughout the remainder of his life. It is said that his wife, Fanny Lucy, who had never read his religious writings, remarked after his death that her husband had always been a good Christian in his way.

Sometime in his youth, it is clear, Arnold endured an experience of conversion, as it were, from Christianity--either rather suddenly and painfully or perhaps gradually and easily. That to which he was eventually converted--the imaginative vision of naturalistic humanism--is the matter to be discussed in the body of this study. However, the next matter of immediate interest is Arnold's awareness of the extent to which the age in which he lived was undergoing the same critical experience as himself--a loss of faith in supernaturalistic Christianity, the original basis of the cultural ideology in Victorian England.

The Culture-Epoch Theory of History

Perhaps the best means of indicating Arnold's awareness of the critical situation in which his age was involved is to examine his view of history. As Gaylord C. LeRoy has remarked, Arnold's speculations concerning the historical process "add up to a philosophy of history so impressive in its comprehensiveness and inner consistency that one wonders

that students of Arnold have taken little notice of it."[22] The nature of his theory of history may be apprehended by examining a number of his works in which the theory is either expressed or implied--specifically, several of the essays published in Essays in Criticism (1865); a poem published in the volume of 1867, "Obermann Once More"; Culture and Anarchy (1869); and Literature and Dogma (1873).

"Heinrich Heine," reprinted in Essays in Criticism, was first published in the August issue of Cornhill magazine in 1863, but it was originally composed and delivered as an Oxford lecture by Arnold in his capacity as Professor of Poetry in June, 1863. In the essay Arnold dwells on the awakening of the modern spirit to the inadequacy of the traditional European order, its medieval heritage.[23] And he asserts that the task of the modern spirit is to reduce the lack of correspondence between old institutions and new needs. He singles out Goethe as the great representative of the modern spirit who preceded Heine in Germany, admiring his

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[22]Gaylord C. Leroy, Perplexed Prophets: Six Nineteenth Century British Authors (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press for Temple University Publications, 1953), p. 50.

[23]References to the works of Arnold that have been published in The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, still being edited by R. H. Super, will be indicated by the last name of the editor, the number of the volume, and the number of the page. Thus the source for the reference in the text above is Super, III, 109. The full titles of the five completed volumes in Super's new edition of Arnold's works are listed in the bibliography.

"profound, imperturbable naturalism" and regarding it as "subversive of foundations" that must be removed so that a better structure, a new order, may be reared.[24] Thus, even in this early essay, one senses Arnold's conception of his age as historically crucial, differing radically from previous ages, and as being especially in need of changes to dissolve the remnants of an outmoded Medievalism.

"Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment" was first composed and delivered as an Oxford lecture in March, 1864. After appearing in the April issue of Cornhill, it was reprinted in Essays in Criticism. The contribution that it makes to our understanding of Arnold's historical consciousness is in the distinctions that it draws between succeeding epochs in the history of western civilization. In the essay Arnold describes the latter stage of Greek paganism as an epoch in which the expression of "sentiment," particularly religious feelings, was characterized by an appeal to the senses and understanding. After the introduction of Christianity into the pagan world of antiquity and its development in the medieval period, the expression of religious sentiment was characterized by its appeal to the heart and imagination. Continuing his history of the modes of religious expression up to the nineteenth century, Arnold describes the Renaissance as an epoch in which the appeal to the senses and understanding was revived in a reaction against the practice of the

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[24] Ibid., p. 110

Medieval period. The Reformation, in turn, is interpreted as another reaction, this time in favor of the heart and imagination. And, again, the eighteenth century reacted and insisted on reason--on the understanding and senses. But in the present epoch of the nineteenth century, he asserts, "the main element of the modern spirit's life is neither the senses and understanding, nor the heart and imagination; it is the imaginative reason.[25]

Whatever the "imaginative reason" may mean, it is nonetheless clear that Arnold perceives a pattern in history, a rhythmic oscillation of periods. He is setting forth a version of what historians call the "culture-epoch theory of history," and he interprets his own epoch as distinctly different from previous epochs, as an epoch in which the movement of history (the swinging pendulum) may achieve a balance--the golden mean between extremes. The periods of past history are neither condemned nor commended. Each is regarded by Arnold as appropriate at the time. But in the present, the time has come for a new and vital synthesis of historical forces.

"The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," the introductory essay to the volume of Essays in Criticism, was first published in the November, 1864, issue of The National Review; but it was originally an Oxford lecture, delivered

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[25]Super, III, 230.

in the preceding October. In the course of the essay, Arnold has occasion to distinguish between the "epoch of expression" that preceded the French Revolution and the "epoch of concentration" that succeeded it and continued on through the middle of the nineteenth century.[26] He describes an "epoch of expansion" as one characterized by vital creative activity in all fields of human endeavor, whereas the "epoch of concentration" is characterized by the effort to consolidate and preserve the achievements of the past. The latter is, in other words, conservative or even reactionary in its activity. The condition for an epoch of creative expansion, Arnold asserts, is the existence of a stimulating "order of ideas." And the exercise of the "critical power" is what discovers and disseminates these new and true ideas.

> The critical power tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society . . . and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs . . . .[27]

Apparently a period of critical activity functions as a necessary prelude or transition to an epoch of creative activity; criticism precedes creation.

After this analysis of the previous century or more of history, Arnold suggests in the essay that "an epoch of expansion seems to be opening in this country."[28]

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[26]Super, III, 269.

[27]Ibid., p. 261.

[28]Ibid., p. 269.

But, he insists, a period of critical activity is required to stimulate it with vital ideas. And again, in the "Preface" to Essays in Criticism, written in January of 1865, he refers to "an epoch of dissolution and transformation, such as that on which we are now entered."[29] Here again, in "The Criticism at the Present Time," Arnold is articulating his awareness of the crucial situation in his age.

One of Arnold's poems, "Obermann Once More," contributes to our understanding of his view of the progress of history. It appeared in the place of honor at the end of his New Poems, published in 1867. Within the poem, the monologue of Obermann expresses and implies a view of history that parallels rather closely that expressed in "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment." In the poem, as in the essay, the latter stage of classical antiquity--"that hard Pagan world"--is described as lacking in an essential and vital quality: it was an age of spiritual sterility, without true joy. But the coming of Christianity, so Obermann says in his monologue, brought new hope and purpose and joy, like the breaking of a new day. The life of men in western civilization was spiritually revitalized by belief in Christ. But then, at the end of the Medieval epoch and at the beginning of the Renaissance epoch, belief began to waver and faith to disintegrate.

> But slow that tide of common thought,
> Which bathed our life, retired.

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[29] Super, III, 288.

Slow, slow the old world wore to naught,
And pulse by pulse expired.[30]

Although without inner life, the outer forms of the old world remained, until "the storm" (the French Revolution) reduced it to ruins. In describing the present condition of the world to the narrator in the poem (Arnold), Obermann declares:

Your creeds are dead, your rites are dead,
Your social order too.

. . . . . .
. . . the past is out of date,
The future not yet born.

However, the poem concludes with a vision of the dawn of a new order of spiritual and social vitality, emerging from the present. Thus the poem characterizes the present, like the end of the ancient Pagan world and the beginning of the Christian era, as an age of crucial historical significance--a time in which both death throes and birth pangs are intermingled.

The chapters of Culture and Anarchy were originally composed as, on the one hand, an Oxford lecture entitled "Culture and Its Enemies," delivered in June of 1865 and subsequently published as an article in the July issue of Cornhill magazine, and as, on the other hand, a series of five articles collectively entitled "Anarchy and Authority," whose successive installments were published in the January, February, June, July, and August issues of Cornhill in 1868. The articles were

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[30]The quotations from Arnold's poems in this study are all taken from the standard edition of his poetry, The Poetical Works of Matthew Arnold, ed, C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry (London: Oxford University Press, 1949).

then collected, corrected, and published in book form with a "Preface" early in 1869. In the second edition of the volume, certain phrases from the text that had become well known were used as the titles of the chapters. The chapter entitled "Hebraism and Hellenism" presents an interesting version of the pattern of history, based on the interaction and alternation of "strictness of conscience" and "spontaneity of consciousness" in the successive cultural epochs of western civilization. According to this version of history, the Hellenism of classical antiquity was succeeded by the dominance of Hebraism in the Medieval epoch. The Renaissance epoch is then interpreted as a resurgence of Hellenism. And the Puritanism of the seventeenth century, which cut short the Elizabethan Renaissance, is regarded as an Hebraic reaction to an imbalanced Hellenism. According to Arnold, this modern form of Hebraism--Puritanism--has continued as the dominant characteristic of English life up to the present. It is time now, he proposes, for a revival of Hellenism but not to the exclusion of Hebraism; we must achieve a dynamic balance of both qualities. In the past, mankind has always emphasized one or the other as essential to his vitality. But now is the time to achieve a balance of both--a vital synthesis.

Finally, in Literature and Dogma, published in 1873, Arnold traces the course of a rhythmic process through the history of religion in western civilization. The book

consists of twelve chapters. In the first chapter, entitled "Religion Given," Arnold defines the religious vision of the early Hebrew patriarchs and prophets as essentially moral in its primary concern for righteousness, which was personified as "God." In Chapter II, "Aberglaube Invading," he describes the development in the Old Testament of a "poetic" accretion of supernaturalistic elements, which he calls Aberglaube--superstition, myth, extra-belief. Gradually the growth of this Aberglaube attached itself to the originally pure moral insight of the ancient Hebrews and eventually displaced it, relegating the matter of morality to a secondary position.

"Religion New-Given," the third chapter in Literature and Dogma, asserts that the essential significance of Jesus Christ resides in his correction of this confusion, which threatened to overwhelm the religious effectiveness of Judaism, but his restoration of primary emphasis on morality. In the next three chapters, then, Arnold repudiates the supernaturalistic elements in the four gospels as Aberglaude, not essentially connected with Jesus' ethical teachings. Chapter VII is devoted to an elucidation of these teachings about righteousness. And in Chapter VIII Arnold asserts that the remainder of the New Testament, after the four gospels, expresses a clear vision of the central teachings of Jesus, especially in the Pauline Epistles. But in Chapter IX, "Aberglaube Re-Invading," he traces in the succeeding history of Christianity the development of supernaturalistic elements,

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which again displace the originally ethical emphasis, so that the true teaching of Jesus has been obscured, especially by the Puritans in England.

The next chapter describes the crisis to which this history of Christianity has led: the Christian religion has been identified not with its experientially verifiable ethical content but with its Aberglaube, which the Zeit-Geist (the scientific orientation of modern man) is dissolving and, with it, the credibility of a Christianity based entirely on an unscientific supernatural foundation. Consequently, even the masses are losing faith in the religion of the Bible and, with it, the basis of their morality, so that even the social order itself may ultimately be endangered. The final two chapters reaffirm the value of the Bible, when interpreted aright, in promoting the moral life of modern man.

Now, the structure of Literature and Dogma as a whole seems to exhibit a rhythm of decadence and resurgence, of sterility and fertility. The two last chapters, summarizing Arnold's reinterpretation of the ethical significance of the Bible for modern man, perhaps implicitly suggest the grounds for another resurgence (which might be retitled "Religion Re-Given by Matthew Arnold"). Thus, in Literature and Dogma, the pattern of history is again perceived as a rhythmical oscillation of cultural epochs, leading up to an epoch-making crisis in the present.

In The Victorian Temper, Jerome Buckley states, "The doctrine of organic development was so thoroughly diffused throughout the nineteenth-century science and philosophy that no serious thinker could escape its implications."[31] And in Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill, Edward Alexander suggests that the concept of history as a succession of cultural epochs, a concept held by both Arnold and Mill in different forms, is no doubt ultimately traceable to the ideas of Saint-Simon.[32] However, the particular interpretation of the pattern of history by Arnold is distinctively his own. What emerges from our examination of the several works that either express or imply Arnold's interpretation of history is a rough but relatively consistent culture-epoch theory of history. The slight variations in the several versions are largely attributable to the differing contexts in which they are set forth and can be accounted for in terms of the various purposes that they are designed to achieve.

Very generally, the culture-epochs that Arnold emphasized as significant in the history of western civilization may be distinguished. First, there was the epoch of original Hebraism, whose history is recounted in the Old Testament; second, the epoch of original Hellenism in classical

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[31]Jerome H. Buckley, The Victorian Temper: A Study in Literary Culture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 5.

[32]Edward Alexander, "The Historical Method." Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 40.

antiquity; third, the epoch of primitive and Medieval Christianity, an extremely long and strong epoch,slow in beginning and slow in ending; fourth, the epoch whose beginning was marked by the opening of the Renaissance and whose end was marked by the close of the Napoleonic era. It was an epoch in which the inner life of the old world was, at first, gradually undermined and in which the outer forms of the old world were, at last, dramatically destroyed; yet it was also an epoch that, by clearing away the old, prepared the way for a new world. Fifth, there was the epoch of reaction that began after the French Revolution and continued into the second decade after the middle of the nineteenth century--the 1860's. And, sixth, there was a new epoch, so Arnold sensed, starting in the latter half of the nineteenth century--the present. It was an epoch, he believed, that could be of crucial significance in the history of western civilization. On the one hand, the reactionary activity of the fifth epoch could be continued into the present. If so, the consequence would be catastrophic; for the failure to respond to the challenging demands in the present epoch, occasioned by the conditions of modern existence, would almost certainly determine a bleak future for England. On the other hand, the constructive preparation begun in the fourth epoch but interrupted by the fifth could be continued and completed. Indeed, England might enjoy an epoch in which the ideal of the good man and the good society could be achieved, in which the several elements of human nature and

social culture would unite to create a vital synthesis--a perfect balance.

Thus Arnold regarded the current condition of his country as crucial. Like every generation, he saw the present as the forward edge of history--a time of transition between the several epochs of the past and an epoch of great promise in the future. The actualization of its potentiality depended on a recognition by the age of its crucial condition and on its decision to construct the future world on a sound foundation, based on a clear understanding of the nature of reality--of God, nature, society, and man. In other words, the opening epoch needed an adequate cultural ideology, and it needed to adapt its institutions and individual lives to it.

In a review of Raymond Williams' Culture and Society, 1780-1950, Seymour Betsky described the failure of the book.

> What Mr. Williams fails to do is to suggest that an industrial civilization in our sense is unprecedented in the history of civilizations; that such a civilization brought either a radical or an unprecendented change in every single human activity: literature and the arts, religion, politics, 'social life and manners' (including sexual relations and family life), law, philosophy, science, pure and applied, national defense, economics, agriculture, education, even recreation. We are dealing, in fact, with the transition from one kind of civilization, based on an agricultural order, balanced by trade, small industry, and commerce, and sanctioned by the Church, and exhibiting a certain stability over the centuries; to a different kind of civilization, sparked by industrialism, incorporating in time the goals of the French Revolution, and supported in its essential secular goals by science and the scientific method.[33]

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[33]Seymour Betsky, "A Review of Culture and Society, 1780-1950, by Raymond Williams," Victorian Studies, III (March, 1960), 298.

This is perhaps a fair description of the cultural situation that Arnold seems to have sensed in his Victorian England, although he lacked the clarifying advantage of the century of hindsight that Betsky enjoys.

Betsky has interpreted the cultural revolution as being necessitated by the technological innovations that constituted the industrial revolution. However, the emphasis in this study is upon the primary significance of ideological innovations, for ultimately even the technological innovations must be regarded as the actualization of potentialities envisioned within the evolving cultural ideology. Thus the industrial revolution may be viewed as the implementation in the economy of implications involved in the shift (at first gradual but accelerated at last) from a supernaturalistic to a naturalistic ideology. Viewed in this light, the impetus for the industrial revolution--the acceleration in economic technology as developed by applied science--was the emergence of naturalistic assumptions in the cultural ideology, as developed by pure science: the discovery of new and basic knowledge. The pattern of cultural evolution is, first, the discovery of new insights into the nature of reality by original thinkers; second, the ensuing transformation of the cultural ideology as the new ideas win general acceptance; and, third, the consequent adaptation of social institutions and cultural technology to the new vision of reality.[34] The term "cultural lag" is

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[34]See the "Introduction" in Neal Cross and Leslie Dae Lindou's The Search for Personal Freedom (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, 1948), Vol. I.

used to indicate the failure of institutions to conform their theory and practice, or their structure and function, to innovations in the cultural ideology. As Karl Marx demostrated, the economic institution is indeed far-reaching in its effects on other social institutions; yet even the economic institution itself (as well as all of the other institutions in the culture of a society) is ultimately bound by the cultural ideology, whose evolution must be determined by the insights of original thinkers, like Marx himself.

The essence of Matthew Arnold's insight into the condition of his age consisted in his awareness that the cultural ideology of the past was no longer adequate, that a new view of reality and novel social conditions had emerged in the modern age, and that the theory and practice of present institutions did not coincide with the new view of reality nor fulfill present needs; rather, they were unsoundly based on ideas and conditions either no longer valid or no longer existing. This incongruity he regarded as a critical situation. He saw his age as involved in a cultural crisis. In concluding a letter to Sir M. Grant Duff, he wrote:

> I have said nothing about politics. Events and personages succeed one another, but the central fact of the situation always remains for me this: that whereas the basis of things amidst all chance and change has even in Europe generally been for ever so long supernatural Christianity, and far more so in England than in Europe generally, this basis is certainly going--going amidst the full consciousness of the continentals that it is going, and amidst the

provincial unconsciousness of the English that it is going.[35]

The Prophetic Response: The Role of Social Critic

Once Arnold himself was conscious of the crucial situation in his country, his historical awareness elicited a personal response from him. Essentially, it was a version of the prophetic response. With a strong sense of vocation, he felt that he had a mission to perform in his country.

Young Matt Arnold's own personal crisis of faith has been indicated. Sometime in his youth, most likely at Oxford, his inherited cultural ideology was rudely shaken and eventually shattered. Gradually he reconstructed an imaginative vision to replace his lost faith. But what was his public response after his private resolution of this crisis? The nature of Arnold's response to his perception that the age was involved in very much the same crisis that he himself had experienced is perhaps most clearly articulated in certain of his confidential letters. Among many passages in his letters that might be selected, the following may serve to indicate both his convinction that he had a role to perform and his specific conception of the nature of this role.

In a letter dated December 24, 1859, Arnold wrote to his married sister, Mrs. Forster; whom he called "K" and in whom he often confided:

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[35]Matthew Arnold, Letters of Matthew Arnold, 1848-1888, ed. W. E. Russell (second edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1900), II, 234.

> I thought the other day that I would tell you of a Frenchman whom I saw in Paris, Ernest Renan, between whose line of endeavor and my own I imagine there is considerable resemblance, that you might have a look at some of his books if you liked. The difference is, perhaps, that he tends to inculate [sic] morality, in a high sense of the word, upon the French nation as what they most want, while I tend to inculate intelligence, also in a high sense of the word, upon the English nation as what they most want . . . .[36]

In another letter to "K," dated November 14, 1863, Arnold wrote:

> I think in this concluding half of the century the English spirit is destined to undergo a great transformation; or rather, perhaps I should say, to perform a great evolution, and I know no one so well fitted as William [Mr. Forster, a Member of Parliament] to be the parliamentary agent and organ for this movement. I shall do what I can for this movement in literature . . . .[37]

Again, in another letter to his sister, Arnold wrote on January 6, 1865:

> Indeed, I am convinced that as Science, in the widest sense of the word, meaning a true knowledge of things as the basis of our operations, becomes, as it does become, more of a power in the world, the weight of the nations and men who have carried the intellectual life fartherest will be more and more felt . . . . That England may run well in this race is my deepest desire; and to stimulate her and to make her feel how many clogs she wears, and how much she has to do in order to run in it as her genius gives her the power to run, is the object of all I do.[38]

On December 27, 1866, in answer to a letter from his mother upon his birthday, Arnold made an interesting declaration:

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[36] Ibid., I, 128-29.

[37] Ibid., p. 240

[38] Ibid., pp. 285-286.

> Forty-four is indeed an age at which one may say "The time past of our life may suffice us" to have trifled and idled, or worse, in. I more and more become conscious of having something to do, and of a resolution to do it; and if . . . I double my present age, I shall, I hope, do something of it . . . .[39]

Throughout the collected letter of Matthew Arnold, such passages frequently recur, expressing not only a general sense of responsibility toward his age as a well-known man of letters but also the specific conception of a concrete purpose to be achieved, a definite contribution to be made. Further, here and there through the letters, he rejoices in testimonies to the influence and effect of his writings, delighted that he is in some sense moving the age as he hoped to do.

After the loss of his inherited cultural ideology, Arnold gradually reconstructed an individual and original imaginative vision of the human condition, with its own distinctive images of God, of nature, of society, and of man, implying answers to the great questions of human existence. And gradually he became convinced that he had a significant function to fulfill--a prophetic role to perform: essentially, to transform gradually the cultural ideology of Victorian England until it coincided with his own imaginative vision, so that the social institutions would then be stimulated to minimize their cultural lag. As William Harbutt Dawson described Arnold's purpose, "Direct influence he did not seek to

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[39] Ibid., p. 400.

to exert. Transformation of thought rather than practical reform was his aim, for to such transformation of thought he looked for the impulse which alone could lead to any wholesale scheme of social reconstruction."[40] He took advantage of every opportunity afforded him in his capacity as a man of letters to further this end and to achieve this effect. Although many of his literary essays were occasional in nature, stimulated by an immediate demand, he used them to express the specific application of his general imaginative vision in relation to a particular topic.

> Without in the least over-rating himself he took himself with absolute seriousness, and his work from first to last is informed with the high sincerity of a consistent purpose--the high purpose of being nobly useful to his time and country by preaching to them precisely the gospel he conceived they most vitally needed.[41]

Now in order to explicate the naturalistic assumptions and humanistic principles that animate Arnold's imaginative vision, in contrast to the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity, the chapters in the body of this dissertation will be devoted to a topical analysis of his concepts of God, nature, society, and man as assumed, implied, or expressed in his poems and essays. The concluding chapter,

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[40]William Harbutt Dawson, Matthew Arnold and His Relation to the Thought of Our Time (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1904), p. 7.

[41]W. C. Brownell, "Matthew Arnold," Victorian Prose Masters (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 156.

then, will be devoted to an elucidation of the religio-mythic effect of Arnold's imaginative vision through a comparison of his position with the consciously religious perspective of the contemporary movement of naturalistic humanism, especially as articulated in selected writings by John Herman Randall, Jr.

In concluding his review of Raymond Williams' Culture and Society, 1780-1950, Seymour Betsky insisted on the significance of Arnold as a cultural critic.

> The signal failure of the book . . . lies in Mr. Williams' radical underestimation of Arnold, who among nineteenth- and twentieth-century commentators on "culture" is something of a gaint. Arnold should have been seen as a figure who consolidates the better ideas of his predecessors and adapts them to the changed times, who offers original insights, and who has been prophetic for us in ways we have not yet spelled out.[42]

To understand and appreciate Arnold's intention and achievement in this sense--as the creator of an imaginative vision and as the prophet of a cultural ideology--is precisely the purpose of this present study.

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[42]Betsky, p. 300

CHAPTER II

THE IMAGES OF NATURE AND OF GOD

In an article written several years ago, Kenneth Allot described certain lists that young Matthew Arnold had entered in his pocket diaries from 1845 through 1847. In these diaries Arnold had written the authors and titles that he wished to read during those years. Prominent in the lists of proposed reading were the names of many philosophers: Plato, Descartes, Kant, Coleridge, Cudworth, Schelling, Berkeley, Mill, Plotinus, Lucretius, and Aristotle.[1]

In another article, A. J. Lubell has discussed the probably significance of the indication in these reading lists of the young Arnold's great interest in philosophical matters. Commenting on these lines in Arnold's poem "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse"--

> For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
> And purged its faith, and trimm'd its fire,
> Show'd me the high white star of Truth,
> There bade me gaze, and there aspire--

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[1]Kenneth Allot, "Matthew Arnold's Reading-Lists in Three Early Diaries," Victorian Studies, II (March, 1959), 254-266. These unpublished diaries were presented to the Yale University Library for preservation. Mr. Allot was permitted to examine them and to describe their contents.

Lubell suggests that at least some of the "rigorous teachers" were probably "the authors of classical antiquity, from whom Arnold got his first lessons in naturalism . . . . "[2] Continuing his explication of the personal references in the lines, he adds, "As for "the high, white star of Truth,' the context of the poem clearly shows that Arnold means the aspiring toward that kind of faith that may dispense with a base of supernaturalism." Lubell concludes that "what emerges clearly from Arnold's interest in all these philosophers is that he was looking for some sort of philosophical faith to replace the religious faith he had lost in his earlier years."[3]

Aside from the pocket diaries, the only other extant documents that indicate Arnold's interests and concerns during these years are his letters to Arthur Hugh Clough. In them we have already observed certain indications that the young Arnold had been bereft of his early religious faith. Although one of the pervasive themes in the letters is Arnold's recurrent rebukes of Clough's efforts "to solve the Universe" in his poems, there are nevertheless some indications that Arnold himself was also engaged in his own private quest for a vision of the nature of ultimate reality. For instance, in the letter dated December, 1847, by Lowry, Arnold writes of

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[2]Albert J. Lubell, "Matthew Arnold: Between two Worlds," Modern Language Quarterly, XXII (September, 1961), 250.

[3]Ibid., p. 251.

his "sinews cracking under the effort to unite matter . . . ."[4] In another letter, dated "after September 1848," Arnold discusses a source of confusion in the poetry of Browning and Keats and then asserts, "They will not be patient neither understand that they must begin with an idea of the world in order not to be prevailed over by the world's multitudinousness . . . ."[5] Yet the confusion of worlds reflected even in Arnold's 1849 volume of poems suggests that he himself was still involved in the process of conceiving his own "Idea of the world."

Only with the publication of The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems in 1849 is the consequence of the young poet's tentative groping and grasping in his quest for a vision of reality clearly revealed. The volume is perhaps as much a collection of questions as a collection of answers. But the poems reflect his emerging ideas of God and nature in a manner much more intimate and explicit than any other source. His letters to Clough contained only hints of his evolving conceptions. The letters to his mother and sisters are silent on these matters, perhaps because he did not wish to disturb them with his heterodoxy. Only in his poems did he express and reveal certain of his deepest feelings and thoughts.

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[4] The Letters of Matthew Arnold to Arthur Hugh Clough, p. 63.

[5] Ibid., p. 97.

The Image of Nature in the Poems

In a critical study of Matthew Arnold's poetry, W. Stacy Johnson declares that for many Victorian poets, and especially for Arnold, "the questions of a man's proper relation with other men, and with God or the Universe, are peculiarly serious . . . ."[6] Moreover, he asserts:

> Most of Arnold's poems are problem pieces. The basic and recurring problem is that of finding a valid image for man in his world, whether the image of God's creature, of a very god, or of an uncreated uncreating thing--the orthodox or the Romantic or the naturalist image.[7]

Of course, the image of man is ultimately dependent upon and derived from the image of nature or of God. It is specifically to apprehend the images of nature and of God as created and expressed in the poetry of Arnold that the examination of his poems is here undertaken. Therefore, the principle determining the selection of poems for examination is that they be relevant to this topic and representative of his attitudes about it. Further, the object in examing these poems is not to arrive at a comprehensive apprehension of their essential significance or ultimate intention but only to sense the image of nature or God that is implicit or explicit in them.

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[6]W. Stacy Johnson, The Voices of Matthew Arnold (New Haven: Published for Smith College by the Yale University Press, 1961), p. 1.

[7]Ibid., p. 38.

The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems, by "A" in 1849, began with a poem simply entitled "Sonnet" (later retitled "Quiet Work" in the two-volume edition of Arnold's poetry in 1869). The sonnet is directly addressed to "Nature," as the poet expresses his desire to learn two lessons (in later versions, one lesson with two duties) from nature--"Of toil unsever'd from tranquillity." He admires the slow, silent, inexorable activity of nature's "sleepless ministers," with which he contrasts the loud, busy, "vain turmoil" in the lives of men. The sonnet concludes with the reflection that the inexorable labor of nature "shall not fail, when man is gone."

The central intention of the poem is to express a quality of attitude and of action that the poet admires. The nature of this quality is revealed by an illustrative comparison: it is like that exhibited in nature. But what is the image of nature that is thus incidentally reflected? The aspect of nature that the poem emphasizes is determined, of course, by the larger purpose of the poet. Yet his choice of nature to illustrate the admired quality indicates his conception of nature itself as a vast process of inexorable and purposeful activity, differing in the kind and degree of its laborious motions from the quality of activity exhibited by men. The nature of the cosmos here seems clearly to be contrasted with the nature of men.

The second poem in the 1849 volume was "Mycerinus," one of the major poems in the volume. Mycerinus had grown up

believing in divine justice, believing that the actions of men are rewarded or punished by just gods, "the Powers of Destiny," that govern the universe. He trusted that the supernatural powers that controlled the operation of nature (according to his cosmology) were greatly concerned with the lives of men and with the administration of justice in human life. But the juxtaposition of the career of his father, who had lived wickedly but had been granted a long life of pleasure, with the condition of himself, who had lived a righteous life but was doomed to early death, revealed an incongruity that resulted in the loss of his faith in divine justice. The existence of the incongruity convinced him that the gods took no cognizance of man's life, or at least not of the moral quality of man's life. No more fearing the judgment of the gods, Mycerinus gave himself to revelry until his death. And there was no judgment.

The poem turns on the shift in Mycerinus's conception of nature and the gods. The change in his life-style is the consequence of the shift in his understanding of the relation of the cosmos to man. He has come to understand that there is not any personal or moral relation between them. Nature is indifferent to man. The incongruity in the juxtaposition of the lives and deaths of father and son has had certain cosmic implications for Mycerinus. Those implications are summed up in the last six lines of the poem, in which "the murmur of the moving Nile"--used earlier in the poem to illustrate a

postualted Power of Necessity over "earth, and heaven, and men, and gods"--rolls along entirely oblivious of the revelry of Mycerinus and his crew. As a symbol of nature or of an ultimate power in nature, this image of the Nile reminds one of the concept of nature emphasized in the opening "Sonnet"--a vastprocess of inexorable motion, ignoring the loud busy lives of little men.

The title poem in the 1849 volume, "The Strayed Reveller," also implies a relation between the gods and man. The effect of the wine that the Reveller drinks in the poem has been variously interpreted as poetic inspiration, excapist fantasy, or the Romantic vision of life. In any case, our interest is in what it does for the Reveller. It enables him to behold the panorama of human life even as the gods. In the last long speech of the poem, "The Youth" or reveller speaks to Ulysses and Circe. All afternoon, he explains to them, he has watched the activity of men. And he has been happy as, like the gods, he surveys the wide world of living men. He catalogues a series of human scenes whose beauty he has appreciated. But the Youth then contrasts the detached attitude of the gods with that of the "wise Bards" who, like the gods, behold the spectacle of men but who, unlike the gods (and unlike the "intoxicated" youth), sympathetically experience the human suffering that they behold. Again, the indifference of the gods to the human condition is emphasized. Man is alone in life; only he himself is concerned with the quality of his existence.

Even the "Fragment of an 'Antigone'" in the 1849 volume reflects a similar impression of the human condition. In the second stanza of the poem, the Chorus declares that aside from the arbitrary beginning and ending of his life, man is essentially alone. The gods do not involve themselves in his life.

> For from the day when these [the Birth-Goddess and Fates]
> Bring him, a weeping child,
> First to the light, and mark
> A country for him, kinsfolk, and a home,
> Unguided he remains,
> Till the Fates come again, alone, with death.

The poem "In Utrumque Paratus" reflects two images of nature. The first three stanzas express one alternative--the representation of the universe and human life as the creations of a supernatural source, God. The second half of the poem represents the naturalistic alternative of man as the Fatherless son, as it were, of a Husbandless mother nature. In their commentary on the poem, Tinker and Lowry note that in the 1869 edition of Arnold's poems, an entirely new stanza, replaced the final stanza of the 1849 volume. In the revised stanza, the speaker in the poem addresses man.

> Thy native world stirs at thy feet unknown,
> Yet there thy secret lies!
> Out of this stuff, these forces, thou art grown,
> And proud self-severance from them were disease.
> O scan thy native world with pious eyes!
> High as thy life be risen, 'tis from these;
> And these, too, rise.

Whatever moved Arnold, after this single edition, to revert to the original concluding stanza in succeeding editions (stressing the lonely consciousness of man), this stanza from

the 1869 edition is more consistent with the image of nature expressed in the preceding two stanzas, as Tinker and Lowry recognized.[8] It clearly implies an acceptance of natural evolution.

But in such poems as "To the Duke of Wellington" and "To an Independent Preacher," the unity of Arnold's image of nature, as reflected in the several previous poems from The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems, is seriously challenged. No doubt it was the stubborn fact of such poems that moved Lionel Trilling to assert that "conflicting views of nature appear in each of the two early volumes and seem to have been held simultaneously."[9] The two poems vividly demonstrate the problem, for one poem seems to commend a man for his "vision of the general law" in the life of all nature and for his conformity to it, but the other poem seems to assert that for a man to be in harmony with nature is utterly impossible. Surely the strictures of A. O. Lovejoy are applicable here:

> For 'nature' has, of course, been the chief and the most pregnant word in the terminology of all the normative provinces of thought in the West; and the multiplicity of its meanings has made it easy, and common, to slip more or less insensibly from one connotation to another, and thus in the end to pass from one ethical or aesthetic standard to its very antithesis, while nominally professing the same principles.[10]

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[8]C. B. Tinker and H. F. Lowry, The Poetry of Matthew Arnold: A Commentary (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 55.

[9]Trilling, p. 94.

[10]Arthur O. Lovejoy, "'Nature' as Aesthetic Norm," Essays in the History of Ideas (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1948), p. 69.

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"To the Duke of Wellington" is a tribute to the Duke's awareness that "the wheels of life stand never idle, but go always round" and that, therefore, man must adapt himself to life's changing conditions. The role of Wellington in England's history attested to his acting on the basis of this insight, "this vision of the general law," for he had the capacity to adapt himself to changing times. In this case, nature is not represented as revealing a moral lesson to man; rather, man is represented as discovering in nature the insight that the condition for his survival and prosperity is a continuing adaptation to the changing circumstances of life. On the other hand, in "To an Independent Preacher," the natural is represented as apparently antithetical to the human. To be good, man must be not like nature but different. Somehow, the distinctively "human" in man must transcend the "natural" in the universe.

The poem in which the supposedly conflicting views of nature intersect and resolve themselves is the sonnet entitled "Religious Isolation." The "Friend" to whom it is addressed is probably Arthur Hugh Clough. The theme of the poem is one that we have noted as common to many of the poems in The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems--the human condition in a naturalistic universe. The sonnet urges the friend to accept in a mature manner the validity of the naturalistic interpretation of the universe and its implications and consequences for human life:

> What though the holy secret which moulds thee
> Moulds not the solid Earth? though never Winds
> Have whisper'd it to the complaining Sea,
> Nature's great law, and law of all men's minds?
> To its own impulse every creature stirs:
> Live by thy light, and Earth will live by hers.

In a strictly naturalistic interpretation of the universe, even the peculiarly human must be acknowledged as ultimately a specific aspect of nature in general. Man is part of the whole that is nature. Yet every part in the whole of nature operates in accordance with the law that is applicable to its own level of being: "To its own impulse every creature stirs." In this sense, even morality is characteristic of nature, at least of the nature that is represented in the constitution of man, although it is not characteristic of "the Solid Earth." Hence it is natural for man to be moral, for it is in accordance with the peculiar organization of nature on his particular level of existence: it is the law of his being--the impulse to which he stirs.

Thus there is not so much a confusion in Arnold's concept of "nature" in the 1849 volume as an occasional inconsistency in his use and application of the word. For instance, if the "Nature" in "To an Independent Preacher" (later retitled "In Harmony with Nature") is understood to designate the general nature of the universe outside man, its significance becomes immediately reconcilable with the image of nature reflected in the other poems of the volume. As Professor J. W. Beach explains in The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth-Century English Poetry, Arnold was here using the

word "to designate the 'world of things' as opposed to the moral world of man; whereas it is often used to designate the natural order which includes man and his moral world together with the world of things."[11] The poem, then, is simply declaring that man must live not by the law that is operative in other aspects of nature (such as "the Solid Earth") but by the moral law that is operative on the level of nature as it exists within his own being.

Thus the content of Arnold's concept of nature, as clarified and emphasized in the sonnet on "Religious Isolation," is relatively consistent in the poems of the 1849 volume. Apparent discrepancies are reconcilable, for seeming differences are attributable to the various senses in which the word is used. Moreover, the image of nature reflected in the sonnet may even be regarded as the genesis of the sense in which Arnold was to use the concept in his religious writings of the seventies. For the title of the poem suggests that although man is isolated in a universe without God, it is still possible for him to be religious--that is, in Arnold's view, to be moral. But, as Beach paraphrases Arnold's idea, "Man must learn to play alone his religious game."[12]

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[11]Joseph Warren Beach, "Arnold," The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth-Century English Poetry (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1936) p. 398.

[12]Ibid., p. 399.

In discussing the poems in Arnold's early volumes, W. Stacy Johnson discerns in them the expression of the poet's "conflict between two needs, the need for faith in a moral order and the need for faith in some ultimate unity of things."

> When he sees the world from a moral point of view, as a social creature, Arnold is a dualist: he perceives that loving, suffering man and inaminate nature are distinct. But when he writes from his need for wholeness Arnold is . . . a monist: he can imagine only one nature in the universe, ordering an apparent multitude of apparently self-centered, aimlessly colliding fragments.[13]

On the basis of the explanation of Arnold's concept of nature heretofore given, it should be clear by now that there is not really a "conflict" between these two needs in the poet. For, as a naturalist, Arnold assumes an ultimate unity in the entire universe. In some sense, nature <u>is</u> a whole, for it is all. And within the whole, Arnold also perceives that there are parts, each fulfilling the law of nature as expressed within the peculiar organization of its own being. This discussion of the poems has up to now, however, focused only on the distinction between, on one hand, the amoral nature of the general universe and, on the other, the moral dimension of nature as it exists specifically within man. The final poem of the volume, "Resignation," affords a clear statement of Arnold's monistic view of the "ultimate unity of things."

In "Resignation" the speaker, conversing with Fausta, describes the wide and deep vision of life that the Poet enjoys:

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[13]Johnson, p. 41.

> Before him he sees Life unroll,
> A placid and continuous whole;
> That general Life, which does not cease,
> Whose secret is not joy, but peace;
> That Life, whose dumb wish is not miss'd
> If birth proceeds, if things subsist:
> The Life of Plants, and stones, and rain . . . .

The "general life" here seems to refer to the entire cosmic process, at least as it is experienced on Earth, with its ever-recurring cycle of the seasons. Here in the last poem of the 1849 volume we encounter a more distinct image of the nature that was casually suggested in the first poem, the sonnet on "Quiet Work," wherein the poet expressed his admiration of the "toil unsever'd from tranquillity" exemplified in the vast inexorable process of nature. Indeed, "Resignation" is in its way a restatement in a grander form of the theme stated in "Quiet Work"--the poet's desire to learn a life-style from the operation of nature in the world. But there is also an experience of deep satisfaction afforded by the contemplation of the"general Life" of nature in the universe as a whole. It is a satisfaction that is, to Arnold, not ethical but esthetic in tone. Indeed, it is perhaps an intellectual version of the mystical experience--the vision of a reality of unity that pervades the variety of appearance.

In 1852 Matthew Arnold's second volume of poetry was published--Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems. The poems in this volume differ in theme from those of the first volume. In 1849 the poems persistently dealt with man's relation to nature, in the sense of the universe or the cosmos. But in

1852 the emphasis has changed. The poems are more concerned with human frustration, especially the personal frustration of the speaker in the poems, who seems to be identical with Arnold the poet. Persistent themes are the desires and regrets of youth, the distress of love, and the melancholy sense of mortality. There is a greater concern with social relations, at least on the level of interpersonal relationships.

However, the title poem in the second volume, "Empedocles on Etna"--the first and longest of the poems--is principally concerned with the theme of the human condition in a naturalistic universe, with the relation of man to nature, like the poems in the earlier volume. Especially is this the case in the first act of the dramatic poem. The length and placement of "Empedocles on Etna," as well as the rather different themes in the remainder of the poems, suggest that perhaps Arnold was trying once for all to get the matter of man's relation to nature settled for himself. It is as if he desired to get the matter out of his system, to establish his image of nature permanently so that he could assume it as his cosmic background and then go on to express other human concerns.

Tinker and Lowry suggest that Arnold incorporated in "Empedocles on Etna" much of the meaning that he had intended to express in a projected but uncompleted poem on Lucretius. They note, first of all, that in the list of poems that Arnold

intended to compose in 1849 (included in an unpublished manuscript in the Yale Library), the first item reads "Chew Lucretius" and the second, in the line immediately below it and after the word "Compose," reads "Empedocles--refusal of limitation by the religious sentiment." Apparently the direction "Chew Lucretius" is a reminder to himself not to compose the poem but to reflect upon it more. Further, Tinker and Lowry point out that among Arnold's notes on the projected poem about Lucretius (now in the possession of Mrs. Norman Thwaites), there are three stanzas that were included in only a slightly altered form in "Empedocles on Etna." Moreover, they observe that much of the poem is obviously Lucretian in spirit:

> Most of the important themes of Empedocles' instruction to Pausanias are stressed at great length in De Rerum Natura: the vanity of luxuries and the contrast with the simple joys of outdoor life; the reiteration that the gods have not arranged the world for man's benefit; the working of nature without respect even to the gods; the conviction that lust and inordinate desire--not the gods--tear man to pieces; the necessity for enjoying the simple pleasure of this life; the power of right reason to overcome our ills; and the conception of "mind as the master part of us."[14]

One reason why the poem on Lucretius was never finished, the commentators conclude, is that its basic ideas had already been expressed in "Empedocles on Etna."

The essential image of nature or God that the dramatic poem reflects is explicitly expressed in Empedocles' long speech to Pausanias, in which the relation of man to the

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[14]Tinker and Lowry, Commentary, p. 295.

universe is the declared topic. The image of nature and the conception of the relation between nature and man that emerge from the poem are essentially the same as those reflected in the poems of The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems: the vast cosmic process of nature is indifferent to man, who must therefore be responsible for his own life. He must fulfill his own nature, the part of general nature that exists only within himself. Empedocles rebukes mankind for "peopling the void air" with gods whom they bless or curse for their fortune and misfortune. Against this consequence of the unbridled "religious sentiment"--the control of the imagination by the wish-fulfilling fantasies of the human heart--Empedocles recommends a pantheistic naturalism that is rather more Stoic or Spinozist than the strictly atomic materialism of Democritus, whose cosmology was adopted by the Epicureans and subsequently reflected in Lucretius' De Rerum Natura.

> All things the world which fill
> of but one stuff are spun, so
> That we who rail are still,
> With what we rail at, one;
> One with the o'er-labour'd Power that through the breadth and length
>
> Of earth, and air, and sea,
> In men, and plants, and stones,
> Hath toil perpetually,
> And struggles, pants, and moans;
> Fain would do all things well, but sometimes fails in strength.
>
> And Patiently exact
> This universal God
> Alike to any act
> Proceeds at any nod,
> And quietly declaims the cursings of himself.

This is not what man hates,
Yet he can curse but this.
Harsh Gods and hostile Fates
Are dreams! this only is;
Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the foolish elf.
(I, ii, 287-306)

That Arnold's conception of nature and God is essentially Stoic was asserted in 1942 by John Hicks.[15] And it has recently been reaffirmed by a classicist, Professor Warren D. Anderson, in his book-length study entitled Matthew Arnold and the Classical Tradition (1965). According to Anderson, the stoics believed in an "invisible unity created by a logos penetrating the universe. The cosmos, then, was far more than a mere design (for the idea of order is inherent in the Greek work kosmos itself); it was a sentient and intelligent organism."[16] Further, one must "realize one's own part in the logos. To acknowledge this great scheme of things is to 'follow nature' (naturam sequi, for the original Greek phusei hepesthai) by acknowledging the leadership of the 'guiding principle' (to hegemonikon) within oneself." In concluding his description of the cosmology of Stoicism, Anderson observes, "Finally, the Stoic conceived of the divine in terms that tended strongly towards monotheism, but he found it difficult to posit the existence of a God who was not in every way identical with the universe."[17] Thus, for the Stoic as

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[15]John Hicks, "The Stoicism of Matthew Arnold," University of Iowa Studies, VI (1942), 7-62.

[16]Warren D. Anderson, Matthew Arnold and the Classical Tradition (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1965), p. 132.

[17]Ibid., p. 133.

as for Arnold, God was not transcendent but immanent. Indeed, neither Arnold nor the Stoics conceived of God as even in nature. Rather God is nature, ((or nature is God).

Much of Anderson's book is devoted to the analysis of these Stoic ideas in Arnold's poetry. Estimating the degree of Stoic influence discernible within the poetry, he concludes, "In his early poems it [Stoicism] is incomparably stronger than Christianity: it constitutes their central intellectual force. Its doctrines are the foundations upon which he attempts to build an adequate idea of the world through poetry."[18] But Anderson observes that in the later poems the Stoic views are nearly absent. In them the Stoic cosmology is more or less assumed; and the ethics of Stoicism, he adds, were largely relegated to private expression in Arnold's notebooks of personal reflections and meditations. And even later, in the prose essays and religious writings, Arnold was not so much Stoic as eclectic--fusing Stoic, Christian, and elements from many other sources in his own original synthesis.

But Anderson's interpretation must be contrasted with that formulated by an eminent Orientalist, Professor Nagarajan, who has demonstrated the influence of Hindu thought upon Arnold in a significant article. After citing Arnold's appreciative remarks on the Bhagavad Gita in his letters to Clough, Nagarajan asserts that "the intellectual frame of

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[18] Ibid., p. 139.

reference in 'Empedocles on Etna' is substantially derived from the Bhagavad Gita," and he proceeds to point out many parallels in the ideas of both works.[19] For instance, in paraphrasing an idea of Empedocles in terms of Hindu religious philosophy, Nagarajan writes, "The will of man insists that he is unique, separate, that the world exists but for his welfare. This is an illusion. It is we who must mark the world's course."[20]

Is it possible for Arnold's early poems to reflect ideas that are not only "essentially" those of Stoicism but also "substantially" those of Hinduism? The answer is, simply, yes. As Arthur O. Lovejoy explained in discussing the study of the history of ideas, most systems of thought consist of a particular complex of elements drawn from a fund of relatively few "unit-ideas." "Most philosophic systems are original or distinctive," he declared, "rather in their patterns than in their components."[21] In terms of this explanation, the fundamental similarity between certain elements in Stoicism and in Hinduism is to be understood as the consequence of their holding certain "unit-ideas" in common.

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[19]S. Nagarajan "Arnold and the Bhagavad Gita: A Reinterpretation of 'Empedocles on Etna,'" Comparative Literature, XII (Fall, 1960), 338.

[20]Ibid., p. 340

[21]Arthur O. Lovejoy, "Introduction: the Study of the History of Ideas," The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea (First Harper Torchbook Edition; New York: Harper and Rowe, Publishers, 1960), p. 3.

Professor Anderson himself has noted the resemblance between the cosmology of the Stoics and that of Spinoza: "Spinoza's pantheistic universe resembles the Stoic cosmos infilled with the divine logos; moreover, the requisite for individual happiness--realizing one's small place in the great pattern--is virtually the same in each system."[22] So we are prepared when other scholars inform us that the cosmology of Arnold, especially that reflected in his later religious writings, is "basically" Spinozoic. Such is the contention, for instance, of William Robbins in his definitive study of Arnold's moral and religious ideas, The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold. The reason for this variety of interpretation is, of course, that Arnold was an eclectic humanist: he took his ideas from various sources, from wherever he found them. And the "unit-ideas" in Stoicism, Hinduism, and Spinozism mutually supplement, reinforce, and complement each other in the original synthesis of ideas from these and other sources that Arnold ultimately achieved in his own thought.

After having clearly formulated an essentially naturalistic cosmology in Act I of the dramatic poem, Empedocles leaped into the crater of Etna in Act II. And in the 1853 edition of his poems, Arnold refused to republish "Empedocles on Etna," explaining in the "Preface" to the volume that the passive response of the central character to his situation made a poem that, for lack of decisive action, was not sufficiently affirmative in its resolution. Two questions need

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[22]Anderson, p. 136.

to be answered before we can understand the later developments in Arnold's images of nature and of God as reflected in his religious writings of the seventies. Why did Empedocles jump into Etna? And why did Arnold, in 1853, regard "Empedocles on Etna" as an unsatisfactory poem?

The motivation for Empedocle's suicidal leap into the volcano was certainly not, as some writers have suggested, his inability to accept the consequences of the austere cosmology that he had explained for the sake of Pausanias in Act I. For it was presented to Pausanias as a sounder basis for ordering one's life well in the world than supernaturalistic superstitions. Empedocles enunciated the naturalistic cosmology as a philosophical basis for living. And after Pausanias left, Empedocles reflected:

> He has his lesson . . .
> And the good, learned, friendly, quiet man
> May bravelier front his life . . . .
> (II,7-9)

Empedocles' conception of nature and of man's relation to God, then, was not what motivated his suicide.

The source of Empedocles' despair, his utter loss of hope in life, is to be sought elsewhere--specifically, in his relations to society and to himself. In their commentary on "Empedocles on Etna," Tinker and Lowry print Arnold's prose outline plan for the poem, preserved among the Yale papers. After stating in the outline that the youthful Empedocles had held his vision of nature and God joyfully among

friends and that "even now he does not deny that the sight is capable of affording rapture and the purest peace," Arnold proceeded in his plan to describe the situation of Empedocles in old age as he intended to express and create it in the poem:

> But his friends are dead: the world is all against him, and incredulous of the truth: his mind is overtasked by the effort to hold fast so great and severe a truth in solitude: the atmosphere he breathes not being modified by the presence of human life, is too rare for him.[23]

And, as represented in the poem itself, this is the actual situation of Empedocles. He is an exile, living in an unsympathetic age, alienated from others and even from himself. Alone, he sums up his condition: "Thou canst not live with men nor with thyself." Soliloquizing, he continues:

> But he, who has outliv'd his prosperous days,
> But he, whose youth fell on a different world
> From that on which his exiled age is thrown,
> Whose mind was fed on other food, was train'd
> By other rules than are in vogue to-day,
> Whose habit of thought is fix'd, who will not change,
> But in a world he loves not must subsist
> In ceaseless opposition, be the guard
> Of his own breast, fetter'd to what he guards,
> That the world win no mastery over him;
> Who has no friend, no fellow left, not one;
> Who has no minute's breathing space allow'd
> To nurse his dwindling faculty of joy--
> Joy and the outward world must die to him,
> As they are dead to me! (II, 261-275)

It is against the Sophists, whose influence had begun to dominate his age, that Empedocles was in "ceaseless opposition." He fears what they are making of the times with

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[23]Tinker and Lowry, Commentary, p. 291.

their ignoble doctrines. In the continuous intellectual contention with them, with no opportunity to cultivate the emotional aspect of his nature, he has lost the balance and unity of his being. One thinks of Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode," in which he attributed his loss of joy in part to his "abstruse research," and of John Stuart Mill's mental crisis, diagnosed by himself as the consequence of an imbalance of intellect and emotion. The imbalance in Empedocle's being is symbolically suggested by the imagery of the four elements in the poem. He has become a "devouring flame of thought" (II, 329, italics mine); he is situated on the arid earth of the volcano cone, far away from access to the refreshing stream of water below; and the air he breathes is thin, causing him to gasp for life (II, 215). In terms of Empedocles' view, as Arnold represents it in the poem, the unity or poise of the elements in oneself is the essential condition for his release from the limitations of human life and for his reunion with nature or God, the "All." This condition of poise, unity, or balance he has been unable to achieve in the age of the Sophists. In his fierce disputations with them, he had lost touch with his soul: he had not lived in the light of his own true deep-buried self, "Being one with which we are one with the whole world" (II, 372).

For Empedocles, the soul or buried self of man is a subconscious source of wisdom concerning the true needs of his real nature--the vital demands of his whole being. To

know this self and to realize it in action, as the fulfillment of his nature, is the ultimate goal of man. The "buried self" in Arnold's poetry reflects the Hindu doctrine of the "Self," I take it, in agreement with Nagarajan's interpretation of "Empedocles on Etna" as demonstrating the influence of certain ideas that Arnold had acquired from his study of the Bhagavad Gita. When one is in right relation with himself, or his Self--that is, when he in effect is his Self--then he will be in right relation to society and to nature or God. But in an age of intellectual contention and confusion, Empedocles has not had the opportunity and solitude to behold and follow the inward light of his soul. He has not actualized the potential of his Self--the true needs of his real nature.

However, for a moment Empedocles has an intimation that because he has resisted the tendency of these Sophistic times to alienate him from his Self, "it hath been granted me/ Not to die wholly, not to be all enslav'd." And in that moment, when he can "breathe free," perhaps because he has been partially and momentarily reunited with his Self, he jumps into the crater to rejoin the elements, the All.

In his excellent study of Arnold's poetry entitled Imaginative Reason, A. Dwight Culler suggests that Empedocles' suicide represents the destruction of his defiant self in the purifying fire of the volcano and that the 1853 Preface, with its explanation for the omission of the dramatic poem from the volume, constitutes a second exorcism of the spirit of

Empedocles in Arnold himself.[24] And Walter E. Houghton has interpreted the poem as Arnold's attempt to portray "the image of a nineteenth-century intellectual."[25] That the poem is contemporary in its significance is confirmed by Arnold'soown admission in the 1853 Preface that there existed in the character of Empedocles "much that we are accustomed to consider as exculsively modern."[26] But that Empedocles in any sense represented himself, Arnold denied in a letter written on November 12, 1867, to Mr. Henry Dunn:

> You . . . appear to assume that I merely use Empedocles and Obsermann as mouthpieces through which to vent my own opinions. This is not so . . . . Traces of an impatience with the language and assumptions of the popular theology of the day may very likely be visible in my work, and I have now, and no doubt had still more then, a sympathy with the figure Empedocles presents to the imagination; but neither then nor now would my creed . . . by by any means identical with that contained in the preachment of Empedocles.[27]

But the statement in his letter must be contrasted with the view expressed in another letter--one written in the summer of 1849 to Arthur Hugh Clough by an acquaintance of Arnold named J. Campbell Shairp: "I saw the said Hero--Matt--the

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[24]A. Dwight Culler, Imaginative Reason: The Poetry of Matthew Arnold (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 154.

[25]Walter E. Houghton, "Arnold's 'Empedocles on Etna,'" Victorian Studies, VI (June, 1958), 314.

[26]Super, I, 1.

[27]From an unpublished letter printed by Tinker and Lowry in their Commentary, pp. 287-88.

day I left London. . . . He was working at an 'Empedocles'--which seemed to be not much about the man who leapt in the crater--but his name and outward circumstances are used for the drapery of his own thoughts."[28]

Now, which of these two letters are we to believe? Probably both letters are to be credited to a certain degree. Although "Empedocles on Etna" was composed in the objective mode of dramatic poetry and did not express a "creed" that was identical with that of the poet, Arnold nevertheless undoubtedly did project certain aspects of himself, of his ideas, and of his own situation into the character of Empedocles in the poem.

Perhaps what Arnold most desired to disassociate himself from and to disown in the character of Empedocles was his negative response to his situation--his suicidal plunge into Etna. The rationalization in the 1853 "Preface" for the exclusion of the poem specifically cites the inadequacy of Empedocles' passive action to resolve the poem in a satisfactory manner. Such situations, "in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved by incident, hope, or resistance," afford no poetical enjoyment. "When they occur in actual life, they are painful, not tragic . . . ."[29]

One must be careful here not to confuse Arnold's esthetics with his ethics, his art with his life. But if there

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[28] Ibid., p. 287.

[29] Super, I, 2-3.

actually is a parallel to be drawn between the situations of Empedocles and of Arnold, what is the result when it is carried out to its logical conclusion? Both men hold similar conceptions of nature or God; both men live in periods in which they find it difficult if not impossible to live well, to lead a fully satisfying life; and the response of one of the two men to the situation is suicide--the ultimate act of escapism. But Arnold, of course, did not leap off the cliffs of Dover. However, his letters do often express his desire, especially as a young man, to leave England, to live in Europe, specifically in Switzerland.

Surely A. Dwight Culler is correct, then, in suggesting that Arnold's decision not to republish "Empedocles on Etna" constituted as exorcism of the spirit of Empedocles within himself. Insofar as Empedocles reflected the poet's attitude, Arnold changed his mind about the appropriateness of the philosopher's passive plunge. I would suggest that the inclusion of an entirely new poem in the volume of 1853 (from which "Empedocles on Etna" was excluded) expresses the change of attitude in Arnold's response to his situation--"The Scholar Gipsy."

Various interpretations of "The Scholar Gipsy" have been propounded. But perhaps the clearest approach to understanding the essential significance of the poem is simply to ask what the speaker most admires in the scholar gypsy whom he seeks. Certainly the speaker in the poem is not striving to find what the scholar gypsy himself is seeking. For in

Arnold's source, Joseph Glanvil's The Vanity of Dogmatizing, the Oxford student was seeking a more complete understanding of the secret and mastery of the art of the gypsy fortune-tellers--what we recognize now as hypnotism and what Arnold himself knew then as mesmerism. Nor does the speaker desire to find the scholar gypsy merely in order to see or to talk with him. For, in the end, he actually bids the scholar gypsy to flee even from the poet himself. What the poet, or the speaker in the poem, really admires is the manner in which the scholar gypsy pursues his quest.

The pastoral element in the poem is used especially to emphasize the contrast between, on the one hand, the simple and serene manner in which the gypsy figure pursues his quest and, on the other hand, the complex confusion in the life of the poet himself and of the contemporaries for whom he speaks. The quest of the gypsy is the business of his life. In a sense, it is his life. And the quest of the speaker and his contemporaries is, likewise, their pursuit of life itself--the business of living. The poet, addressing the scholar gipsy and speaking for his contemporaries, exclaims:

> O Life unlike to ours!
> Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
> Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
> And each half lives a hundred different lives;
> Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

In contract with the ununified lives of the speaker and his contemporaries, the scholar gipsy had "one aim, one business, one desire."

The speaker envies the age in which the scholar gypsy lived--"Before this strange disease of modern life,/ With its sick hurry, its divided aims"--and warns the scholar gypsy against the effects of life in the modern world:

> But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
> For strong the infection of our mental strife,
> Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest;
> And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
> Like us distracted, and like us unblest.

The implication is that the scholar gypsy was able to live with such equanimity and unity of purpose because he was born in a different age, that there is something in modern life that makes such a unified life difficult if not impossible. And that which is singled out as most responsible for the disunity is the strong infection of "mental strife." The Victorian period itself was, of course, an age of mental strife. Religion, politics, economics, education, science, the arts--all were fields of intellectual contention. The entire cultural ideology inherited from the past, with its traditional conceptions of the nature, purpose, and relations of God, of nature, of the structures and functions of the institutions in society, and of man himself, was being vigorously challenged and seriously questioned. For the Victorian period was experiencing the climax of a cultural revolution, both ideologically and technologically, in the evolution of western civilization.

"Mental strife," we remember, was the source of imbalance and disunity in Empedocles. Entering into the

intellectual contention of his time, he neglected the true needs of his real nature. He became alienated from his "Self." He was not an integrated personality, with the intellectual and emotional balance and wholeness of a unified person. This is essentially the state that the speaker in "The Scholar Gypsy" describes in himself and his contemporaries. And it is the opposite of this state in the scholar gypsy that the speaker admires and himself desires to enjoy.

If indeed "The Scholar Gypsy" actually incarnates a personal ideal of Arnold, it is his own desire to achieve a unified life, to live by the light of his own true deep-buried self, in an age when circumstances seemed to conspire against it. The conditions under which he desires to pursue his quest or to live his life, Arnold in effect declares, are not those of Empedocles but those of the scholar gypsy. This is advice that he had before given to Clough: not to try "to solve the Universe." He would not, in an effort to change the age so that it would foster the unity of individuals, fiercely dispute with the Sophists of the age, and thus lose the very unity that he desired in the process of striving for it. Nor would he entirely disengage himself from the age or, like Empedocles at the last, escape from life itself. Instead, almost like the slow, silent, sure process of general nature itself, his specific nature would pursue its quest to realize the true needs of his real Self, even as the scholar gypsy was quietly and patiently intent upon his single goal--"waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall."

The "spark from Heaven" is a phrase that suggests some sort of inspiration--a revelation of truth, an insight of profound significance, or a vision of ultimate reality. What the "spark" signified to the scholar gypsy (the secret of the gypsy art) is of little import, for the speaker most admired the manner in which he pursued the quest. But what the "spark" represented for the speaker in the poem and for his contemporaries is an interesting matter for speculation. Is it only a deep insight into the significance of his own life and purpose that is suggested? Or is it a revelation that would perhaps resolve all the "mental strife" of the age? A Dwight Culler offers an intriguing interpretation: "He is waiting for the spark to fall which has fallen in Culture and Anarchy, and the secret he would learn from the gypsies is not dissimilar from the method and secret of Jesus in Literature and Dogma."[30]

Ultimately, I think, Arnold is suggesting both an individual significance and a social application. Neither the achievement of wholeness in the life of the individual nor the resolution of the problems of the age can be expected from following the way of Empedocles. Rather, both the immediate unification of the person and the ultimate integration of the society can be won only by the method and secret of the scholar gypsy. And in all his writings, in the politically oriented Culture and Anarchy as much as in the

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[30]Culler, p. 193.

religiously oriented Literature and Dogma, Arnold traces the anarchy of society to the anarchy in the life of the individual. He recognizes that the influence is mutual: that the condition of the society affects the condition of the individual and that the state of the latter affects the state of the former. But transformation must begin with the individual. For only a transformed person can or will contribute effectively to the transformation of his age. And to transform the individual is to contribute to the transforming of society.

In "The Scholar Gypsy" Arnold had, as Culler phrases it, "poised" his life. He had found the way to develop and maintain his own unity, and he was consequently prepared to begin his contribution to the transformation of Victorian society.

The Image of God in the Essays

One of Arnold's greatest contributions to this process of social transformation, at least in his own estimation, was his religious writings of the seventies. And it was in these writings on religion that, of course, Arnold most concerned himself with the concept of God. In them he was engaged in the task of explicitly expressing his images of God and of nature in specifically religious terms. In a subsequent chapter, Arnold's essays on religion will be examined as criticisms of the theory and practice of the religious institution in Victorian society. Our concern in the present chapter is to examine his religious essays only in order to

apprehend more clearly and fully the images of God and of nature that he reflected in his mature thought. The effort to apprehend the image of God that Arnold envisioned and projected in his writings on religion must necessarily concentrate on the several controversial definitions of God that he formulated. The goal must be to grasp clearly the full significance, implications, and assumptions involved in these definitions and then to relate them to the images of God and of nature that were reflected in the earlier poem.

Arnold's first book-length essay on religion was St. Paul and Protestantism, published in 1870. Although it was primarily concerned with the exposition of the "method" and "secret" of Jesus as understood and expressed in the Pauline Epistles, Arnold nevertheless had occasion to venture a definition of God. Early in the book he defines God as that "stream of tendency by which all things strive to fulfill the law of their being."[31] On the same page, Arnold also writes that the use of the word "God" is no doubt "the least inadequate name for that universal order which the intellect feels after as a law . . . ." Approximately halfway through the book, he offers another variation in his definition of God, describing Him or It as "the universal order by which all things fulfill the law of their being."[32]

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[31]Matthew Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), p. 8.

[32]Ibid., p. 47.

The second and the most famous of Arnold's book-length essays on religion was Literature and Dogma, published in 1873. In it a significant alteration in the definition of God is advanced. Arnold approached this second definition of God by discussing the manner in which the idea of God was grasped and expressed by the ancient Hebrews.

> They had dwelt upon the thought of conduct and right and wrong, till the not ourselves which is in us and all around us, became to them adorable eminently and altogether as a power which makes for righteousness; which makes for it unchangeable and eternally, and is therefore called The Eternal.[33]

Later in the book, Arnold puts all of this together in a succinct definition of God as that "enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness."[34]

From St. Paul and Protestantism and from Literature and Dogma, then, we emerge with two rather different definitions of God, both italicized by Arnold for emphasis: on the one hand, God is described as the "stream of tendency by which all things strive to fulfill the law of their being"; and, on the other hand, God is described as the "enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." In his Ethical Studies, originally published in 1876, F. H. Bradley dismissed Arnold's definitions of God with derision, confessing that "when 'culture' went on to tell us what God

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[33]Matthew Arnold, Literature and Dogma (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), p. 28.

[34]Ibid., p. 52.

is for science, we heard words we did not understand about 'streams,' and 'tendencies,' and 'the Eternal,'" and concluding that "'the Eternal' . . . is nothing in the world but a piece of literary clap-trap."[35] And Lionel Trilling readily agreed in his own Matthew Arnold (1939) with Bradley's treatment. However, William Robbins advances a dissenting opinion in his study of Arnold's religious thought (1959), asserting that "Arnold's position was not so intellectually naive as Bradley makes out . . . ."[36] On the basis of our understanding of Arnold's image of nature in his poems, perhaps we can arrive at a comprehensive apprehension of the essential consistency in Arnold's image of God in his religious essays.

First of all, it is of course important to note the contexts in which Arnold offers his several definitions of God. The definition in St. Paul and Protestantism--the "stream of tendency by which all things strive to fulfil the law of their being"--is intended and offered as a statement about God that will be acceptable to the "scientific sense" of man.[37] Arnold's understanding of what is "scientific" has often been denounced as inadequate. However, F. A. Dudley has written an article in which he concludes that there were

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[35]F. H. Bradley, Ethical Studies (Second Edition; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 317.

[36]William Robbins, The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1959), p. 78.

[37]Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 8.

two senses in which Arnold used the term "science": "the older and broader sense of thorough, systematic knowledge in any field"; and, in a narrower sense, "the comprehension and interpretation of the [physical] world."[38] In the former sense, Arnold used the term "science" to refer to truly disinterested knowledge, as opposed to irrational prejudice without basis in the facts of experience. Yet Dudley concludes, "As a lay critic of physical science itself [as opposed to the humanities, in his writings on education], Arnold can hardly be regarded with great seriousness."[39]

But it seems in his definition of God that Arnold is drawing on both of these senses of the term. For he is engaged in defining an aspect of the physical world; yet his definition is acceptable, if at all, not to the physical sciences, which demand experimental verification, but to an older, less exact, more humanistic "science," experiential in its approach to knowledge. That Arnold's definition indeed has reference to the physical world is clearly indicated by the expression that he uses as synonomous with his definition: "that universal order which the intellect feels after as a law." This "universal order" is, when transposed, the "order in the universe"-- an "order" which is, moreover, sensed as a "law," Yet it is impossible to verify <u>experimentally</u> the

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[38]Fred A. Dudley, "Matthew Arnold and Science," <u>PMLA</u>, LVII (March, 1942), 276-66.

[39]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 292.

existence, constitution, or direction of this law of order in the universe. Nor indeed did Arnold intend to specify that it is possible to do so. Rather, his statement is to be understood as asserting only that we sense, experientially, there is order in the universe and that, insofar as we can apprehend it, the order consists in the activity of all things to fulfill the law of their own being. This is to assert, after all, no more than that the functions of phenomena are determined by their structures and that, therefore, each object acts in accordance with its own nature.

It should begin to become apparent now that the concept of God which Arnold expresses in this first definition is essentially the same as the image of general nature that he reflects in his earlier poetry. For in both cases he is suggesting the vast, impersonal, cosmic process. In other words, the definition postulates that God is either the cosmos itself (the natural universe) or the process at work within the cosmos. This view we recognize as a version of Spinozist pantheism. In a technical exposition of Spinoza's cosmology, H. F. Hallet distinguishes between his concept of God as process and his concept of nature as cosmos, using the traditional terms from scholastic philosophy--"Natura naturans" and "Natura naturata." "'Nature' as creative potency-in-act is God--Nature as creating a nature for itself: Nature 'naturing herself'; Nature regarded as a determinate totality

of determinate being--as having received a nature--is the world or Nature 'natured.'"[40] Throughout his Ethics, Spinoza insists on the virtual identity of God and of nature. He habitually uses the phrase "God or Nature." Matthew Arnold's acquaintance with and admiration for Spinoza's thought is well known, for it was indicated both publicly in the several essays that he devoted to the philosopher and privately in his letters to Clough. And the relation of his own cosmological view to that of Spinoza is revealed in the "unit-ideas" that are common to both. For both of them, "God" is but nature under one of its aspects. Nature is the complex of structures in the universe--the cosmos. And God is the complex of functions in the universe--the process. Thus, as Robert Shafer has asserted, Arnold's position is clearly and thoroughly "naturalistic because it refused to admit the possibility of anything beyond the regular 'course of nature.'"[41]

The context in which Arnold advanced his second definition of God (that in Literature and Dogma) was entirely different from that of the first. This second definition of God--as the "enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness"--is conditioned by at least three other factors: first, it is presented as the notion of God that was

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[40]H. F. Hallett, Benedict De Spinoza: The Elements of his Philosophy (London: The Athlone Press, 1957), p. 14.

[41]Robert Shafer, "Matthew Arnold," Christianity and Naturalism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), p. 168.

grasped by the ancient Hebrew people; second, the definition emphasizes only that aspect of God which is apprehended in the strictly ethical dimension of human experience; and, third, it is an idea of God intended not to satisfy the scientific sense (although it is offered as a view of God not incompatible with or offensive to science) but specifically to enable the reading of the Bible to be a morally inspiring experience for the contemporary Victorian. All three of these factors are insisted on in God and the Bible: A Review of Objections to Literature and Dogma (1875).

Arnold's first and general definition of God, having served its purpose in St. Paul and Protestantism, was no more invoked. But the second and specifically religious definition of God figures prominently in all of his subsequent essays on religion. And Arnold's clearest exposition of its significance is to be found in the three opening chapters of God and the Bible: "The God of Miracles," "The God of Metaphysics," and "The God of Experience." In these chapters, Arnold contrasts his own concept of God with, onethe one hand, the God of popular superstition and with, on the other hand, the God of scholastic theology. In so doing, he is himself challenged to clarify explicitly the assumptions, inplications, and ambiguities in the earlier work.

Perhaps one difficulty that prevents a ready understanding of Arnold's second definition of God is his use of the phrase "not ourselves" in it. Why does he insist on the

insertion of this qualifying phrase? It seems to be the one dispensable element. If it were omitted, the definition would read, simply, "the enduring power that makes for righteousness" or, in another common variation, "the Eternal that makes for righteousness." What is lost, if anything, by its omission? One loss, when the phrase "not ourselves" is omitted, is that the remaining word "Eternal" then seems to be an adjective without a noun to modify. It is true that Arnold sets off the phrase "not ourselves" with a pair of commas as a nonrestrictive element and that, in so doing, he is signaling his use of "Eternal" in a substantive sense. But it is also true that in some cases he omits the commas, as when he writes, for instance, of "having led the reader to face . . . what 'God' means in the Bible, and to see that it means the Eternal not ourselves that makes for eighteousness."[42] And, too, Arnold often uses the phrase "not ourselves" even alone in a clearly substantive sense, as when he writes of "the not ourselves, mighty for our weal or woe."[43]

This difficulty in the definition is removed and we are well on our way toward a clear apprehension of Arnold's meaning when we recall that the "not ourselves" is another way of saying the "not-self," the "other." The "not-self" is, of course, one in an opposing set of philosophical terms used

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[42]Matthew Arnold, God and the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 26.

[43]Ibid., p. 69

in a traditional dualistic distinction between the "Self" and the "Not-self." In this dualism the "Self" is the egoistic source of consciousness in the individual; and the "Not-self" is the world that he experiences outside his subjective consciousness--the objective world of nature, society, and even his own body. In this light, then, Arnold's "Eternal not ourselves" is none other than nature itself--the eternal world. That this is indeed the sense in which Arnold intended the phrase is clearly indicated by its use of it in the context of Literature and Dogma where he originally introduced the term:

> The not ourselves, which is in us and in the world around us, has almost everywhere . . . struck the minds of men as they awoke to consciousness, and has inspired them with awe. Every one knows how the mighty natural objects which most took their regards became the objects to which this awe addressed itself.[44]

The genius of the Hebrews, Arnold insists throughout his religious essays, consisted in their apprehension of one aspect of the "not ourselves": the insight that, in effect, the nature of the world, at least in the universe of human experience, is such that "righteousness makes for life and happiness." This, he contends in God and the Bible, is a law of experience.

> That there is an Eternal not ourselves which makes for righteousness and is called God, is admitted; and indeed so much as this human experience proves. For the constitution and history of things shows us that happiness, at which we all aim, is dependent on righteousness.[45]

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[44]Arnold, Literature and Dogma, p. 26.

[45]Arnold, God and the Bible, p. 29.

Here the words "the constitution and history of things" is but a step away from "the structure and function of nature." Or, again, "constitution" is nearly synonymous with "cosmos," as "history" is with "process." Arnold is apparently suggesting that in the natural world, or at least within the world of human nature and experience, happiness and life are contingent on righteousness. We can perhaps better grasp his meaning if we express the obverse statement that is implicit in his assertions that the "not ourselves" (in the sense of "the world") makes for righteousness and that, in turn, righteousness makes for life and happiness. The obverse statement is that <u>whatever</u> truly makes for life and happiness in human experience is to be construed (by definition) as "righteous." And the constitution of human nature is such that man necessarily strives for life and happiness. Thus man is required by his own nature to conduct himself "righteously," as it were, in order to fulfill the true needs of his whole being. This is the condition for his life and happiness. It is in this sense, then, that nature or the not ourselves that is "in us and in the world around us" fosters "righteous" behavior.

If the interpretation of Arnold's definition of God suggested here is correct, then nature fosters "righteousness" in human conduct because, in the course of evolutionary development, such behavior is "selected" by the process of natural adaptation, because it contributes to the survival

and fulfillment of the human species. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover in "The God of Experience" (the third chapter of God and the Bible) that Arnold is willing to grant the supposition that "our moral perceptions and rules are all to be traced up, as evolutionists say, to habits due to one or other of two main instincts,--the reproductive instinct and the instinct for self-preservation."[46] For Arnold's point, as he argues it, is simply that such virtues as chastity and charity are ultimately adopted by man and perpetuated in his traditional morality as desirable precisely because experience eventually demonstrates that they actually foster social survival and personal happiness and that the failure to practice them somehow detracts from the quality of life and happiness in the society and in the individual. And the reason that this is so can be attributed only to the constitution of the cosmos, insofar as it involves mankind: it is simply the scheme of things. Apparently, righteousness is (so it seems) the will of nature. In Arnold's view, at least, the natural condition for vitality and happiness is that kind of conduct which men commonly designate as "righteous"; and, to him, this view is pragmatically verifiable: the history of nations and the lives of individuals attests its verity. That the human condition thus fosters righteousness "is really a law of nature, collected from experience, just as much as the law of gravitation is; only it [gravitation] is a law of nature

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[46] Ibid., p. 126.

which is conceived, however confusedly, by very many more of mankind as affecting them, and much more nearly [than the law that righteousness makes for life and happiness]."[47] Such is the nature of the universe, the "not ourselves," at least insofar as it is manifested in the nature of man.

Arnold will not commit himself to a more specific definition of God. His reason is that more precise specifications are not "scienficially" verifiable. He opposes those who would assert the personal or anthropomorphic nature of God with his own essentially agnostic stance.

> All we [actorial plural] say is that men do not know enough about the Eternal not ourselves . . . to warrant their pronouncing this either a person or a thing. We say that no one has discovered the nature of God to be personal, or is entitled to assert that God has conscious intelligence. Theologians assert this and make it the basis of religion. It is they who assert and profess to know, not we. We object to their professing to know more than can be known, to their insisting we shall receive it, to their resting religion upon it. We want to rest religion on what can be verified, not on what cannot.[48]

About the nature of God, Arnold insists, man can know nothing. All he can know is what he experiences, and all he can experience is only the effect that God--or, as we have seen, the order of nature--causes in the life of man: it fosters righteousness. In God and the Bible, Arnold refuses to assert anything about the "being" of God; he refuses even to assert

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[47] Ibid., p. 77.

[48] Ibid., pp. 31-32.

that God is a being at all. He prefers to speak of "the enduring power that makes for righteousness" rather than of "the Eternal Being that makes for righteousness"; for, as he says, "Power is a better word [than Being], because it pretends to assert nothing more than effect on us, operation."[49]

In an article entitled "Matthew Arnold's 'Eternal Not Ourselves . . .,'" Eugene Williamson, Jr. adds an interesting note to the history of Arnold's idea of God. He first points out that in Arnold's definitions of God as "the stream of tendency by which all things strive to fulfill the law of their nature" and as "the eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness," there is implicit "a view of divine immanence,"[50] Then he attempts to trace the source of the view. Although he grants that it "might be expected in one who had previously published an appreciative study of Spinoza" in Essays in Criticism (1865), he cites the evidence in Arnold's letters to Clough to show that Arnold had access to "the immanentist position" even as early as 1847, when he was reading the Bhagavad Gita. Yet, Williamson asserts, it is possible to demonstrate that Arnold may have originally become acquainted with the notion of immanent God in 1834, for in that year Professor Jacob Abbot, an American correspondent with Dr. Thomas Arnold, sent the latter a copy of his book

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[49]Ibid., p. 93.

[50]Eugene L. Williamson, Jr., "Matthew Arnold's 'Eternal Not Ourselves . . .,'" Modern Language Notes, LXXV (April, 1960), 310.

entitled The Corner Stone, in which he defined God as "the all-pervading Power, which lives and acts through the whole universe."[51] It is at least possible if not probable, Williamson contends, that the young Arnold may have discovered the genesis of his later concept of God in his own home--from his father's talk or from the book in his father's library (although Dr. Arnold himself was opposed to pantheistic views of God).[52]

The most recent and most ambitious study of Arnold's writings on religion is William Robbins' The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold (1959). In a chapter entitled "The Idea of God," Robbins discusses at length Arnold's concept of divinity. He concludes that the primary source of Arnold's idea of God was the cosmology of Spinoza, which Goethe had highly praised. After suggesting that Arnold was "driven by a need for authority as urgent as that of Coleridge and Newman," Robbins asserts that Arnold went beyond Spinoza, "in his objectifying of an immanent moral principle, to a non-pantheistic statement of a controlling power outside man."[52] In so doing, as Robbins intends to convey by the title of his book, Arnold was manifesting an "idealizing" tendency. But surely this is not the case. In no sense can Arnold's position be construed as a metaphysical idealism. Rather,

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[51] Ibid., p. 311.

[52] William Robbins, "The Idea of God," The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold (London: William Heineman LTD, 1959), p. 110.

instead of postulating a quasi-idealistic "controlling power outside man," his view of God was fundamentally naturalistic: "The not ourselves . . . is in us and in the world around us . . . ." For Arnold, as an agnostic, the Eternal, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness was an immanent effect whose cause could not be teleologically categorized either as intentional or as accidental. The only sense in which he wished to "objectify" God was as a religious symbol, not as a transcendent metaphysical actuality. Robbins is on safer ground when he used the term "idealism" to refer to Arnold's ethical concern, which is indeed his primary referent.

Whether or not William's conjecture is correct, it is nonetheless clear that Arnold's view of God as either immanent in or identical with nature is present in his early poetry and persists throughout the later prose. The image of nature in the poems, it may be asserted, is essentially the same as the image of God in the essays. The distinction that we noted in the poems between nature as it exists generally in the universe and as it exists specifically in man (who fulfills the law of nature only as it is expressed in the peculiar organization of his own being) corresponds closely to the difference between the two definitions of God that Arnold advances in his essays on religion. The definition of God as "the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their own being" is clearly related

to what we have referred to as the concept of "general nature" in the poems. And the definition of God as "the enduring power that makes for righteousness" is likewise clearly related to the concept of "specific nature" in the poems--of that aspect of nature which is operative in the strictly ethical dimension of the human condition, wherein the "law of being" is, in Arnold's view, essentially moral.

In his essay on "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment," Arnold asserted that "the main element of the modern spirit's life is neither the senses and understanding, nor the heart and imagination; it is the imaginative reason."[53] In the Pagan epoch, so Arnold argues in the essay, the element by which man lives was the "senses and understanding"; and in the Medieval epoch the predominant element was the "heart and imagination." What modern man needs, he concludes, is a happy synthesis of both elements. Such a synthesis he calls the element of "imaginative reason." He points out that the "imaginative reason" was a prominent element in the poetry of the early Greek classical poets, claiming that "no other poets who have so well satisfied the thinking-power, have so well satisfied the religious sense."

It would seem that the image of God which Arnold reflected in his essays was intended to appeal to the imaginative reason of modern man. On the one hand, he proffers his

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[53]Super, III, 230.

definition of God as verifiable, or at least as not incompatible with or offensive to modern man's scientific sense. It is intended to satisfy his "thinking-power," as no "God of Miracles" now can. On the other hand, the simplicity and sublimity of his "Eternal" is intended to appeal to the "heart and imagination." It is intended to satisfy his "religious sense," as no "God of Metaphysics" ever can.

CHAPTER III

THE IMAGE OF SOCIETY

Many of Matthew Arnold's essays are devoted to the criticism of society. Much of his writing is concerned with matters that in the increasingly specialized contemporary period are regarded as properly the province of what we should now call a "social critic." Even as a specialized profession, social criticism requires a rather broad knowledge and general interest, for actually the social critic is involved in the criticism of culture. And culture, as a concept in the social sciences, refers to all of the inventions of human ingenuity, as opposed to the products of natural processes. Human culture thus includes both the technological and ideological (or material and spiritual) inventions and creations of mankind. In practice, the social critic is particularly interested in these aspects of human culture that determine the group life of the members of a society--its mechanisms of adaptation for social living. Specifically, these cultural mechanisms are the social institutions of the society; economic, political, educational, religious, recreational, and familial.[1]

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[1] See Samuel Koenig, "The Meaning and Function of Institutions," Sociology: An Introduction to the Science of Society (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1957), pp. 69-73.

A social critic, then is not so much the critic of a society as of its culture--specifically, of the theory and practice, the structures and functions, of the institutions in the culture of the society.

The student of the social sciences is one who, for one reason or another, is interested in acquiring a specialized knowledge of the structure and function of society as an organism (or as a mechanism, depending upon his point of view). But the social critic is, as it were, a general student of the social sciences who elects actively to apply his knowledge to the evaluation of the institutions in ansociety. Presumably, he has had a vision of what these institutions ought to be and is not content with what they are. He is a student with a point of view. His studies are conducted with a practical end in mind. His goal is likely to be either the conservative reformation or the radical transformation of the social order, or the order of society--its institutional structure.

Ultimately, the evaluation of any human activity--be it technology, recreation, or objects of worship--is an exercise in cultural criticism. Such judgment is properly regarded as a specialized endeavor within the larger context of cultural criticism in general. Thus literary criticism, for example, is concerned with the evaluation of a specific cultural creation, verbal art forms. Literature, in turn, is only one among numerous modes of esthetic expression.

Collectively, the arts of all kinds constitute an important dimension in the ideological aspect of human culture. But the arts are still only a part of a larger whole, that of culture in general.

As a Victorian man of letters, Matthew Arnold ventured into the criticism of literature, a specific activity of culture in gneeral. But eventually he gravitated from the part to the whole--from literary criticism in particular to cultural criticism in general. Ultimately Arnold concerned himself in his essays with most of the institutions in Victorian England, especially with the political, educational, and religious institutions. The evolutionary course of his critical concern from a specific cultural activity to culture in general may be clearly traced in several declarations about the nature and function of criticism that he delivered on several occasions in his career. If the shift near the beginning of his critical career from Essays in Criticism, First Series (1865) to Culture and Anarchy represents the movement by a literary critic from a specifically literary criticism to a generally cultural criticism, then the shift at the end of his career from Discourses in America to Essays in Criticism, Second Series (1888) represents merely a movement in critical activity from one to another of several cultural interests by an established and accomplished social critic.

Criticism, Culture, and Civilization

The effort to analyze Arnold's concept of criticism necessarily begins, of course, with a consideration of his first, most explicit, and extensive statement about the critical endeavor--the early essay entitled "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." The essay was originally delivered as an Oxford lecture in October of 1964 and subsequently published in The National Review the next month, but its most notable appearance was in Essays in Criticism (1965), where it was given the place of honor as the first essay in the volume. Its position there was obviously intended to emphasize its introductory purpose--the definition of the critical point of view exemplified in the remaining essays of the volume.

"The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" begins with a quotation from Arnold's lectures on translating Homer and remarks upon the opposition that these words had generated, as if the quotation were his text and as if his essay were then to be an exegetical defense of it. But as S. M. B. Coulling has observed, the occasion for the essay "was no more the opposition to the Homeric lectures than is it subject the nature of literary criticism."[2] Arnold's subject is rather, on the one hand, the nature of criticism in general and, on

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[2]S. M. B. Coulling, "The Background of 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time,'" Philological Quarterly, XLII (January, 1963), 36.

the other hand, the specific function of criticism during a stipulated time--the present time of transition from an epoch of concentration to an epoch of expansion.

Criticism

In the first paragraph of his essay on "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Arnold defined the nature of the "critical effort" that motivates criticism in general; it is the spirit of the age--the Zeit-Geist: "the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science to see the object as in itself it really is."[3] He used the term "disinterested" to characterize the truly critical attitude, an attitude that he insisted was deplorably lacking in Victorian England.

> Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of the mind second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted.[4]

He cites the Edinburgh Review as being bound and limited by the interests of the old Whigs; the Quarterly Review, by the Tories; and the British Quarterly Review, by the Dissenters. In contrast to these he cites the French Revue des Deux Mondes as an example of truly disinterested critical endeavor. Men who are bound and limited by personal interest, he asserts,

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[3]Super, III, 258.

[4]Ibid., p. 270

cannot truly criticize, cannot really "see the object as in itself it truly is."[5]

The nature of criticism, so it seems, is the ability to discern the truth--or, more comprehensively, the true and the good (if not the beautiful). For, in seeing the object as it is, the critic discerns not only its nature but also its value. Truly to see or know an object necessarily involves a consciousness of its worth. Or, once it is known as it is, then its value is assumed to be obvious. That the critic possessed this capacity for correctness in evaluation as well as

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[5]Of course, Arnold's own capacity for disinterestedness has been seriously questioned. Geoffrey Tillotson's essay entitled "Matthew Arnold: The Critic and the Advocate" in his Criticism and the Nineteenth Century inspired E. K. Brown's book-length study entitled Matthew Arnold: A Study in Conflict. Brown's contention is that Arnold inveterately violated his own ideal of disinterestedness and that his works are the worse for his lack of esthetic detachment: "there are times when he is impelled by the old Adam in him to speak with the naked intensity of interestedness . . ." (p. 23). In Brown's zeal to prove his point, he perhaps overlooks the sense in which Arnold used the term "disinterested." For him, it meant simply the endeavor to divest oneself of irrational and purely selfish ties, the endeavor to be rational for the sake of the society as a whole. He never intended disinterested to mean unconcerned. For one should be vitally concerned to implement what he sees--from a truly critical viewpoint--to be right, just, and good. It is true, however, that Arnold was a little too ready to assume that his own views were absolutely identical with "right reason." But at its best, the ideal that he strove to follow involved a synthesis of both "critical detachment" and "passionate commitment," as Sidney M. B. Coulling observed in "Matthew Arnold's 1853 Preface: Its Origin and Aftermath," Victorian Studies, VII (March, 1964), 262.

for clarity in perception is implied in the definition of criticism that he offers near the end of his essay, italcized by Arnold for emphasis: "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world."[6] This second definition also emphasizes another dimension in his conception of the nature of criticism. It not only learns but also propagates the true and the good.

Much of the essay elaborates on the effect that criticism causes by its propagation of the true and the good. This effect is actually the function that criticism serves. Arnold's concept of the function of criticism in the present epoch, as noted in Chapter I of this study, was that it should create the conditions for an age of creative expansion in all human activities. Criticism ultimately fosters cultural creativity. Indeed, it was the critical activity of the Frensh philosphes, Arnold states, that resulted in the French Revolution, whose greatness derived "from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law." Yet the French Revolution also illustrates the fatal "mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these fine ideas of the reason."

> Joubert has said beautifully: . . . . (Force and right are the governors of this world; force will right is ready.) Force till right is ready; and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral,

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[6] Ibid., p. 283.

> and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right,--right, so far as we are concerned, is not ready,--until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it.[7]

In this passage we may clearly observe, on the one hand, the conservative influence of Edmond Burke in Arnold's support of the establishment and its traditional institutions for their value in preserving the social order. On the other hand, we observe a Miltonic insistence on the right and duty of the individuals in a society collectively to choose their destiny, to determine the shape of their social order, by the free exercise of their wills after acquiring a knowledge of alternatives. Clearly, the implication is that the task of criticism is to enable the members of a society to attain "this sense of seeing it and willing it [the right]." If criticism is true to its nature and performs its function well, then the people will gradually come to a knowledge of the true and of the good and (it is assumed) will consequently choose to transform the real and thus to actualize the potential of the ideal. This, then, is the function of criticism.

And it is the task that Arnold proposed to himself as a social critic: gradually to transform the culture of Victorian England by subjecting his countrymen to a program of critical education until they recognized the incongruity between the imperfect reality of their social institutions and the ideal of the truly good and until, by their own

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[7]Super, III, 265-66.

decision, they committed themselves to the transformation of their social institutions and individual life-styles.

Culture

If "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" was the manifesto of Arnold's critical program, then Culture and Anarchy was his first major excursion into critical activity that professedly was not concerned specifically with literary matters; for, as even the subtitle of the book indicates, Culture and Anarchy was expressly An Essay in Political and Social Criticism. The content of its political criticism we shall examine later; our immediate concern with the volume is to understand Arnold's concept of "culture" and its relation to "criticism."

The essential purpose of Culture and Anarchy is to recommend the pursuit of culture to Arnold's countrymen. In Chapter I, "Sweetness and Light," he defines his concept of culture. He begins by distinguishing between two kinds of culture, or rather between two motives for the pursuit of culture. One motive is personal; the other, social. Culture based on the personal motive is simply the consequence of intellectual curiosity, a "liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind."[8] Such personal culture (or self-cultivation), Arnold declares, is eminently worthwhile for its own sake; but it was not specifically to recommend this kind of culture that he wrote Culture and Anarchy.

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[8]Super, V, 90.

The other type of culture, which Arnold is desirous to recommend, is socially oriented. Its motive is not curiosity but morality. As he indicates, its impetus is derived from "the moral and social passion for doing good," and its ultimate aim is "to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail."[9] But this type of culture is not merely moral; it is to be distinguished from simple moral passion (which he later calls "Hebraism") in that "it is possessed of the scientific passion as well."[10] In other words, this culture is the consequence of a vital synthesis of both Hebraism and Hellenism, the nature of the latter being "Sweetness and Light," or beauty and truth.

In the "Preface" to the volume, Arnold enunciated perhaps his most comprehensive statement about the type of culture that he desires to recommend in the book:

> The whole scope of the essay is to recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matter which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge, turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits . . . .[11]

The relation of Arnold's conception of criticism, as defined in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," to his concept of culture, as defined in Culture and Anarchy, is

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[9] Ibid., pp. 91-93

[10] Ibid., p. 92.

[11] Ibid., p. 233.

clearly revealed in this statement. Both are devoted to learning "the best which has been thought and said in the world." Insofar as criticism is devoted only to learning the true and the good, it would seem to be identical with personal culture. But as we have seen, Arnold insists that the endeavor of criticism is not only to learn but also to propagate what it learns. And the effect or function of its propagation (at the present time, at least) is to create a current of fresh ideas, so that an opoch of creativity may be stimulated. Likewise, the effort of culture is to turn ""a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits." And the goal of culture, as of criticism, is ultimately to stimulate creative activity; but its creative activity is explicitly stipulated--the creation of "perfection." Thus the culture based on the social motive strives to know things as they really are not simply for its own sake, as an end in itself, but rather as the means of eventually implementing a social order whose foundation is grounded on an adequate concept of the true and the good. As we have seen, this is essentially identical with the function of criticism as described in the earlier essay.

The "pursuit of perfection," as the central aim of culture, is insisted upon by Arnold again and again in Culture and Anarchy. And the concept of perfection that he propounds is that of an internal, general, and harmonious development of human powers. It is internal, because it involves the

"expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature"; general, because "the individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward"; and harmonious, because it includes "all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest."[12]

It is important that we understand precisely what Arnold has done in designating human perfection as the goal of "culture," or of what we may refer to in our terms as "cultural criticism." He is here expressing an ideal of humanism--the ethical concept of the good man. And in making an ideal concept of man the measure of all things, he is clearly within the humanistic tradition. What Arnold has done, then, is to define his point of view as a social critic; he has announced his vision of what ought to be--a humanistic vision of man and of society. He has formulated his standard and function of social institutions: do they foster or frustrate the actualization of man's potential for human perfection? The criterion that Arnold was to apply in his social

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[12] Ibid., p. 94.

criticism of Victorian England is that of whether or not its institutions contributed to the humanization of his countrymen. The ideal society is that which fosters the development of ideal men. Hence "culture" is (in at least one of its senses) Arnold's name for his humanistically oriented social criticism.

It is interesting to note one variation in Arnold's description of the aim of culture. At one point in Culture and Anarchy, when trying to make clear the aim of culture, he offers as a synonymous expression for "the pursuit of perfection" a saying by Biship Wilson: "To make reason and the will of God prevail!" And the "will of God" he defines as "the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to."[13] Immediately we recognize the relation of Arnold's definition of the "will" of God to the definition of "God" Himself that he later proposed in St. Paul and Protestantism (1879): "the stream of tendency by which all things fulfil the law of their being." As we noted in Chapter II, this definition of God corresponds to the Spinozist conception of a general nature in the cosmos as a whole, whose processes of causal determination are designated as "God." The definition of the "will of God" in Culture and Anarchy clearly indicates that God's will is essentially

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[13] Ibid., p. 93.

identical with the normative processes of causal determination in general nature--"the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world."

Again, the second clause in Arnold's statement about God's will--"which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to"--immediately reminds us of his second definition of God, that proposed in Literature and Dogma (1873): "the Eternal, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness" (which in turn fosters life and vitality). This definition we described in Chapter II as Arnold's concept of nature as it relates specifically to the moral structure of human personality. For Arnold, of course, the moral element was fundamental in human nature--in nature, that is, as manifested on the level of man. As he often said, "Conduct is three-fourths of life." It is the basic law of man's being. But he also insisted that although morality or Hebraism is, and rightly so, the largest part of human nature, it is nevertheless only a part of the greater whole. Much of Arnold's writings was devoted to the cultivation of the other one-fourth of life. And this part he designated as the Hellenistic aspect of man. In order to be a complete person, one must achieve a vital synthesis of both Hebraism and Hellenism in his nature. And the cultivation of this completeness, the pursuit of this perfection, is the end of culture; and the means of culture is social criticism--the evaluation of the institutions in the culture of a society by the ideal standard

of humanistic wholeness. The continuity and consistency of naturalistic humanism as Arnold's critical orientation is evident: it is plainly present as much in his essay in political criticism, Culture and Anarchy, as in his essay in religious criticism, Literature and Dogma.

Civilization

In 1879 Arnold published a volume whose title, Mixed Essays, aptly describes not only the content of the single volume to which it was affixed but also the contents of all the volumes of prose criticism that he composed during the course of his career. It symbolizes what we have referred to as the problem of variety in the canon of Arnold's compositions as a man of letters. Fortunately, in the "Preface" to Mixed Essays, he himself recognizes the problem of his own variety, as exemplified in the contents of the volume. He begins the "Preface" by noting that the contents of the volume span almost two decades, for one of the essays was first published nearly twenty years earlier. This is the essay entitled "Democracy," which originally appeared as the "Preface" to the first of his blue-book reports for the Education Department, subsequently published in regular book form for the general public as The Popular Education of France (1861). Besides the subject of education, the essays of the volume are also concerned with political, literary, and (indirectly) religious matters. In short, Mixed Essays

is an extremely typical volume, for it is truly representative of the variety of Arnold's critical interests.

In the "Preface," Arnold states that although the essays in his volume touch upon "a variety of subjects," the volume nonetheless has a certain "unity of tendency."[14] The unifying tendency at work in the various essays, so he points out, is their common concern with the matter of civilization. "Civilization," he declares, "is the humanisation of man in society. Man is civilized when the whole body of society comes to live with a life worthy to be called human, and corresponding to man's true aspirations and powers."[15] After postulating the existence of an instinct toward "expansion" in human nature, he proceeds to enumerate the "powers" that this instinct prompts man to develop as the elements that constitute his "civilization."

> They are the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, the power of social life and manners. Expansion, conduct, science, beauty, manners,--here are the conditions of civilization, the claimants which man must satisfy before he can be humanised.[16]

In the "Preface" to Mixed Essays, whose contents represent his typical concerns during the twenty-year span of his entire active career as a social critic up to that time,

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[14]Matthew Arnold, Mixed Essays (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904), p. vii.

[15]Ibid., p. viii.

[16]Ibid., p. x.

Arnold reaffirmed that the ideal of human perfection was indeed the central concern in his social criticism, as he had announced ten years earlier in Culture and Anarchy. His notions of human perfection have perhaps been somewhat refined. Instead of the simple duet of Hebraism and Hellenism, the elements in the harmonious human life now form a quartet--conduct, knowledge, social life, and beauty. Or, in other words, the perfectly cultured man has advanced to a highly civilized cultivation of ideas, manners, morals, and the arts. Arnold uses the terms "civilized" and "humanized" as practically synonymous, both referring to the state of human "perfection." If a distinction is to be made, it would seem that, generally, the process of "civilization" is the pursuit of perfection, or the development of the conditions for human wholeness, in the culture of a society and that, specifically, the process of "humanization" is the pursuit of perfection, the cultivation of completeness, in the personality of the individual. Ultimately, however, civilization is the means to the end of humanization: the effectiveness of a culture is to be evaluated in terms of the personalities that, as an environment, it tends to foster.

> That the aim for all of us is to make civilization pervasive and general . . .: such is the line of thought which the essays in the present volume follow and represent. They represent it in their variety of subject, their so frequent insistence on defects in the present actual life of our nation, their unity of final aim.[17]

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[17] Ibid., p. x.

So Arnold concludes his "Preface." And perhaps nowhere else has he expressed more precisely and concisely the unifying purpose of his life and works. For his dedication to the humanization of his countrymen is the motivating purpose that informs far more than the variety of subject matter in Mixed Essays. His devotion to the cause of civilization, as expressed in the "Preface," may indeed be recognized as the truly unifying theme in the new edition of The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold. His essays in cultural criticism--literary, educational, religious, and political or social--are clearly related to the several elements of human perfection, the primary powers of man, the marks of civilization: beauty, knowledge, conduct, and social life. Thus, broadly, the essays on religion focus on conduct or morals; the essays on education focus on knowledge or ideas; the essays on politics focus on social life or manners; and the essays on literature focus on beauty or the arts. Of course, the relation between the types of criticism and the elements of civilization is scarcely so sharply focused in practice as this theoretical scheme suggests; nevertheless, it does enable us to grasp the general scope of Arnold's critical endeavor. As Walter J. Hipple, Jr. recognized, "Man's aspirations and powers! It is the analysis of these aspirations and powers which is the ground of all Arnold's thought."[18]

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[18]Walter J. Hipple, Jr., "Matthew Arnold, Dialectician," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXXII (October, 1962), 4.

The intention in the remainder of this chapter is to conduct a general survey of Arnold's essays in cultural criticism with a running commentary, designed to indicate the scope of his vision of the ideal society--one whose culture is truly civilized, promoting the humanization of its members. The commentary on these essays is not presented as a radically new interpretation of their significance, for the explanation of particular works is largely in agreement with the treatment accorded them by such men as Lionel Trilling, Edward Alexander, and William Robbins. However, no treatment of Arnold's essays in cultural criticism--social, political, educational, religious, and even literary--has traced through them the specifically humanistic principles that inform the general body of these works with an intensive, extensive, and comprehensive consistency. To do so is the purpose of the present treatment.

The Political Institution

The subtitle of Culture and Anarchy, published in 1869, is An Essay in Political and Social Criticism. As we have already noted, it is a book devoted more to theoretical than to practical criticism. Specifically, it was concerned with enunciating a theoretical rationale for cultural criticism. Nevertheless, the volume did include illustrative applications of the proper critical procedure; culture, as criticism in action, made its debut. Actually, even ten years earlier,

Arnold had published a pamphlet entitled England and the Italian Question (1859). While abroad visiting foreign schools (especially those of France) in order to prepare a report on elementary education for the Education Department, he took advantage of his on-the-spot opportunity to explain to the English people back home what was happening on the continent between Austria, Sardinia, and France. But the inauguaration of his active concern with political and social questions is more properly marked by the appearance of Culture and Anarchy, in which his critical orientation is more maturely expressed.

The sense in which Arnold uses the term "social" to describe a certain category of his cultural criticism should perhaps be clarified. He seems to use the term to refer, among other things, to the social organization or class structure in Victorian England (the relations of upper, middle, and lower classes); at other times, to the quality of "manners," or of social life in general; and, at certain times, even to the condition of "civilization" as a whole. To attempt to separate Arnold's specifically "social" criticism from his "political" criticism is a difficult task, for they are intricately interrelated in his thought, as the subtitle of Culture and Anarchy suggests. Nevertheless, for the sake of orderli-n ness in discussion, I have ventured to classify his essays in political and social criticism into four general categories: English social criticism, Irish political criticism, American social criticism, and English political criticism. In some

instances, the classification of essays is admittedly arbitrary. Thus, for instance, the essays on English politics often deal with the political problems of Ireland, since Irish problems constituted such an important matter in English politics. But it is hoped that this system of classification, as an organizational device, will be convenient and useful.

English Social Criticism

In "Sweetness and Light," Chapter I of Culture and Anarchy, we have already noted Arnold's theoretical consideration of the ends and means of "culture" as humanistic social criticism. In Chapter II, "Doing As One Likes," he begins the practical application of his critical theory. Against what he characterizes as the typical Englishman's assumption that doing what he likes is the supreme good in itself, Arnold urges the notion that liberty is only a means: that it affords an opportune condition for the achievement of excellence or perfection, as true end of life. What one does with this liberty--the quality of his actions--is more important than his merely having the liberty to do anything he likes.

In the chapter entitled "Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace," then,he discusses the quality of life that characterizes the three social classes in England--respectively, the

upper, middle, and lower classes.[19] He examines each class in turn and, first, pronounces the ordinary concerns of the upper class, the aristocratic Barbarians, to be essentially material--"worldly splendour, security, power, and pleasure."[20] Next the bourgeoise middle-class Philistines, with their interest in industrial wealth and non-conformist religion, are declared to be vulgar. Finally, the proletariot lower-class Populace are, or at least have been made to be, brutal: referring to recent demonstrations of political activity among the working class, Arnold describes the class as "now issuing from its hiding place to assert an Englishman's heaven-born privilege of doing as he likes . . . marching where it likes, meeting where it likes, bawling what it likes, breaking what it likes . . . ."[21] But these qualities--materialism, vulgarity, and brutality--are not peculiar to the respective classes. There is doubtless, Arnold suggests, a little bit of each of them in all of us; for "all of us, so far as we are Barbarians, Philistines, or Populace, imagine happiness to consist in doing what one's ordinary self likes.

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[19]Patrick J. McCarthy, in Matthew Arnold and the Three Classes (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), has examined Arnold's treatment of the upper, middle, and lower classes in Victorian England and concludes that his concepts of the Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace are more rhetorical than sociological: their characterization is a generalized and "idealized" literary creation for the purposes of his cultural criticism.

[20]Super, V, 140.

[21]Ibid., p. 143.

What one's ordinary self likes differs according to the class to which one belongs . . . ." However, all is not lost.

> In each class there are born a certain number of natures with a curiosity about the best self, with a bent for seeing things as they are, for disentangling themselves from machinery, for simply concerning themselves with reason . . . and doing their best to make these prevail:--for the pursuit, in a word, of perfection.[22]

Among the many, there are a few who use culture--the quest for truth by wide reading, keen observation, and clear reflection--in order to advance toward perfection: to transcend the "ordinary self" and to actualize the potential of the "best self."

Having formulated in "Doing As One Likes" and in "Barbarians, Philistines, Populace" what to him seems the cause and the effect of the imperfection in the British character--the best of the "ordinary self" to assert itself in unreflecting activity--Arnold proceeds in "Hebraism and Hellenism" to explore the nature of this uncritical drive to practical action without adequate theoretical basis. As a trait of human nature, it was dominant among the ancient Hebrews. Therefore, he names it "Hebraism." It may be contrasted with the "sweetness and light" that was dominant among the ancient classical Greeks and that, therefore, may be named "Hellenism." "The upper-most idea with Hellenism is to see things as they really are; the uppermost idea with Hebraism is conduct and obedience." As Hebraism is

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[22] Ibid., p. 145.

characterized by energy, doing, and "strictness of conscience," so Hellenism is characterized by intelligence, thinking, and "spontaneity of consciousness."[23] The trouble with the Englishmen of the present, Arnold theorizes, is that they are dominated by the spirit of Hebraism, especially as it is manifested in the puritanical Nonconformist religion of the powerful Philistine middle class.

In the chapter entitled "Porro Unum Est Necessarium," Arnold continues his reflections, searching (in the spirit of culture, or Hellenism) for a solution to the problem. He concludes that, although a balance of both Hebraism and Hellenism is essential to human perfection, what is wanted now--the one thing needful--is a Hellenistic reaction to Hebraism: an excess of Hellenism to correct the defect of Hebraism, so that a desirable mean may ultimately be restored as the ideal of perfection.

In the final chapter of Culture and Anarchy, entitled "Our Liberal Practictioners," Arnold presents a demonstration of culture (as the critically reflective spirit of Hellenism) in action, confronting a practical problem that is being mishandled, so he thinks, because of the incapacity of the active but uncritical English-Hebraic character to see what is the reality in the situation. The matter that he selects to examine is the proceedings for the disestablishment of the

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[23] Ibid., p. 165.

Irish Church. He asserts that, to one who sees clearly because his vision is not obscured by a private interest, the established Irish Church is plainly "contrary to reason and justice, in so far as the Church of a very small minority of the people there [the Protestants of the establishment] takes for itself all the Church-property of the Irish people," the majority of whom are Catholic. His argument (which his critical culture enables him to grasp) is that the State, as in several nations on the continent, should endow all the major denominations in Ireland, for "the State is of the religion of all of its citizens, without the fanaticism of any of them."[24] Examining the motives of those who oppose the endowment of religion, he observes that "the actual power, in shoft, by virtue of which the Liberal party in the House of Commons is now trying to disestablish the Irish Church, is not the power of reason and justice, it is the power of the Noneconformists' antipathy to Church establishments."[25] He concludes by declaring the necessity for a disinterested critical approach to such problems, or rather an approach interested not in establishing what it likes but in establishing what is required in order to conform to the ideal of perfection, which culture fosters. Such culture Arnold earnestly recommends to his countrymen as a light to lead the nation.

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[24] Ibid., p. 193.

[25] Ibid., p. 194.

In Culture and Anarchy, Arnold was apparently reacting to certain ideas in John Stuart Mill's On Liberty (1959) that he thought incorrect and dangerous. In response to Mill's concept of a free and open society in which various groups should all be allowed to promote their private interests vigorously, Arnold sets up a dilemma to which his title points: that is, culture or anarchy? Arnold is arguing for a general principle of authority to which the eccentricities of individuality may be referred for correction. The principle which he proposes is simply that of right reason--another name for what Arnold has variously presented as intelligently directed curiosity or criticism (in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time") and as culture or Hellenism (in Culture and Anarchy).[26]

At this point in his career as social and political critic, Arnold has fully formulated his critical rationale--the use of "culture," the intelligent pursuit not of private interests but of human perfection--and is now ready to apply it generally to social problems.

Culture and Anarchy was published in 1869; in 1871 appeared a volume entitled Friendship's Garland, "edited" by Matthew Arnold. It consisted of a series of twelve letters

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[26]This view of the relation between Arnold and Mill is developed both by Lionel Trilling in Chapter IX, "Culture or Anarchy," of Matthew Arnold (second edition; New York: Columbia University Press, 1949) and by Edward Alexander in Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965).

that had been previously published in the Pall Mall Gazette from July, 1866, to November, 1870--that is, irregularly, both before and after Arnold's composition of the essays that were reprinted in Culture and Anarchy. The letters purported to be the correspondence between Arnold and Arminius, a fictitious Prussian Baron, as carried on through long letters-to-the-editor in the Pall Mall Gazette. Their publication in book form as Friendship's Garland was an arrangement between the editor and Arnold to carry the fictional joke one step further by publishing the letters as a memorial volume in honor of Arminius, who (so it was represented) had died in the Franco-Prussian War. As a character created by Arnold, then, Arminius is presented as an intelligent, frank, outspoken critic of English society. The role assumed by Arnold, as he represents himself in the letters, is that of a well-meaning but somewhat muddle-headed defender of the English way of doing things. The letters are truly delightful--charming, witty, and critically cutting. The invention of the acerbic Arminius apparently enabled Arnold to shed "light" without the trouble of having to intermix it with "sweetness."

The episodic consideration of topics as presented in Friendship's Garland necessarily precludes any coherent examination of the whole. The letters are filled with critical digs, here and there, in the ribs of English society. However, several of the more important matters may be

mentioned. At one point, after describing "the three powers . . . which go to spread that rational human life which is the aim of modern society: the love of wealth, the love of intelligence, the love of beauty," Arminius proceeds to characterize the earlier Victorian period of active reform as administering well to the love of wealth through its commercial legislation but as neglecting to nurture the other two powers.[27] "The legislation of your middle class in all that goes to give human life more intelligence and beauty, is no better than was to be expected from its own want of both."[28] A recurring note throughout the letters is Arminius' command to the English to "Get 'Geist,'" which he interprets as "intelligence."[29]

"Letter V" (November 8, 1866) in Friendship's Garland is of especial interest because of its relation to the Irish land question. After John Bright had recently called public attention to the land reforms of Stein (the Prussian Minister in the first decade of the nineteenth century), Arnold used Arminius as an authoritative voice through which to make public a general explanation of Stein's land reforms, for the English were largely uninformed about the matter while Arnold, who had visited Prussia, was well informed.[30] According to

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[27]Super, V, 20.

[28]Ibid., p. 21.

[29]Ibid., p. 42

[30]Ibid., "Explanatory Notes," p. 394.

Arminius, the essence of Stein's reforms was his compulsion of landlords to sell a certain percentage of their lands to their tenants, who were granted an extended purchase period.[31] (This is a matter that was later to influence Arnold's own consideration of affairs in Ireland.)

In "A Recantation and Apology," also included in Friendship's Garland, Arnold engages in a mock repentance for not previously acknowledging the wisdom of the Liberals in their handling of Irish affairs. The occasion of his "recantation" is, in 1869, the disestablishment of the Irish Church. However, he manages sublty to convey his awareness that, as a conciliatory measure, it is a failure; for it was undertaken (as he had pointed out in Culture and Anarchy) not in a spirit of justice and friendship but in response to Noncomformists' antipathy to religious establishments, and the Irish are doubtless aware of this. The spirit of a measure as well as its letter, Arnold insists, is important.

Finally, Arminius' dying words to England, as conveyed by one who was with him in the Franco-Prussian War when he dies, may be noted:

> Your nation is sound enough, if only it can be taught that being able to do what one likes, and say what one likes, is not sufficient for salvation. Its dangers are . . . due to the false notion that liberty and publicity are not only valuable for the use to be made of them, but are goods in themselves, nay, are the summum bonum![32]

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[31] Ibid., pp. 57-64.

[32] Ibid., p. 353.

The next important stage in the English social criticism of Arnold is marked by the publication of the volume entitled Mixed Essays in 1879. Three essays from among the "mixed" lot included in the volume are relevant to Arnold's social criticism: "Democracy," "Equality," and "Porro Unum Est Necessarium" (not to be confused with the chapter of the same name in Culture and Anarchy). "Democracy" begins by developing two ideas: on the one hand, the rise of the middle class to power; on the other hand, the concommitant decline in aristocratic influence. Arnold accepts the coming of democracy as natural and inevitable. It grows out of an instinct for expansion (perhaps somewhat like Adler's "will to power") implanted in each individual. "The vital impulse of democracy is . . . identical with the ceaseless vital effort of human nature itself."[33] However, with the decline of aristocratic influence, Arnold foresees a serious social problem.

> On what action may we rely to replace, for some time at any rate, that action of the aristocracy upon the people of the country, which we have seen exercise an influence in many respects elevating and beautiful, but which is rapidly, and from inevitable cause, ceasing? In other words . . . what influence may help us to prevent the English people from becoming, with the growth of democracy, Americanized? I confess I am disposed to answer: On the action of the State.[34]

What Arnold meant by "Americanized" is indicated by his reference to "the dangers of America . . . which come from the

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[33]Matthew Arnold, "Democracy," Mixed Essays (New York: Macmillan Company, 1904), p. 8.

[34]Ibid., p. 17.

multitude being in power, with no adequate ideal to elevate or guide the multitude."[35]

But what does he mean by his conclusion that the answer to this social problem lies in "the action of the State"? The State, he suggests, can do more for the middle and lower classes than they can do for themselves. As a practical example, their schools can be greatly improved by "the intervention of the State in public education."[36] At this point in "Democracy" (originally the "Preface" to a book on continental education systems), Arnold is presenting the conclusions that he has drawn from his observation of the school system in France. He was highly impressed with the educational results that had been wrought in France by the exertion of State authority. Therefore, he recommends to the middle and lower classes in England the advantages to be gained from placing their schools, which are presently denominational or voluntary schools established by private initiative, under state control so that adequate standards for educational quality can be set up, supported, and enforced. Thus their children will enjoy the benefit "of breathing in their youth the air of the best culture of their nation."[37]

Anticipating objections to State control from liberty-loving English individualists, Arnold proceeds to discuss the

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[35] Ibid., p. 20.

[36] Ibid., p. 25.

[37] Ibid., p. 26.

issue. It is not State-action as such to which the English should object, he argues; the action of the State is to be feared only when it is the instrument of an alien and hostile element. However, in England, what is the State?

> The State is properly just what Burke called it--the nation in its collective and corporate character. The State is the representative acting-power of the nation; the action of the State is the representative action of the nation. Nominally emanating from the Crown, as the ideal unity in which the nation concentrates itself, this action, by the constitution of our country, really emanates from the ministers of the Crown.[38]

In England the State is but the people themselves!--or rather the delegation of their collective power to ministers who will administer the will of the people. Hence it is not to be feared. Instead, it should be welcomed as the instrument that, in the coming democratic age, may institute means to forestall the Americanization--that is, the vulgarization--of the English: in short, it may provide the light of culture for the masses.

Arnold's political thought, particularly his notion of the "State," has not fared well with the critics. His emphasis on enlarging and strengthening the powers of the state has been construed, for example, as a movement toward "a sort of absolute monarchy" and consequently roundly criticized by Sir Ernest Barker in the chapter entitled "The Political Theory of Literature" in his Political Thought in England, 1848 to 1914, (second edition; London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 175. Lionel Trilling's chapter entitled "Culture or Anarchy" in his

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[38] Ibid., p. 31.

Matthew Arnold remains one of the most influential treatments of Arnold's idea of the State. Referring to Arnold's recommendation that the Ministers of the government, as the representative "best selves" of the nation, be fully empowered to implement their assigned functions in efficiently executed administrative activity, Trilling insists that his position rests on the assumption that "the possession of reason by some people gives them the right to coerce others."[39] Further, Trilling asserts that Arnold "believed so firmly in reason that he was certain it justified the use of its antithesis, force, without which it was powerless."[40] What Trilling and others especially protest against is Arnold's advocacy of the occasional use of coercive measures. However, as Basil Willey points out:

> The particular "anarchy" confronting Arnold . . . . as he composed Culture and Anarchy was the anarchy, or the omens of it, associated with "shooting Niagara," with the second reform bill, with trades-union disturbances, Fenian outrages, Reform League riots in Hyde Park, the campaign of John Bright, the Murphy riots at Birmingham and Manchester, and the like.[41]

What Trilling and others do not sufficiently consider is that Arnold advocated coercive measures only to restore the

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[39]Lionel Trilling, "Culture or Anarchy," Matthew Arnold (second edition; New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 253.

[40]Ibid., p. 260.

[41]Basil Willey, "Matthew Arnold," Nineteenth Century Studies: Coleridge to Matthew Arnold (London: Chatto and Windus, 1949), p. 254.

conditions in which reason can exert its influence. Never did he intend to suggest that the State (in the sense of legislative and administrative officials) has the right to impose even the right reason of its best self upon the nation by force. Always he insisted that the State is a representative agent of action which the people themselves elect and approve voluntarily. The strength of the state is essential not to impose its unwanted policies but to implement the desired means of civilization that require concerted action on a scale larger than individuals or private organizations can command. Along with the educational and ecclesiastical institutions that it establishes, the State functions as a model and guide to inspire and teach a noble ideal of humanization and civilization. It is not a forceful power imposing a determinative environment upon the individual but a reasonable agent creating an ennobling atmosphere of attractive culture. As J. Dover Wilson sums up Arnold's view,

> All he really contended was that more state activity was essential to a developing civilization in England, as, indeed, has been abundantly proved, and that in an ideal community the best thought and aspiration would find their expression in communal action . . . .[42]

Another essay reprinted in Mixed Essays, "Equality," was originally delivered as an address to the Royal Institution and subsequently published in The Fortnightly Review in March,

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[42]J. Dover Wilson, "Matthew Arnold and the Educationists," The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1930), p. 190.

1878. Essentially, the essay is an indictment of the English practice of inequality as it exists in the structure of social classes and a demand for ultimate equality through a revision of the law of bequest. Especially interesting are the grounds upon which Arnold bases his indictment: "It is in its effects upon civilisation that equality interests me."[43] Civilization he proceeds to define as "the humanisation of man in society."[44]

> To be humanised is to make progress towards . . . our true and full humanity. And to be civilised is to make progress towards this in civil society . . . . To be the most civilised of nations, therefore, is to be the nation which comes nearest to human perfection, in the state which that perfection essentially demands.[45]

Now, he continues, the elements in human perfection are several: "the power of intellect and science, the power of beauty, the power of social life and manners"--all of which the ancient Greeks so eminently prized. "The power of conduct is another great element . . .," for which Israel may stand as the representative.[46] In Arnold's analysis here of the elements comprising human perfection, one recognizes the Hellenism and Hebraism of which he had written in Culture and Anarchy. However, in addition to the beauty and intelligence, or sweetness and light, that he had before ascribed to Hellenism, he has

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[43]Matthew Arnold, "Equality," Mixed Essays, p. 45

[44]Ibid., p. 48.

[45]Ibid., p. 48.

[46]Ibid., p. 49.

now included "the power of social life and manners." Thus the nature of human perfection includes the elements of intelligence, conduct, social life, and beauty. Or, in current terms, the humanized man is he who has cultivated himself in ideas, manners, morals, and the arts. To have done so is to be a cultured man. This point Arnold restated and re-emphasized later in his "Preface" to Mixed Essays, which we have previously examined.

As a critical frame of reference, Arnold in "Equality" designates Germany as the modern nation in which ideas are most cultivated; France, manners; England, morals; and Italy, arts. Using this standard, then, he finds the civilization of England not ideally constituted to foster the humanization of its peoples; for the situation of inequality among the classes greatly inhibits the development of excellence in English social life and manners. He contrasts the grace and vitality of social intercourse among the more truly democratized French with the condition of society in England, which is pronounced to be far inferior. As France owes "her civilisedness to equality," so we English (Arnold concludes) owe "our uncivilisedness to inequality."[47]

Nevertheless, social equality is not to be desired as an immediately accomplished condition; for as "in America . . . we see the disadvantage of having social equality before there

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[47]Ibid., p. 64.

has been a . . . high standard of social life and manners formed,"[48] even so our present social organization . . . will and must endure until our middle class is provided with some better ideal of life than it has now."[49] However, in order to effect a gradual development toward social equality, Arnold proposes a change in the law of bequest whereby primogeniture (the exclusive right of the eldest sons to inherit the aristocratic estates) will be done away: a change which would ultimately, not immediately, evolve a desirable condition of social equality--essential to a civilization whose intended effect is to foster the humanization of its peoples.

The third essay involving English social criticism in Mixed Essays is "Porro Unum Est Necessarium." The one thing that is needful, so Arnold proposes in this essay, is to establish an adequate system of state-supported, public, secondary education so that the middle classes--who seem destined to set the standards for the nation--may "undergo transformation" and become "homogeneous, intelligent, civilised."[50]

> What is really needed is to follow the procedure of the Elementary Education Act [the Education Act of 1870] by requiring the provision throughout the country of a proper supply of secondary schools, with proper buildings and accommodations, at a proper fee, and with proper guarantees given by the teachers in the shape of either a university degree or a special certificate for secondary instruction.[51]

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[49] Ibid., p. 70.

[50] Matthew Arnold, "Porro Unum Est Necessarium," Mixed Essays, p. 132.

[51] Ibid., p. 129.

Throughout Arnold's essays in social criticism of England--in Culture and Anarchy, in Friendship's Garland, and in Mixed Essays--one sees the development of his critical program. He fashioned as his instrumental approach the notion of criticism as a disinterested endeavor to discover reality. He set it about the task of discovering reality as the basis upon which society may be reorganized in order to correspond more closely to an ideal of human perfection. He formulated a four-point frame of reference--German ideas, French manners, English morals, and Italian arts--as the criteria for any adequate conception of civilization. And he practically applied this frame of reference and set of standards in examining the condition of society in England; finding it wanting in certain respects, he consequently advocated certain measures as the means of correction or improvement.

Irish Political Criticism

After English social criticism, the second category of Arnold's social and political essays to be examined is that of Irish political criticism. Although Arnold has often been characterized as a dilettante dabbling in political criticism, at least one scholar, WilliamsRobbins, defends him: "With respect to the Irish question, one of the persistant major problems of English politics, Arnold's prophetic insight was weak, but there is in his writing on this subject a rare blend of sound diagnosis, practical remedial proposals, and a balanced

historical perspective."[52]

Conveniently, Arnold collected a number of his essays that deal most directly with the political problems of Ireland in a volume entitled Irish Essays and Others, published in 1882. The essays reprinted in this volume had all been written and published in periodicals after the appearance of Mixed Essays in 1879. However, a single essay among the miscellaneous collection contained in Mixed Essays, "Irish Catholicism and British Liberalism" (originally composed in 1878), may be taken as the starting point of Arnold's active interest in Irish affairs. After a brief examination of this earlier essay, a representative sample of those in Irish Essays and Others will be considered, since the content of several of them is somewhat repetitious.

The salient points in "Irish Catholicism and British Liberalism" may be quickly summarized. In this essay Arnold is arguing for the reason and justice of the demand by the Irish Catholics to have a state-endowed Catholic university. In substantiating his charge of the injustice of the English Parliament in refusing to grant this demand, Arnold points to the practice of continental nations that support the higher education of all the principal denominations, and even in Scotland the Presbyterian university at Glasgow is endowed; but in Ireland, where Catholicism is not merely one among

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[52]William Robbins, "Matthew Arnold and Ireland," University of Toronto Quarterly, XVII (October, 1947), 52.

several principal denominations but the religion of a great majority of the people, this support is withheld. Arnold then castigates British Liberals as being too responsive and susceptible to the pressure of opinion from their Nonconformist constituency, which is opposed to all religious establishment or endowment. This is a repetition of the charge against "Our Liberal Practictioners" in Culture and Anarchy as being motivated by a private interest rather than a concern that reason and justice should prevail. Evidently Arnold believed, like Burke again, that those elected to positions of political representation should not pander to the lower "interests" of their constituency. Instead, they should assume the responsibility to govern wisely and rightly, led by their own highest lights.

"The Incompatibles" is an extremely long essay, divided into two parts, in Irish Essays and Others. Part I of the essay was composed immediately before the Irish Land Bill of 1881 was brought into Parliament for debate. In it ARnold proposes to "look fairly into that incompatibility, alleged to be incurable, between us and the Irish nation."[53] He explicates the cause of the incompatibility by examining the history of relations between England and Ireland. After the original conquest of Ireland by the English, with the accompanying confiscation of lands, Arnold declared, "the sense of

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[53]Matthew Arnold, "The Incompatibles," Irish Essays and Others (New York: Macmillan Company, 1904), p. 277.

prescription [an acceptance by the Irish natives of the English right of ownership] never arose."[54] The reason that it did not arise, he continues, is that "where there is misery going on for centuries after a conquest, acquiescence in the conquest cannot take place."[55] And he quotes vivid accounts by Edmund Spenser in the sixteenth century, Jonathan Swift in the eighteenth century, and General Gordon in the present nineteenth century, all graphically describing the actual misery suffered by the Irish peasantry.

In the course of 1881, Arnold edited a volume entitled Letters, Speeches, and Tracts on Irish Affairs by Edmund Burke; therefore, being familiar with his views, he invokes his aid in the present essay. "Burke is clear in the opinion that . . . Irish misery and discontent have been due more to English misgovernment than to Irish faults"[56] Further, he quotes Burke directly: "'Concessions, extorted from embarrassment and fear produce no gratitude, and allay no resentment.'"[57] Arnold grants that great concessions have already been made to the Irish in the form of Catholic emancipation, the abolition of tithes, and disestablishment of the minority Irish Church, and the Land Act of 1870. "But with respect to

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[54] Ibid., p. 278.

[55] Ibid., p. 281.

[56] Ibid., p. 284.

[57] Ibid., p. 284.

every one of them . . . they were given too late . . . and seemed to be given not from a desire to do justice, but from the apprehension of danger."[58]

> What is most needed, in dealing with the land in Ireland is to redress our injustice, and to make the Irish see what we are doing so. And the most effective way, surely, to do this is not to confer boons on all tenants, but to execute justice on bad landlords.[59]
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> . . . . . .
>
> Of the landlords it is proposed to expropriate only the worst so as to found for the good ones security and prescription; and the compensation assigned to the bad expropriated landlords by the English Parliament is sure to be not insufficient, rather it will be too ample.[60]

Part II of "The Incompatibles" was written immediately <u>after</u> the Irish Land Bill of 1881 was brought into Parliament for debate. The point which Arnold is trying to make in this part of the essay hinges on his distinction between <u>material</u> and <u>moral</u> grievances. Even if the Land Bill should satisfy the Irish material grievance--effecting a change that will prevent future suffering--them the moral grievance, were it left unsatisfied, would continue to fester and irritate relations between England and Ireland. The moral grievance--the sense of England's great injustice in inflicting the centuries of past suffering--may best be met by some such act as the expropriation of bad landlords, which Arnold proposed in Part I.

Since Irish agitation for Home Rule is currently active, Arnold proceeds to consider the matter in the essay.

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[58] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 288.

[59] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 287.

[60] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 292.

"The present Land Bill is not so defective as that it need prevent cordial union, if . . . other things are accomplished."[61] In order for the Irish to feel a sense of union with the English, he asserts, "they must feel an attractive force, drawing and binding them to us, in what is called our civilisation . . . ."[62]

At this point in his essay, then, Arnold has reverted to English social criticism. After contrasting the defective social life and manners of the English with the more charming, genial, and attractive social life and manners of the Irish, he concludes that "if we wish cordially to attach Ireland to the English connection, not only must we offer healing political measures, we must also, and that as speedily as we can, transform our middle class and its social civilization," principally by the establishment of a state-supported system of public secondary schools.[63]

An ironical slant in Arnold's Irish political criticism is adopted in "An Unregarded Irish Grievance," another essay in Irish Essays and Others. In this essay Arnold sets forth as an Irish grievance when the Irish themselves scarcely regarded as such. He proposes that since the English middle class does not desire the advantages of state-supported public secondary schools, then perhaps it should be granted to the Irish. But

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[61] Ibid., pp. 312-13.

[62] Ibid., p. 314.

[63] Ibid., p. 332.

he ultimately includes England's condition in his pleas for the establishment of secondary education, describing England's present practice as being analogous to that of Ireland: "Our signal deficiency in England, also, [is] the want of all general organisation of the service of secondary instruction, of all co-ordination of the existing resources scattered over the country . . . ."[64] He affirms his conviction that secondary education for the middle class in both England and Ireland "can only become adequate by being treated as a public service, as a service for which the State, the nation in its collective and corporate character, is responsible."[65] But he anticipates that, so far as endowed secondary education for mostly Catholic Ireland is concerned, the influence of English Nonconformist antipathy toward the Catholics will prevent any immediate action. He concludes the essay with a philosophical resignation to his role as a persevering propagandist in the service of this grievance.

> We who lament [the middle class choice not to have an adequate education by consenting to a public secondary system] . . . can only resolve . . . to work with patience and perseverance for the evocation of that better spirit which will surely arise in this great class at last.
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> Meanwhile, however, the English middle class sacrifices . . . not only its own education, but the education of the Irish middle class also.[66]

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[64]Matthew Arnold, "An Unregarded Irish Grievance," Irish Essays and Others, p. 342.

[65]Ibid., p. 345.

[66]Ibid., p. 350.

American Political Criticism

It is interesting to turn from Matthew Arnold's Irish political criticism to the third category of his political and social essays--that of American social criticism. This phase in Arnold's criticism was inaugurated by the publication of his essay entitled "A Word About America," which appeared in Nineteenth Century magazine in May of 1882. Although he had never visited America, Arnold presumed to challenge those who described it as a land in which an appreciable degree of culture was widespread among its peoples. The reason for his skepticism is his notion that "whereas our society in England distributes itself into Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, America is just ourselves, with the Barbarians quite left out, and the Populace nearly."[67] In other words, Arnold conceives of Americans as primarily constituting a huge middle class. As such, he suspects that they share many characteristics with their Philistine brothers in the middle class of England, where "the civilisation of the most important part of our people is impared by a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners . . . ."[68] He hopes that this is not the case in America but strongly

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[67]Matthew Arnold, "A Word About America," Five Uncollected Essays of Matthew Arnold, ed. Kenneth Allot (Liverpool: University Press of Liverpool, 1953), p. 6.

[68]Ibid., p. 19.

suspects that it is so.[69]

As it happened, Arnold accepted an opportunity to conduct a lecture tour in America in 1883. Upon his return to England, therefore, he was enabled to speak with the more authoritative voice of personal experience when he wrote an essay entitled "A Word More About America," which appeared in the February issue of Nineteenth Century in 1885. Somewhat surprisingly, he began with praise for America, for he had been deeply impressed with the division of government into federal and state jurisdictions, each efficiently handling the affairs that most directly concern it. In contrast to this eminently suitable arrangement, Arnold dwells on the muddled situation in England, where affairs that often affect Scotland, Ireland, or Wales alone are handled by the English Parliament as a whole at London.

As the reader continues, it shortly strikes him that this is not really an essay about America at all. Instead it is more properly another essay in Irish political criticism; for, after establishing the value of the general principle of division of political responsibilities (as illustrated by American government), the author proceeds to apply it

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[69]Howard Mumford Jones in "Arnold, Aristocracy, and America," The American Historical Review, XLIX (April, 1944), 393-409, ridiculed Arnold's lack of insight into the promise of American democracy, contending that Arnold was more authoritarian than democratic, despite his pleas for equality, and that his authoritatian predisposition consequently incapacitated him for valuable criticism of democracy in America.

specifically to the Irish demand for Home Rule. He proposes that the ideal solution to the problem between Ireland and England is to establish a provincial government in Ireland to handle strictly Irish affairs while matters of national concern continue to be handled by the Parliament in London, the capital city of the kingdon. Further, the system should also be extended to the other natural provincial regions. Indeed, the notion of local government should be carried out to its logical conclusion, so that Arnold here adds another reform to his list of favorite proposals, designed to create a better civilization: "more equality, education for the middle classes, and a thorough municipal system."[70]

Apparently as a sort of token acknowledgement of his title topic, Arnold concludes "A Word More About America" with the reflection that although the political problem seems to be solved in America, the human problem remains--how to create a better civilization for the humanization of the people in the United States.

In 1886, Arnold accepted the opportunity to conduct another lecture tour in America. Most of his lectures dealt with literary subjects. But one, entitled "Numebers; Or, the Majority and the Remnant," dealt with American civilization itself. Originally delivered in New York, the address was

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[70]Matthew Arnold, "A Word More About America," Five Uncollected Essays of Matthew Arnold, ed. Kenneth Allot, p. 38.

published in Nineteenth Century upon Arnold's return to England. In many ways, "Numbers" seems very like a sermon. As its subtitle suggests, the lecture turns on the Biblical distinction between the few and the many. After pointing out that not only Isaiah and Jesus but also Socrates placed their faith in the few, Arnold points out that the existence of democracy in America assumes (contrary to these saints and sages) a faith in the many. But Arnold contends that the salvation of the nation depends upon the saving remnant in its midst--those who follow St. Paul's admonition: "Having in mind things true, things elevated, things just, things pure, things amiable, things of good report; having these in mind, studying and loving these," so Arnold paraphrases Paul, "is what saves States."[71]

Ultimately Arnold's contention here is, as in Isaiah's moral vision, that the fate of a nation, its destiny, depends on the quality of its men. Although in the past he has had occasions to praise the civilization of France, that nation is in danger at this point because it is "a worshipper of the great goddess Lubricity [impurity]," at least in its popular culture.[72] If this flaw continues to enervate the integrity of France, so Arnold is moved to prophesy, then "she will more and more lose her powers of soul and spirit, her intellectual

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[71]Matthew Arnold, "Numbers," Discourses in America (New York, Macmillan Company, 1906), p. 32.

[72]Ibid., p. 40.

productiveness, her skill in counsel, her might in war . . . and the life of that famous State will be more and more impaired, until it perish."[73] He extends a like admonition to Americans"

> If the failure to mind whatsoever things are elevated should be real in your American democracy, and should grow into a disease, and take firm hold on you, then the life of even these great United States must inevitably suffer and be impaired more and more, until it perish.[74]

Thus he concludes with, in effect, a call for conversion to the cause of culture.

The final essay of Arnold in American social criticism, "Civilisation in the United States," appeared in the April issue of Nineteenth Century in 1888, the year of his death. It apparently constitutes the "last word," as it were, about America. It concerns what Arnold had previously observed--the "human problem" in the United States. Using the criterion of whether or not life in America is "interesting," he surveys the state of its ideas, manners, morals, and arts. Although he finds points for praise--its social equality, for example--he is forced to conclude, "The human problem, then, is as yet solved in the United States most imperfectly; a great void exists in the civilisation over there: a want of what is elevated and beautiful, of what is interesting."[75]

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[73] Ibid., p. 63.

[74] Ibid., p. 67.

[75] Matthew Arnold, "Civilisation in the United States," Five Uncollected Essays, p. 59.

Even worse is the fact that the Americans are largely unaware of their imperfection because they have no real source of responsible criticism, for their daily newspapers sing only the praises of the nation and its peoples.

English Political Criticism

The final category of Matthew Arnold's social and political essays to be considered is that of English political criticism, a matter which concerned him much in the last decade of his life. Although his views on politics in England have obviously been either expressed or implied in the contexts of the other categories, these essays are selected as representative of those that deal most directly with the criticism of English politics.

The first of the essays to be examined in this phase of Arnold's critical career appeared as one of the "other" essays in the volume entitled Irish Essays and Others, published in 1882--"The Future of Liberalism." In effect, this essay constitutes a challenge to the Liberal party after its recent return to power in 1880. Arnold begins by announcing the guiding principle that orients his own political concerns. "The master-thought by which my politics are governed is . . . the thought of the bad civilisation of the English middle class."[76] However, he is disappointed to observe that it is not a major concern with either the Liberals or the

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[76]Matthew Arnold, "The Future of Liberalism," p. 379.

Conservatives. He reflects on the nature and purpose of the political institution.

> The true and noble science of politics is even the very chief of the sciences, because it deals with this question [of how to live] . . . for the benefit of man in society. Now of man in society the capital need is, that the whole body of society should come to live with a life worthy to be called human, and corresponding to man's true aspirations and powers. This, the humanisation of man in society, is civilisation. The aim for all of us is to promote it, and to promote it is above all the aim for the true politician.[77]

After elaborating a theory of history as the succession of alternating periods of concentration and expansion (a distinction previously suggested, as has been noted, in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time"), Arnold identifies the Conservative party as that most suited to foster the values of order, stability, and consolidation in periods of concentration and identifies the Liberal party as that most suited to foster the values of progressive development in periods of expansion. The present age, he states, is a time for expansion. And it is therefore up to the Liberals to respond to the challenges of the present age with wise leadership. If they do not respond effectively, then the nation must turn to the Conservatives. But what is most wanted is a progressive development toward a more perfect civilization.

> Let Liberal statesmen despise and neglect for the cure of our present imperfection no means, whether of public schools, now wanting, or of the theater, now left to itself and to chance, or of anything else which may

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[77] Ibid., p. 385.

> powerfully conduct to the communication and propagation of real intelligence, and of real beauty, and of a life really humane.[78]

In concluding, Arnold lists several other matters of moment in which the Liberals must exercise humane leadership--in such matters as the injustice of social inequality and the enduring questions of Ireland's land and ecclesistical affairs.

"The Future of Liberalism" is a significant essay in Arnold's canon of social and political criticism. It presents very clearly his view of the relationship between society and politics. The end that all of Arnold's criticism strives to foster is an ideal of human perfection, the humanization of man in society, a civilization possessing an adequate culture in its ideas, manners, morals, and arts. But the principal means by which this end is to be implemented and cultivated are political, such as the establishing of adequate secondary schools or the institution of social equality through alterations in the law of bequest. Thus, in Arnold's criticism, social ends and political means are inextricably interrelated. His own purpose, as a critic, is to conduct a private propaganda campaign for these goals. Sometimes he seems to be an agent in a guerrilla war, harassing now the people, now the statesmen themselves, to grant his conditions--for their own sakes. At other times he seems to project the image of a prophet, voicing a vision of the ideal and urging his countrymen, with faith, to realize it in England.

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[78] Ibid., p. 402.

The occasion for Arnold's next essay in English political criticism, "The Nadir of Liberalism," was again the recent return of the Liberal party to power--in February of 1886, after the brief Conservative interlude that began when the Liberals fells from power in June of 1885. "The Nadir of Liberalism," then, was published in the May issue of Nineteenth Century in 1886. The essay scrutinizes rather closely the leader of the Liberals, William Gladstone. Arnold's central point is that Gladstone has been a victorious politician in his measures but that he has not been a successful statesman in his policies (although Arnold praises the man personally). That is, his measures have consistently been passed, but they often have not really solved the problems with which they were intended to cope. Many of his measures did not really "satisfy vital needs and remove vital dangers of his country."[79] He mentions particularly Gladstone's policies in relation to Ireland (apparently since it had been the announcement of Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule that had ultimately precipitated the present resumption of power by the Liberals). And he proceeds to examine specifically Gladston's "project of giving a separate Parliament to Ireland [as one that] has every fault which a project of State can have."[80] To Arnold it is plain that the geographical proximity of the islands of Great Britain

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[79]Matthew Arnold, "The Nadir of Liberalism," Essays, Letters, and Reviews of Matthew Arnold, ed. Fraser Nieman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 267.

[80]Ibid., p. 217.

and Ireland demand--reasonably and naturally--a single system of government. Further, separation might endanger them both, either from without or from each other. However, he concedes that the Irish have legitimate grievances and that some successful solution must be found. He himself proposes here what he had previously set forth in "A Word More About America" (1885): a system of provincial government in Ireland to handle strictly Irish affairs (including even a separate district for Ulster, if it is found to be best) and of national government centered in the Parliament at London for affairs of national import--a system analogous to that of the American division of federal and state powers.

If Arnold had known that at the time when "The Nadir of Liberalism" was published (May, 1886) the Liberals had but three more months to remain in power, then perhaps he would not have written it. In August, 1886, the Liberals fell and Conservatives returned to power with the Marguess of Salisbury as Prime Minister. Therefore, as he had challenged the recently elected Liberals in "The Future of Liberalism," so now Arnold undertook to arouse and stimulate the Conservatives in another essay, "The Zenith of Conservatism" which appeared in the January issue of Nineteenth Century in 1887. However, in his effort to influence the Conservative statesmen, he adopts a stategy different from his approach to the Liberals. In this essay, Arnold represents himself as voicing "the mind of the country, the great power of quiet reasonable

opinion in England."[81] It is a role that he plays consistently in subsequent essays addressed to the Conservatives. He seems to suppose that this approach will best appeal to the Conservative disposition.

It is this constituency (the large body of quiet reasonable men), Arnold suggests in the essay, that has reacted against the ineptitude of the Liberals and has now placed the Conservatives in power. And these men expect the Conservative party to deal not just victoriously but quite successfully with the matters that await its constructive hand, especially with such matters as the obstruction of procedure in Parliamentary debate, the disestablishment of the Church in Wales, and the condition of Ireland. Arnold discusses each of these issues in turn, emphasizing the kind of actions that the "quiet reasonable men" would approve. With respect to the tactics of obstruction by the Irish members in Parliament, "the body of quiet reasonable opinion throughout the country is in favor of a most stringent reform . . . ."[82] He recommends the use of closure by a majority of three-fifths or of two-thirds. To the question of church disestablishment in Wales, where the majority of the people are Dissenters, Arnold proposed the same sort of answer that he had urged in the case of Ireland, where the majority are Catholic:

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[81] Matthew Arnold, "The Zenith of Conservatism," Essays, Letters, and Reviews by Matthew Arnold, p. 314.

[82] Ibid., p. 316.

"To maintain the establishment in Wales for the sole benefit of a small minority of the population is an absurdity there, just as it was in Ireland."[83] It is against reason and justice. Finally, Arnold deals at some length with the condition of Ireland, where the sabotage of landlords by the Plan of Campaign is now in operation. His basic recommendation is for a more stringent policy of coercion: "the habit of defiance must not be allowed to establish itself, must be quelled when it seeks to establish itself."[84]

It is perhaps somewhat surprising to discover this cultured advocate of humanity so strongly endorsing the policy of coercion. But one must understand that, for Arnold, social order is the sine qua non of civilization. The alternative is chaos or anarchy, which is (as any reader of Culture and Anarchy knows) the arch-enemy of culture. Before anything at all constructive could be achieved, so Arnold held, anarchy must be quelled.

Arnold's next excursion into English political criticism occurred in May of 1887, when his essay entitled "Up to Easter" was published in Nineteenth Century. This essay constitutes a a review of the progress that the Conservative party had made in this session of Parliament since the appearance of "The Zenith of Conservatism" in January. Again Arnold projects

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[83] Ibid., p. 319.

[84] Ibid., p. 323.

the image of himself as representative of "the reason of the nation." In the course of the essay, he surveys the performance of the Conservatives in the areas that he had singled out in the earlier essay as demanding responsible treatment. He praises them highly for revising the procedures of Parliamentary debate with a new closure ruling, so that the practice of filibuster by the Irish members has been satisfactorily inhibited. Further, although not yet passed, a Crimes Act for implementing a more vigorous policy of coercion is presently being considered in Parliament as a means to combat the Plan of Campaign. He urges its passage.

Then he turns to the enduring Irish problems, for which satisfactory solutions remain to be found. Again he recommends his system of provincial governments, which he especially advocates as a means to resolve the tension between the Protestant North (Ulster) and the Catholic South (the remainder of Ireland); for, he asks, is it likely that, if Ireland were now to be given any version of Gladstonian Home Rule, the Catholic majority would extend entire religious liberty to the Protestant minority at this time? As to the land question, he reiterates his earlier objections to the Irish Land Act of 1881 as being too little and too late. "What we all now see to be desirable, is to have one owner, and that owner, as far as possible, the cultivator."[85]

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[85]Matthew Arnold, "Up to Easter," Essays, Letters, and Reviews of Matthew Arnold, p. 351.

Arnold concludes by encouraging the Conservatives to persevere in their quest for really successful solutions to these problems.[86]

Arnold's last essay in English political criticism to be considered is "From Easter to August," which appeared in the September issue of Nineteenth Century in 1887. As the title indicates, it is a continuation of his commentary on the Salisbury Conservative ministry, initiated in the two previous essays. Written after the adjournment of this session of Parliament, the present essay takes a backward glance at the road that has been traveled to this point. Again speaking for the body of quiet reasonable people, he offers somewhat belated praise to the Liberal-Unionists for having earlier defeated Gladstonian Home Rule and thus enabling the Conservatives to come to power. He is also pleased to observe that the Crimes Bill--which he had advocated in "Up to Easter"--was passed. However, on the whole, it seems to him that the position of the Conservative party has been weakened by its failure to act decisively in other areas. "Plainly, then, Conservatism is not now any longer at its zenith."[87] He points out that it is notably in the area of Irish affairs that the big questions remain, and foremost among them at the moment is the question of Irish landlordism. He encourages

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[86]Ultimately, in the passage of the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903, they were successful in this matter.

[87]Matthew Arnold, "From Easter to August," Essays, Letters, and Reviews by Matthew Arnold, p. 358.

others to stand with him. "The greatest possible service, which the body of quiet reasonable people in England can now render . . . is to set their face like a flint against all paltering with this question, to insist on a thorough and equitable settlement of it.[88]

Arnold concludes this last essay in a note of obvious satisfaction with his role as an essayist who has made some small contribution to his country through his criticism. "To be a quiet reasonable person always answers, always makes for happiness; there is always profit in being . . . a counter-influence to asperity, envy, and anger . . . ."[89]

In the course of this short survey and running commentary on the four categories of Matthew Arnold's essays in social and political criticism--English society, Irish politics, American society, and English politics--certain features have been noted. It has been observed how, in the first place, the lack of a creatively inspiring environment moved Arnold to undertake criticism in general as a means to remedy the defect; for, to Arnold, the degree to which a society can nourish culture (in the sense of esthetic and intellectual activity) is an index to the quality of its civilization, its power to humanize its citizens. After gradually formulating a critical rationale--including the

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[88] Ibid., p. 366.

[89] Ibid., p. 369.

goal of human perfection, a fourpoint standard for evaluation (intellect, conduct, social life, and beauty), and an approach of disinterested objectivity--he began to apply his critical apparatus to practical situations of social or political concern in Ireland, America, and England. Finding the social civilization of England to be lacking in certain respects, especially in ideas and social life, he used a calculated strategy to advocate certain political measures (fixed upon in the process of envolving his critical program) as the means of ultimately correcting these imperfections: specifically, by enlarging and strengthening the power of the State itself, by executing a more just administration of ecclesistical matters, by altering the law of bequest to create greater social equality, by instituting local government in appropriate regions, and by establishing state-supported public secondary education for the middle class.

With the largest problem in Victorian politics--Irish affairs--Arnold dealt at length in all of the categories, even within his essays on American society. He seems to have regarded relations with Ireland as a special test of the quality of civilization in England proper. He assigns the original cause of the bad relations to failures in English civilization itself. And he insists that ultimately the only means of healing the relations is by transforming the civilization of England--through the acceptance of the proposals that he repeatedly advocated.

The Educational Institution

A discussion of Arnold's political and social criticism establishes the foundation for a discussion of his other cultural criticism, for his critical interest in educational and in religious matters was certainly evident in his writings on politics and society. Many of his recommendations for specific political action directly involve education and religion. The political institution is, after all, a structure whose function is to organize many of the other activities of the society in an orderly and effective form. Part of Arnold's political criticism dealt with the institution of politics itself: he proposed alterations in the structure of the political institution in order to enable it to execute its function more effectively. Most notably, he advocated the enlarging and strengthening of the powers of the State so that it would operate as a more efficient, beneficent, and rational instrument in ministering to the needs of the people by creating the conditions for a more nearly perfect civilization. Much of his political criticism also dealt, consequently, with the proper function of such a State (enlarged and strengthened) in relation to the other social institutions. Thus he proposed that the State reorganize the institution of education and that it adopt certain policies with respect to the institution of religion in England. These we have encountered briefly in the course of our survey and commentary on Arnold's body of

criticism dealing with the political institution. As Stuart Sherman observed, "Arnold's political and his social thought are indetachably related. He always treated politics as an instrument for the renovation of society."[90]

However, besides his indirect treatment of questions and issues about education in certain of his essays on politics, Arnold wrote several rather lengthy works devoted exclusively to educational matters. Two of these--The Popular Education of France (1861) and Schools and Universities on the Continent (1868)--were orginally prepared as blue-book reports for Royal Commissions and subsequently published in regular book-form for the general public. Arnold also wrote numerous letters-to-the-editor, an article, and a pamphlet, all concerned with the controversy about the Revised Code in 1861-62, a proposed measure whereby government grants to schools would be determined not by need but by performance ("payment by results"), which Arnold strongly opposed. But his third most important writing on education was a short book entitled A French Eton (1864), a rather informal and personal report on education. With The Popular Education of France, Schools and Universities on the Continents, and A French Eton should also be included Arnold's popular lecture entitled "Literature and Science," published in Discourses in America (1885).

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[90]Stuard P. Sherman, Matthew Arnold: How to Know Him (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1914), p. 225.

The careers of the Arnolds, father and son, in education were the subject of a book by Sir Joshua Fitch, a younger contemporary and colleague of Matthew Arnold--Thomas and Matthew Arnold and Their Influence on English Education (1899). But his treatment of the younger Arnold has since been superseded. Arnold's ideas of education (as expressed in his books, essays, pamphlets, lectures, articles, and letters) have been thoroughly and competently examined, discussed, and evaluated in The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold (1950) by W. F. Connell, a professional student of English education. However, the purpose of our examining Arnold's criticism of the educational institution is not to present an exhaustive analysis of his pronouncements but only to indicate his central proposals and to relate them to the general purpose of his social criticism.

From March through August in 1859, Arnold traveled about France, Holland, and Switzerland, visiting schools. Appointed by the Newcastle Royal Commission on elementary education, he inspected representative elementary schools in order to prepare a blue-book report. Given permission by the commission, he decided to publish the report also in regular book-form for the general public, so that it could exert even greater influence. In May of 1861, only a few weeks after its appearance as part of the Newcastle Commission's report, The Popular Education of France With Notices of That of Holland

and Switzerland was published.[91]

The Popular Education of France is largely taken up with an historical account of the development of elementary education in France, with a series of chapters discussing its present constitution and administration, and with similar but briefer accounts of elementary education in Holland and in Switzerland. Although the requirements of his position as a commission-appointed, fact-finding school inspector discouraged, if it did not preclude, Arnold's personal judgment in his report, his enthusiasm for the French system is nevertheless evident, especially in Chapter XIII, "The Popular Education of France and England Compared--Legislation," and in Chapter XIV, "The Popular Education of France and England Compared--Results on the People." These chapters are conducted not so much as a comparative study as a study in contrast, with the juxtaposition of the French and English systems reflecting unfavorably on the latter. However, in the "Introduction: Democracy," Arnold explicitly expresses certain personal judgments and conclusions. (The "Introduction: Democracy" was reprinted nearly twenty years later as the opening essay in Mixed Essays (1879), where it was simply entitled "Democracy.") This introductory essay is one of Arnold's most significant and revealing pronouncements.

Arnold's essay "Democracy" has already been discussed in its relation to the political institution. We noted its

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[91]Super, "Critical and Explanatory Notes," II, 330.

demand that the powers of the State--the institutional structure whose function is to organize the communal activities in a society--should be enlarged and strengthened, so that it could fulfill its organizational function in relation to the other social institutions with greater effectiveness, thus creating a more civilized culture and so contributing to the humanization of the citizens. Such enlargement and strengthening of the State would be implemented only with the willing consent of the people, who must recognize that the ministers of the State, elected by them or appointed by the crown, truly represent their best interests. It is necessary here only to summarize the significance of the essay on "Democracy" in relation to the educational institution.

It must be remembered that "Democracy" was originally published as the introduction to a report on education. Therefore, its recommendations with respect to the State should be understood in an educational context. Although the proposal to enlarge and to strengthen the State is presented as generally desirable for the sake of improving the structure and function of all social institutions, the original occasion for, and the immediate application of, the proposal was specifically in relation to the institution of education. As J. Dover Wilson, in an article entitled "Matthew Arnold and the Educationists," has indicated: "It was . . . as the provider of schools that Arnold first came to consider the nature and function of the

State."[92]

The general argument of "Democracy" is simple to summarize. Democracy is increasing and aristocracy is declining. Although the aristocracy had its faults, it nevertheless upheld a high and noble standard of culture. In short, it stood for the civilization of society and the humanization of man. And the effect of its stance was to prevent the standard of culture in the national life from being vulgarized. It provided an exemplary model and civilizing leadership in public affairs. But the aristocracy is declining in influence. Simultaneously, the development of democracy in England is increasing. The Reform Act of 1832 had dramatically signaled the birth and growth of the democratic spirit in England. And in 1861, when Arnold first published "Introduction: Democracy," agitation was rife for a second reform bill (which was finally passed in 1867); and in 1879, when he reprinted "Democracy" in Mixed Essays, the demand was again strong for a third reform bill (which was finally passed in 1884). As he said, "At the present time, almost everyone believes in the growth of democracy, almost everyone talks of it, almost everyone laments it; but the last thing people can be brought to do is to make timely preparation for it."[93]

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[92]J. Dover Wilson, "Matthew Arnold and the Educationists," The Social and Political Ideas of Some Representative Thinkers of the Victorian Age, ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1930), p. 183.

[93]Arnold, "Democracy," Mixed Essays, pp. 21-22.

Gaylord C. LeRoy contends in his chapter entitled "Matthew Arnold" in Perplexed Prophets: Six Nineteenth-Century British Authors that Arnold's attitude towards the coming of democracy was fundamentally ambivalent, that he welcomed it yet (like the middle class in general, of which he was a member) he feared the advancement and elevation of the uncultured lower class.[94] But this is scarcely the correct way to construe his attitude. What Arnold dreaded was certainly not the advance of democracy itself. As he affirms in "Democracy," it is natural and even good that democracy should spread, for it is an inevitable development from the instinct for "expansion" implanted in human nature. And Edward Alexander has written, "The unifying purpose of the writings both Arnold and Mill was to prepare their culture for its imminent democratization."[95] Yet the present study maintains that even the goal of "democratization" is only an organic part, although greatly important, in the larger context of Arnold's endeavors toward the humanization of his countrymen. Nevertheless, As Alexander suggests, Arnold did not fear nor fight democracy; on the contrary, he actively supported it. And he insisted that the growth of democracy would be lamentable only if it were permitted to spread without "timely preparation" for its development.

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[94]Gaylord C. LeRoy, "Matthew Arnold," Six Nineteenth-Century British Authors (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press for Temple University Publication, 1953), pp. 40-85.

[95]Edward Alexander, Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill, p. vii.

What is to be lamented is the danger of the "vulgarization" of society in a democracy. For without the presence of an aristocracy as a model and as a guide, the level of civilization seems destined to decline. "The individuals who compose it [a democratic society] are, the bulk of them, persons who need to follow an idea., not to set one . . . ."[96] The consequence in England will surely be much the same as that in the United States--the vulgarization of civilization and of the individuals who compose the society. This condition of vulgarization Arnold repeatedly refers to as the process of "Americanization." These notions of the dangers of democratic civilization we recognize as nearly identical, of course, with those forecast by Alexis de Tocqueville in his Democracy in America, which Arnold had read with interest and regarded with respect.

Americanization, the decline of civilization, vulgarization--this is the problem. But what is the solution that Arnold proposed in "Democracy"? What is the "timely preparation" that he advocated? The answer that he recommends in the essay is that England must rely on "the action of the State."[97] He then develops his proposal for enlarging and strengthening the power of the State as the representative--through its well-chosen, qualified, and responsible ministers,

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[96]Arnold, "Democracy," Mixed Essays, pp. 19-20.

[97]Ibid., p. 17.

entrusted with adequate means to execute their ideas in action--of the "best-self" of the people. In general, he argues, such a State will foster the development and maintenance of an admirable civilization in that "the nation may . . . thus acquire in the state an ideal of high reason and right feeling, representing its best self, commanding general respect, and forming a rallying point for the intelligence and for the worthiest instincts of the community . . . ."[98] In so doing, the State will be assuming the role previously performed by the aristocracy in holding aloft a high standard and noble ideal of civilization, which should serve as a model and as a guide for the middle and lower classes.

More particularly, the "action of the State" may make timely preparation for the inevitable development of democracy, Arnold continues, by reorganizing the structure and function of the educational institution. "Democracy," let us again recall, first made its appearance as the introduction to a report on education. The Newcastle Royal Commission for which Arnold prepared the report had been appointed "to consider and report what Measures, if any, are required for the Extension of sound and cheap elementary Instruction to all Classes of the People."[99] The Popular Education of France was therefore concerned with the development, constitution, and

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[98] Ibid., p. 21.

[99] Super, "Critical and Explanatory Notes," II, 327-28.

administration of the elementary schools for the children of France. But Arnold had also visited in France a few representative secondary schools. And the proposal for State action that Arnold advocates in the introductory essay is specifically that the State intervene in educational matters in order to secure adequate public secondary education for the English youth, especially for those of the middle class. Fairly certain that elementary education would be provided, Arnold apparently used his introduction to direct the attention of the public to the next important matter in education--that of secondary education. His recommendation is that the middle and lower classes place their schools, which are presently demoninational or voluntary schools established by private initiative, under the control of the State so that adequate standards for educational quality may be established and administered. Thus their children will experience the humanizing and civilizing effect "of breathing in their youth the air of the best culture of their nation."[100] Education of this kind is the best insurance of the English, Arnold believes, against the vulgarizing influences in democracies. But it is necessarily dependent upon an enlarging and strengthening of the powers of the State, with the creation of a Minister of Education (as in France), in order to implement it effectively.

In the Education Act of 1870, the principle of the provision by the state of elementary public education in

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[100]Arnold, "Democracy," Mixed Essays, p. 26.

England was securely founded. But the extension of the principle of state intervention in education to include secondary public schools was not to be realized until the twentieth century--in the Education Act of 1902. Therefore, Arnold spent much energy (in his essays, books, and speeches on education) vainly pleading until his death that secondary education be made publicly available by the State, especially for the sake of the middle class, which was replacing the aristocracy as the leader of the nation. In 1861-64, the Clarendon Royal Commission was appointed to study and report on the secondary education of the aristocracy. Arnold's response to the activities of the Commission was a series of articles that were eventually published in book form as A French Eton (1864). The book compared the public secondary education provided in the schools of France (some of which he had previously visited) with that in the English schools for the sons of the aristocracy, concluding that the former is certainly not so fine as the latter but recommending that something similar to the French system be instituted for English middle class. A French Eton helped give impetus, so R. H. Super suggests, to a third study--the Taunton Royal Commission on the desirability and feasibility of public secondary education in England. Again Arnold was appointed to report on education abroad, and again he published his blue book report later in regular book form for the general public: Schools and Universities on the Continent (1868), And

throughout his life, Arnold continued--formally and informally, professionally and personally, in speeches and in essays--to urge the cause of education. As Stuart Sherman wrote of him, "He became keenly interested in education and its practical problems as soon as he fully grasped their relation to the general changes which he wished to further in the social life of his times."[101] Further, as a twentieth-century official concerned with the British Department of Education has written, "It is not too much to say that Arnold was the creator in this country of what may be called, as a study, the 'politics' of education."[102] Finally, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch once gave Arnold an appreciative tribute for his service to education. "In his hard-working official life he rendered services which those of us who engage in the work of English education are constantly and gratefully recognizing in their efforts; and we still toil in the wake of his ideals."[103]

In almost his last words on English education, composed in 1886, Arnold summarized the comprehensive and coherent system of public education that he desired to see the State empowered to implement and to execute.

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[101]Stuart P. Sherman, Matthew Arnold: How to Know Him, p. 17.

[102]Sir Fred Clark, "Introduction," in W. F. Connell's The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1950), p. ix.

[103]Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, "Matthew Arnold," Studies in Literature (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1918), p. 237.

> May we live to see the coming of a state of things more promising. Throughout the country good elementary schools taking the child to the age of thirteen; then good secondary schools, taking him to sixteen, with good classical high schools and commercial high schools, taking him on further to eighteen or nineteen; with good technical and special schools, for those who require them, parallel with the secondary and high schools--this is what is to be aimed at. Without system, and concert and thought, it cannot be attained: and these, again, are impossible without a Minister of Education as a centre in which to fix responsibility, and an Educational Council to advise the Minister and keep him in touch with the tendencies, needs, and school-movement of the time.[104]

In this summary of his recommendations concerning the structure of the educational institution, Arnold emphasizes two essentials: first, a greater provision of schools of various grades and types; and, second, a sequential progression in all schools--from elementary through secondary to higher education.

There remains but one more matter to consider in Arnold's writings about the educational institution. This is the matter of the curriculum content that he advocated as the means to the end of a truly civilizing and humanizing education. It is a matter that he dealt with in Chapter XXII, "General Conclusion: School Studies," of Schools and Universities on the Continent (1868). With the phenomental growth of scientific knowledge in the nineteenth century, a controversy developed between those who proposed that the content of popular education should be composed primarily of the modern

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[104]Matthew Arnold, "Education," The Reign of Queen Victoria; A Survey of Fifty Years of Progress, ed. T. H. Ward (London: Smith Elder, 1887), II, 279.

scientific knowledge and those who proposed that it should consist of the traditional course of study in ancient classical literature. It was the beginning of the educational controversy over the humanities and the sciences.

Since Arnold himself had been educated in the humanistic and classical tradition at Rugby and at Oxford, one would naturally expect that his sympathies would lie with the classical humanists. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to discover that his position is a mean between the extremes, a happy balance--which is, after all, perhaps the more truly humanistic position, as Aristotle suggested. In developing his proposition as a recommendation in the concluding chapter of Schools and Universities on the Continent, he begins by asking and answering the question of what is the purpose of education: "its prime direct aim is to enable a man to know himself and the world. Such knowledge is the only sure basis for action, and this basis it is the true aim and office of instruction to supply."[105] In order to realize this twin aim of knowing both man and nature, the student must include both the humanities and the sciences in his education. Thus the extremists among both the humanists and the "realists" (advocates of a primarily scientific public education) are both right and wrong. Each is right in assuming that their course of study is necessary to achieve the purpose of education, but

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[105]Arnold, Schools and Universities on the Continent, p. 290.

both are wrong in assuming that either the humanities or the sciences comprehend in themselves the whole of what is essential to an adequate education for modern man. "Meanwhile neither our humanists nor our realists adequately conceive the circle of knowledge, and each party is unjust to all that to which its own aptitudes do not carry it."[106]

Much later in his career, Arnold continued to enunciate essentially the same view in his popular lecture "Science and Literature," which was published in Discourses in America in 1885. As part of his rhetorical strategy in the lecture, Arnold selects Huxley as the representative of the realist position and charges that the realists have misunderstood his own position as humanist. For, although he is a humanist, he is not an extremist, he explains; further, pushing the argument into the enemy's encampment, he denounces the position of the extreme realists as inadequate. Finally, to those frightened that the sciences may someday push the humanities out of the curriculum, Arnold concludes with an affirmation of the enduring revelance of humane letters. Because man has instincts for beauty and conduct as much as for knowledge, his instinct for self-preservation and expansion will not suffer the humanities to be entirely neglected. They are essential to his wholeness.

For Arnold, the process of humanization was itself essentially a process of education: it required a continuing

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[106] Ibid., p. 291.

discipline of self-cultivation in order to actualize the potential of one's complete humanity--in order, that is, to achieve perfection. And public education at its best was to become, so he envisioned, a significant contributor to a humane civilization for his countrymen.

The Religious Institution

In Chapter II, "The Images of Nature and of God," we have already examined Arnold's concept of God. There we found that "God"--"the Eternal, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness"--was an aspect of nature as experienced from the perspective of the moral viewpoint. In Chapter IV, "The Image of Man," we shall consider the experiential and psychological effect of religion, as Arnold understood it, upon the individual. Our present interest in Arnold's religious writings is in his criticism of religion as a social institution, in his analysis of its structure and function in the culture of Victorian England.

Of course, Arnold's own treatment of religion has itself been severly criticized in turn. His religious writings have been dismissed as the dabblings of a dilettante and neglected as the negligible meddling and scribbling of a vagrant man of letters. For instance, one critic describes his theological thought as "a hazy mixture of Germanized Hellenism and an Anglicanism excessively rarified and with the bony structure

of dogma removed."[107] Yet other writers have defended his religious essays. Thus H. W. Garrod remarks, "It has been found convenient to forget that it was by his theological writings that he first rose into the rank, or esteem, of a great writer."[108] Further, George McClean Harper, commenting on Arnold's qualifications as a student of religion, observed:

> Matthew Arnold was much better equipped to treat of theological questions than many professional theologians; his knowledge of the Bible was extraordinary; his reading in the early Christian fathers was wide; he was far better acquainted than most of his clerical and academic contemporaries with the works of the great English divines . . .; and furthermore he was familiar with the processes and results of comparative historical study as practices on the continent of Europe.[109]

And, in a critical article, E. H. Hunt asks, "Is it not obvious that religious thought is now closer to Arnold than to . . . his critics ?"[110] Finally, Basil Willey has highly praised the relatively neglected religious writings as among Arnold's best works, at the very center of his life-purpose.

> His literary essays should be viewed, not as the main current from which his other writings are offshoots, but as tributary rills swelling the mainstream of his life's effort. And his main effort was that of a sage, a teacher, a moralist and a physician of the human spirit.[111]

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[107]John Heath-Stubbs, The Darkling Plain (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1950), p. 100.

[108]H. W. Garrod, Poetry and the Criticism of Life (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), p. 79

[109]George McClean Harper, Spirit of Delight (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1928), p. 105

[110]E. H. Hunt, "Matthew Arnold and His Critics." Sewanee Review, XLIV (April, 1936), 415.

[111]Basil Willey, "Matthew Arnold," Nineteenth Century Studies, p. 252.

"Estote ergo vos perfecti!--the motto of Culture and Anarchy, 'the full perfection of our humanity'--that was Arnold's life-long quest . . . ."[112]

The Function of Religion

Arnold's four books devoted exclusively to religious matters--St. Paul and Protestantism, Literature and Dogma, God and the Bible, and Last Essays on Church and Religion--were published during the period from 1870 to 1877. However, as we have noted in our examination of his political criticism, his concern with religious matters is evident in much of his other writing. Even before the period of prose criticism, much of his early poetry--in its quest to define man's relation to the cosmos and man's relation to man--is obviously religious in its implications. But it is in the volume entitled Essays in Criticism (1865) that his interest in religious matters, which was later to express itself at length in the four books on religion, is more clearly indicated. Several of the essays in the volume deal at least indirectly with religion--"Maurice Guerin," "Eugenie Guerin," "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment," and "Joubert." But especially in the essay entitled "Marcus Aurelius" the nature of his interest in religion is directly revealed.

The essay on "Marcus Aurelius" opens with a general consideration of the nature of morality and of the function of

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[112]Ibid., p. 254.

religion in relation to morality.

> Now the object of systems of morality is to take possession of human life, to save it from being abandoned to passion or allowed to drift at hazard, to give it happiness by establishing it in the practice of virtue; and this object they seek to attain by prescribing to human life fixed principles of action, fixed rules of conduct.[113]

The object of morality is, in Arnold's view, to save men--individually and collectively--from the chaos (or "anarchy") of unrestrained passion. Any system of morality is to be valued insofar as it conduces to this end. Further, the ultimate positive goal of morality, beyond the rather negative influence of mere restraint, is to foster human happiness. The assumption is that happiness is desirable but that the translation of desire, or "passion," into action does not always lead to happiness, neither for the person nor for the society. The passions must be controlled for the sake of life and happiness; in other words, righteousness makes for life and happiness (and whatever makes for life and happiness is righteous). Such restraint and re-direction is the object of morality, and the more effectively it achieves this object, the better it is as a system of morality.

But there is a problem--one of inspiration. Even to know the good is not necessarily to act the right. To oppose the desire of a passion, there must be an emotional impetus to morality; for "moral rules, apprehended as ideas first, and then rigorously followed as laws, are, and must be, for the sage only."

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[113]Super, III, 133.

> The mass of mankind have neither force of intellect enough to apprehend them clearly as ideas, nor force of character enough to follow them strictly as laws. The mass of mankind can be carried along a course full of hardship for the natural man, can be borne over the thousand impediments of the narrow way, only by the tide of a joyful and bounding emotion.[114]

It is at this point that morality, if it is to be widely appealing and deeply effective, must be reinforced by religion. For at least one of the functions of religion (its most important function) is to serve as a source of emotional inspiration for moral conduct. "The paramount virtue of religion is, that it has lighted up morality; that it has supplied the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying the sage along the narrow way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all."[115] The implication is that the more effectively a religion fulfills its primary function of reinforcing morality with emotional inspiration, the better it is as a religion. The best religion, then, will be that whose nature most inclines it to the effective fulfillment of this function.

It is on this ground, as an especially effective inspiration for righteousness, that Arnold points to Christianity as singularly superior among religions. Christianity fulfills the function of religion with "unexampled splendour":

> its distinction is not that it propounds the maxim, "Thou shalt love God and thy neighbor," with more development, closer reasoning, truer sincerity than

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[114] Ibid., p. 134.

[115] Ibid., pp. 134-35.

> other moral systems; it is that it propounds this maxim with an inspiration which wonderfully catches the hearer and makes him act upon it.[116]

And Arnold quotes several passages from the Bible to illustrate how it is suffused with a depth of emotion admirably suited to encourage people--to hearten them--in righteous behavior. It is thus that Christianity most effectively fulfills the primary function of religion--to reinforce morality with emotional inspiration.

The argument of "Marcus Aurelius," as an essay in literary criticism, is that the Meditations is to be greatly valued among moral writings because it manages to infuse its Stoic ethics with an emotional element. Its inspirational value is less than that of the Christian Bible, but it nonetheless provides more than mere intellectual resignation: "it is a spirit, not so much of gladness and elation, as of gentleness and sweetness; a delicate and tender sentiment . . . ."[117]

The view of religion that Arnold sets forth in "Marcus Aurelius," first published in the November, 1863, issue of Victoria Magazine, anticipates the definition of religion that he expressed ten years later in Literature and Dogma (1873) and italicized with a sense of certainty and finality: there he affirms that religion is "morality touched with emotion."[118]

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[116] Ibid., pp. 135-36.

[117] Ibid., p. 149.

[118] Arnold, Literature and Dogma, p. 18.

And again Arnold insists that the essential distinction between ethical systems and religions is simply that the former address their moral appeal to the intellect and that the latter address their moral appeal to the emotions. This definition of religion infuriated F. H. Bradley, who heaped scorn on it in his Ethical Studies. However, the definition is perhaps not quite so limited as may at first appear if we remember that Arnold is emphasizing the primary function of religion, from his point of view, rather than its nature. Had he designed to reply specifically to Bradley's criticism, he might perhaps have clarified his statement by adding, for instance, that religion is morality touched with emotion--under the conditions of poetic truth and beauty requisite for inspiring human conduct! At any rate, this conception of the essential function of religion is the consistent and guiding principle in all of his writings on religion. We have noted, for example, how his definition of God was so fashioned as to emphasize the moral significance of the divine nature and thus to enable the reader to turn to his Bible for a morally inspiring experience, uninhibited by an irrelevant and unacceptable supernatural notion of God.

This redefinition of religion in moral terms has the effect of focusing not upon God, however, but upon man. It is thus a humanistic conception of religion: religious morality is valued as a means to the end of human happiness. Man must obey "God" (the natural conditions for life and

happiness), but he does so not for God's sake but for his own. Ultimately, the value of religion consists in its contribution (no mean one) to the humanization of man, to his fulfillment as a complete human being. The criterion by which the existing religious institution in a society should be evaluated is its effect as a civilizing agent--the degree to which it fosters human wholeness.

Thus in St. Paul and Protestantism (1870), the first of his books on religion, Arnold's reinterpretation of Pauline doctine is clearly a specific application of his general principle that the function of religion is to humanize man by inspiring him to control his passions. Arnold attempts in the book to demonstrate that the current dissenting heirs of Puritanism--the Calvinistic Congregationalists and Baptists and the Arminian Methodists and others--with their emphases on, respectively, the fear of Hell and the hope of Heaven, were distorting the original emphasis of St. Paul on righteousness for its own sake. This he attempts to demonstrate by a reinterpretation of St. Paul's Epsitle to the Romans. Reversing the traditional interpretation of English protestants (the Puritans), he declares that the essential concern of the Apostle Paul is not the relation of man to God but the relation of man to other men. Contrary to the orthodox view, Arnold argues, Paul's emphasis is not primarily on salvation by faith in God but on works of righteousness toward men. The former is secondary and subordinant to the latter. Again, this is

to say, in Arnold's terms, that the function of religion is to reinforce morality.

Precisely how the religious orientation of Pauline Christianity reinforces the Pauline concern for individual righteousness is the subject of the second half of the book. In Part II of St. Paul and Protestantism, Arnold sets forth a radical reinterpretation of the orthodox doctrine of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. Later he refined and elaborated his reinterpretation in Literature and Dogma, wherein he objected to the literalistic orientation of the Puritan mind which made "salvation" conditionally dependent entirely upon an intellectual assent to the actual historicity of the event, which to him was essentially symbolic in its significance. As Arnold interpreted what he called the "necrosis doctrine" of St. Paul, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus was a figurative representation of the death of the old man (a person ruled by the passions of his flesh) and the rebirth of the new man (the same person now led by the spirit of righteousness). As the law of the flesh leads to death--spiritual decadence or sterility--so the law of the spirit leads to life more abundant. Arnold did not deny that St. Paul also accepted the resurrection of Jesus as a historical event; but his primary emphasis, Arnold insists, was upon the symbolic significance of the doctrine.

Arnold goes on, then, to discuss the moral function of this religious doctrine--how, by touching morality with

emotion, it inspires and reinforces moral conduct. This effect of the doctrine Arnold referred to later in Literature and Dogma as the Christian "secret." This "secret," which enables one to lead a righteous life, is an imaginative identification of oneself with Jesus: "The motions of sin in ourselves we succeed in mortifying . . . by sympathy with Christ in his mortification of them."[119] Following the example of Jesus, whose crucifixion and resurrection symbolized the continuing inner process of his entire life, one must "die" to the flesh and "live" by the spirit. The precise content of Arnold's concept of the "flesh" and of the "spirit" we shall discuss in the next chapter, "The Image of Man." But it is clear that the psychological process of imaginative identification of the individual with Jesus is another means, as Arnold presents it, of attaching emotional associations to the ethical life of making moral decisions. Propagated by the social institution of religion, this religious doctrine may enrich the moral dimension of human experience with emotional inspiration. As a part of the process of civilization within the cultural environment of a society, the religious institution may thus fulfill its function of fostering the humanization of man.

The Structure of the Church

On the basis of his understanding of the function of religion, Arnold advanced certain notions about the proper

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[119]Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 67.

structure of the religious institution--the Christian church as it existed in Victorian England. The structural recommendations that he advocated were intended to enable the church to fulfill its religious function more effectively. His notions about the proper structure of the church are most explicitly set forth in two of his writings: "Puritanism and the Church of England" and "The Church of England."

The essay on "Puritanism and the Church of England" was included in Arnold's short book St. Paul and Protestantism, published in 1870. As we have noted, his effort in the book was to demonstrate how the English protestants, the nonconformist Puritans of whatever denomination, had misinterpreted certain essential doctrines of St. Paul, specifically the significance of the crucifixion and resurrection. Involved in his discussion was a consideration of the significance of such traditional Puritan doctrines as predestination, original sin, and justification in relation to his own reinterpretation. In the course of the reinterpretation, he had demonstrated (at least to his own satisfaction) that the Puritan doctrines were all quite unfounded in scripture, the Puritans' own source of authority for their faith; their doctrines, he argued, were based on misreadings and misunderstandings of St. Paul's meanings.

In "Puritanism and the Church of England," Arnold proposes that since the Puritan denominations have based their existence on the validity of such doctrines and since these

doctrines, as held by the nonconformist Puritans, have now been shown to be a wresting of the scriptures (in St. Paul and Protestantism, to which the essay is attached), the Puritans no longer have any valid grounds, therefore, on which to base their continued existence. Consequently, he argues, the Puritan Nonconformists should all return within the fold of the established Anglican Church. "Puritanism and the Church of England" is thus, although perhaps not very tactful, an essay toward an ecumenical movement in nineteenth-century England.

Much of the essay is devoted to a discussion of the advantages to be gained--by the Puritans, by the established Church, and by the nation as a whole--if ecclesiastical unity were to be achieved. The current condition of separatism, confirming the Puritans in their parochialism and provincialism, causes them "to be in the main, at present, an obstacle to progress and to true civilisation."[120] Once within the established Church, the misdirected energy of the Puritans would be redirected toward more creative activity.

> The good of comprehension in a national Church is, that the larger and more various the body of members, the more elements of power and life the Church will contain, the more points will there be of contact, the more mutual support and stimulus, the more growth in perfection both of thought and practice.[121]

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[120]Matthew Arnold, "Puritanism and the Church of England," St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 104.

[121]Ibid., p. 105.

One great advantage of an historic national church, Arnold emphasizes, is its capacity for change and progressive development. Sects of men that separate only for the sake of narrow notions tend "to be shut up in sectarian ideas of their own, and to be less open to new general ideas that the main body of men . . . ."[122] However, the "historic Church cannot choose but allow the principle of development, for it is written in its institutions and history."[123] And the ability to adapt to the demands of the age is essential if the religious institution is to fulfill its function in the modern period. It must accommodate itself to what is valid in scientific and secular thought as well as adjust itself to the conclusions of recent continental higher criticism. All of this the historic and established Anglican Church is in a better position to do, he asserts, than the several Puritan sects.

In concluding his ecumenical essay, Arnold even proffers, as a tentative set of articles for confederation, the proposals of Tillotson and Stillingfleet for ecclesisatical unity, drawn up in 1689. These are seven broad and tolerant conditions, which he quotes entire. He offers them as a model to be studied not so much for their specific requirements for union as for their general spirit of reconciliation. He notes that

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[122] Ibid., p. 131.

[123] Ibid., p. 121.

these proposals were originally drawn up for the union of protestants in England, but he suggests that the advantages would be even greater if the Catholics were invited to join. But such comprehensive unity he recognizes as unrealistic in his generation. Nevertheless, he envisions a progressive movement "which may one day make a general union of Christendom possible."[124] Meanwhile, the task of the religiously concerned is to create an adequate and uniform structure for the institution of the Church in England so that it may fulfill its function well.

"The Church of England," Arnold's second essay to deal explicitly and exclusively with the structure of the Church, was originally delivered as an address to the London clergy at Sion College and subsequently published in Last Essays on Church and Religion, which appeared in 1877. It is an essay in antidisestablishmentarianism. Against those who propose that the religious institution be disestablished, Arnold defends the Church as a civilizing influence whose activity deserves to be recognized, sponsored, and supported by society as a whole. The Church is not a private sect but a public institution that exists for the good of the whole society. As a public institution, there is a public reason for its existence.

> I regard the Church of England as, in fact, a great national institution for the promotion of what is commonly called goodness, and for promoting it through the most

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[124] Ibid., p. 153.

> effectual means possible, the only means which are really and truly effectual for the object: through the means of the Christian religion and of the Bible.[125]

The mere existence of a nationally instituted Church is a constant and visible remainder to men of their moral responsibilities. And the positive activity of the Church, in edification and inspiration, makes it an effective instrument for influencing conduct--which is, as Arnold often said, three-fourths of human life. As Benjamin F. Lippincott has written, "For him the Church was a society for the promotion of goodness; its establishment by the state was important, for he believed that an interest so deep and abiding as religion should be publicly and splendidly recognized."[126]

Arnold remarks that it may seem strange for him to defend the establishment of the Church before the London clergy (the original audience of his address) but that he does so in order to deliver a challenge. The lower classes, the working masses, are regarding the Church as increasingly irrelevant to their concerns. The goal of these people is "an immense renovation and transformation of things, a far better and happier society in the future."[127] Arnold reminds the clergy that although the popular notion of a good society

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[125]Matthew Arnold, "The Church of England," Last Essays on Church and Religion (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1902), p. 312.

[126]Benjamin F. Lippincott, "Matthew Arnold," Victorian Critics of Democracy (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1938), p. 106.

[127]Ibid., p. 327.

may be an ideal that is alloyed with some false values, nevertheless "it is also the ideal of our religion"--the kingdom of heaven on earth.[128] The clergy must recognize the purpose of the Church as a great national institution for the promotion of goodness and devote themselves actively to work for this ideal of the good society, a civilization designed to foster not only the moralization of the masses but also their humanization--the cultivation of their complete humanity. This is the present, as it is the historic, role of the religious institution, the Church.

> And by opening itself to the glow of the old and true ideal of the Christian Gospel, by fidelity to reason, by placing the stress of its religion on goodness, by cultivating grace and peace, it will inspire attachment, to which the attachment which it inspires now, deep though that is, will be as nothing; it will last, be sure, as long as this nation.[129]

Once the significance of its function is generally recognized, there will be no more talk of disestablishment.

The Use of the Bible

Much of Arnold's critical writing about religion centers on the proper and improper use of the Bible as a source of inspiration for the moral life. He is much upset by the failure of the Puritan denominations to acknowledge and read the Bible as literature. True, it is religious literature, but it is nonetheless literature. Therefore, it is to be read

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[128] Ibid., p. 328.

[129] Ibid., p. 343.

with due regard for its literary nature; that is, it is not to be read as a legal contract between God and the human race, nor is it to be taken as a scientific document. Thus, for example, at one point in St. Paul and Protestantism, he states that his purpose is actually "the true criticism of a great and misunderstood author."[130] And the subtitle of Literature and Dogma, his most famous book on religion, is An Essay Towards a Better Apprehension of the Bible

The main reason why the Bible is misunderstood, Arnold stresses, is that people tend to interpret in a material sense what should be apprehended in a spiritual sense. That is, they fail to recognize the peculiar quality of the Bible as literature--its use of the metaphorical mode of communication. Instead, what is meant figuratively and poetically is taken literally and prosaically. Arnold distinguishes between two characteristics of the Apostle Paul's use of language that are characteristic of most Biblical language. On the one hand, Paul Orientalizes--he spiritualizes the material, using the figurative mode. On the other hand, he Judaises, using scripture (the Old Testament) as a source of absolute truth, whose assertions are to be accepted unquestioningly as historically, scientifically, and logically sound; thus Paul himself tends to take the Old Testament literally.

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[130]Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 63.

[131]Ibid., p. 26.

> When Paul Orientalises, the fault is not with him when he is misunderstood, but with the prosaic and unintelligent Western readers who have not enough tact for style to comprehend his mode of expression. But he also Judaises; and here his liability to being misunderstood by us Western people is undoubtedly due to a defect in the critical habit of himself and his race.[131]

Arnold makes clear that Paul himself, immersed in the mythic orientation of his age with its supernaturalistic ideology, was disposed to understand the Old Testament literally and that, consequently, his view of Jesus was influenced accordingly. He accepted the resurrection of Jesus in a material sense. But, Arnold insists, he also perceived its symbolic significance, and this it was that he emphasized in his Epistles as an inward source of inspiration for the moral life of righteousness. He did not preach that faith in the supernatural reality of the resurrection automatically "saved" an individual. Rather, his primary concern was righteous conduct for its own sake; righteousness in itself, here and now, he regarded as supremely desirable. And the teachings about the life and death of Jesus he valued for their instrumentality in fostering the realization of this desirable effect. A recognition and contemplation of the moral significance of Jesus and an imaginative identification with him could function--on the naturalistic level of psychological experience--as an emotional inspiration to righteous behavior.

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[131] Ibid., p. 26.

Ultimately, what Arnold recommends to modern man as the proper approach to the Bible is that of demythologizing. This approach has been popularized in the twentieth century by the German theologian Rudolf Bultmann and his followers, in whose hands it has assumed the propertions of a hermeneutic movement--a particular school of Biblical interpretation. The demythologizers more or less frankly accept the naturalistic assumptions of the contemporary secular world, although some of them assume the existence of an ultimate transcendental dimension of being. And they acknowledge that the Bible is the product of a culture whose assumptions were supernaturalistic, being based on a mythic orientation and ideology. Nevertheless, the demythologizers believe that the Biblical writers often had profound intuitions and insights into the human conditions. Although couched in the mythic mode of expression, their views are not to be rejected as superstitious and false. They should rather be regarded as valid truths expressed in symbolic forms. The problem of interpretation, then, is to demythologize--to translate the truth from its mythological and supernaturalistic context into psychological and naturalistic terms. For basic experiential insights into the human condition remain true, even though the ancient cosmology that shaped the form of their expression may itself become outmoded.

Eugene L. Williamson, Jr. has analyzed the relation between the Biblical criticism of Thomas and Matthew Arnold. Although concluding that the son was far more radical than

his liberal father, he cites six points of similarity in their Biblical criticism:

> (1) rejection of the idea of plenary Biblical inspiration; (2) emphasis on the ethical rather than the metaphysical significance of the Bible; (3) validation of religious doctrines by the teachings of Jesus; (4) reference to experience . . . as demonstration of the efficacy of Christian teachings; (5) distrust of anthropomorphic conceptions of God's nature; and (6) considered employment of humanistic learning in Biblical interpretation.[132]

Doubtless the elder Arnold would have been shocked at the lengths to which his son was to carry these principles. Developing the implications of these principles to their logical conclusion, he was to arrive at a mode of interpretation that anticipated the contemporary movement of demythologizers.

The demythologizing approach of Arnold, with its interpretive consequences, is fully and clearly exemplified in his treatment, for instance, of the concept of God in the Old Testament. Arnold's effort to define "God" was based on the assumption that the concept, although generated in a supernaturalistic culture, had a valid naturalistic meaning for modern man. He "demythologized" the image of God in the Old Testament so that a contemporary Victorian could read the Bible with a sense of its relevance. This was Arnold's intention, at least, whether or not it was his achievement.

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[132]Eugene L. Williamson, Jr., "Significant Points of Comparison Between the Biblical Criticism of Thomas and Matthew Arnold," PMLA, LXXVI (December, 1961), p. 540.

Likewise, his handling of the doctrine of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ in the New Testament is another instance of demythologizing: he translated the doctrine from its mythological and supernaturalistic context into psychological and naturalistic terms, investing the doctrine with symbolic significance rather than literal or historic actuality.

Further, Arnold's position in the famous Colenso controversy of his time may be simply stated in terms of his demythologizing hermeneutics. The Bishop of Colenso had published a book on the Pentateuch in which he pointed out much of its obviously mythological character. Religious liberals applauded him, but conservative colleagues condemned him. Arnold wrote several articles in which he dealt directly or indirectly with the controversy, including "The Bishop and the Pilosopher," "Spinoza and the Bible," and "Dr. Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church," all originally published in periodicals during 1862 and 1863. Judging Colenso's work as an essay in higher criticism, Arnold condemned it as puerile in comparison with continental scholarship. Judging it as a work for the religious edification of laymen, he found it "unedifying." In other words, the essence of Arnold's criticism is that the Bishop "demythologized" the Pentateuch, but he failed to translate and interpret the valid naturalistic significance that existed within the supernaturalistic forms of expression. He failed to emphasize the "natural truth of

religion" despite its being couched in mythological terms. Spinoza, on the other hand, is represented as an early exemplar of the correct approach to Biblical criticism and interpretation; and Dr. Stanley is upheld as a modern exemplar.

In the process of teaching his countrymen the proper use of the Bible, besides the general approach of demythologizing, Arnold recommended a specific and practical use of the Bible as a regular aid to meditation. This use of the Bible he dwells upon in his "Preface" to Last Essays on Church and Religion.

> The figure and sayings of Jesus, embodying and representing men's moral experience to them, serving them as a perpetual reminder of it, by a fixed form of words and observances holding their attention to it, and thus attaching them, have attracted to themselves, by the very force of time, and use, and association, a mass of additional attachment, and a host of sentiments the most tender and profound.[133]

For Arnold, the Bible was neither a book of religion nor a book of morality; instead, it was a book of religious morality--that is, of morality touched with emotion--and so was capable of inspiring men to righteous conduct. He believed that for the English, nurtured in the Christian tradition of western civilization, the Bible was the natural source of a noble morality that is both experientially valid and emotionally inspiring. Since the emotions are the springs

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[133]Arnold, "Preface," Last Essays on Church and Religion, p. 173.

of action, they must be involved in the contemplation of ethical principles in order to influence conduct. As Robert Shafer described Arnold's position in Christianity and Naturalism:

> The importance of the Bible is that it states the moral law clearly, in passionate language, and in concrete, literary form, through symbol and myth, so that it brings its contributions of truth to us in a humanized shape which comes home to us and stimulates in us the intense conviction necessary to rouse us to action.[134]

Arnold himself exemplified the use of the Bible for this purpose in his own practice. The Note-Books of Matthew Arnold (edited by Lowry, Young, and Dunn) are studded with verses and passages from the Bible that he wrote down in order to meditate upon them daily. Such daily meditation was a life-long habit with him. In the year before his death, he wrote elsewhere:

> The most important and fruitful utterances of Jesus are not things which can be drawn up as a table of stiff and stark external commands, but the things which have most soul in them; because these can best sink down into our soul, work there, set up an influence, form habits of conduct, and prepare for the future.[135]

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[134]Robert Shafer, "Matthew Arnold," Christianity and Naturalism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), p. 185.

[135]Matthew Arnold, "Count Leo Tolstoi," Essays in Criticism, Second Series (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905), p. 297. The essay entitled "Count Leo Tolstol," was originally published in the Fortnightly Review during December of 1887.

The Function of Literature

It may seem strange, at first, to examine Arnold's conception of the function of literature in the course of discussing his social criticism of the religious institution. But it is not so strange when we remember, for instance, that in 1880 Arnold wrote that "most of what now passes with us for religion . . . will be replaced by poetry."[136]

In understanding Arnold's high conception of the potential function of poetry, it is perhaps best to start with his essay entitled "Maurice de Guerin," published in Essays in Criticism, First Series (1865). There he wrote of the "interpretative power" of poetry, anticipating his later definition of poetry as a "criticism of life." This "interpretative power" of poetry he describes as "the power of so dealing with things as to awake in us a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them, and of our relations with them."[137] Poetry exercises its interpretive power on two objects--man and nature: he refers to poetry both as "the interpretress of the natural world" and as "the interpretress of the moral world."[138]

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[136]Matthew Arnold, "The Study of Poetry," Essays in Criticism, Second Series (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905), p. 3.

[137]Super, III, 13.

[138]Ibid., p. 30.

> Poetry interprets by expressing with magical felicity the physiognomy and movement of the outward world, and it interprets by expressing, with inspired conviction, the ideas and laws of the inward world of man's moral and spiritual nature. In other words, poetry is interpretative both by having natural magic in it, and by having moral profundity.[139]

In this early essay in literary criticism, Arnold asserts that the greatest poets achieve a balance of both "natural magic" and "moral profundity," pointing to Aeschylus and Shakespeare as examples.

Arnold's later definition of poetry as a "criticism of life" must be understood in the light of his earlier description of it as the interpreter of the essential human significance of the natural and the moral dimensions of experience. It should also be remembered that Arnold's phrase is more a statement of what poetry does than of what it is--a definition of its function, not of its nature. Further, as H. W. Garrod noted in his volume entitled Poetry and the Criticism of Life, we should consider that when Arnold so described poetry, he merely "gave paradoxical finish, and a too sharp expression, to what for five and twenty centuries had passed for a truism with poets and men of letters."[140] And, finally, let us not forget that Arnold qualified his definition of the function of poetry as a "criticism of life"

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[139] Ibid., p. 33.

[140] H. W. Garrod, "Poetry and the Criticism of Life" Poetry and the Criticism of Life (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), p. 10.

by immediately adding "under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty."[141] As John Holloway has insisted, his conception of nature and function of poetry is by no means so simple as we are prone to assume.[142]

As Arnold grew older, he came to place more emphasis on the "high and excellent seriousness" of moral profundity in poetry and to subordinate natural magic to it.[143] In the end, his notion of the most significant poetry seems to be closely related to his definition of religion as "morality touched with emotion." And here we are enabled to see how he could suppose that poetry might someday replace traditional religion, for his treatment of the Bible in his own naturalistic and humanistic religious morality was a use of the Bible as the very greatest literature, as the most morally profound poetry. And other poetry of moral profoundity differs from the Bible not in kind but in degree. Even secular poetry, insofar as it is "morality touched with emotion," may fulfill the religious function of serving as a source of inspiration for righteousness. Someday, he perhaps envisioned, there may exist a body of such poetry, rivalling even the Bible as an

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[141]Arnold, "The Study of Poetry," Essays in Criticism, Second Series, p. 5.

[142]John Holloway, "Matthew Arnold and the Modern Dilemma," Essays in Criticism, I (January, 1951), 1-16.

[143]Ibid., p. 33.

an emotional inspiration toward religious morality for modern man. Such a body of poetry would no doubt be that literature of "imaginative reason" which he wrote about at the end of "Pagan and Medieval Religious Sentiment" as the great need of the modern age. It would saitsfy the naturalistic orientation of the modern intellect as well as the emotional and moral needs of the human heart and imagination.

In concluding this section on Arnold's social criticism of the religious institution in Victorian England, we should note a special feature of the times that served to intensify his devotion to the cause of religion. It is treated in Chater X of Literature and Dogma--"Our 'Masses' and the Bible." There Arnold describes what he regards as a situation of crisis. "This is what everyone sees to constitute the special moral feature of our times: the masses are losing the Bible and its religion."

> From the great inspirer of more than three-fourths of human life the masses of our society seem now to be cutting themselves off. This promises, certainly, if it does not already constitute, a very unsettled condition of things. And the cause of it lies in the Bible being made to depend on a story, or set of asserted facts, which it is impossible to verify; and which hard-headed people, therefore, treat as either an imposture, or a fairy-tale that discredits all which is found in connection with it.[144]

In his religious writings, then, Arnold sought to avert a social crisis--the condition of moral chaos in society. Along with most Victorians, he regarded religion as the great moral

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[144]Arnold, Literature and Dogma, pp. 282-83.

stay of society. As Walter E. Houghton observed in The Victorian Frame of Mind, the spread of atheism was a source of anxiety to many Victorians:

> The decline of Christianity and the prospect of atheism had social implications which now seem curious (though they may have more bearing on our contemporary situation that we suppose). It was then assumed, in spite of rationalist denials, that any collapse of faith would destroy the sanctions of morality; and morality gone, society would disintegrate.[145]

Seeing that supernaturalism must go, Arnold strove to restablish the Christian religion upon a naturalistic foundation. He stressed its natural moral truth and emphasized the earnest use of the Bible to reinforce morality through its psychological effect. And he insisted upon the establishment of the Church as a national institution of immense social significance. All this he did because he believed that religion was ultimately a profoundly civilizing and humanizing cultural influence. The function of religion, he believed, was to foster the moralization part of the whole process of humanization; and conduct, he said, was three-fourths of life. This he set as the end of religion; and as the means to this end, he recommended the public use of the Church and the private use of the Bible to cultivate and enrich the moral dimension of human experience. This was Arnold's ultimate, general

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[145]Walter E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870 (New Haven: Published for Wellesley College by Yale University Press, 1957), p. 58.

and positive goal in dealing with religion. But his religious criticism was perhaps immediately precipitated and intensified by a zeal to avert the social chaos of moral license among the masses, who were losing the Bible, its religion, and consequently their own morality. As Asa Briggs stated in The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867, "The Religious Census of 1851 demonstrated what Christians had long feared, that a large proportion of the population of England were neither Church people nor of any other religion."[146]

In concluding this chapter of Arnold's "Image of Society," we may recount the chief points of his project as a social critic in Victorian England. As a humanist, his concern is centered in man. His goal is the humanization of man, the achievement of human excellence by the cultivation of man's "powers": his capacities for beauty, knowledge, conduct, and social life--or, in other words, for ideas, manners, morals, and the arts. Such humanization is man's happiness. Civilization, then, is the organization of social institutions in order to provide a cultural environment that fosters the development of man's true humanity and that affords the resources for the exercise and expression of his human powers. A vision of this ideal society Arnold held as a criterion by which to evaluate the actual society of Victorian England. This criterion he consistently applied in

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[146]Asa Briggs, The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867 (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1959), p. 465.

all of his cultural criticism. Politics, education, religion, and even literature--all were evaluated in terms of this standard: the ideal society is that which fosters or affords the opportunity for the development of ideal man. We build our cities and our cities build our youth. Alterations or transformations in the structures and functions of social institutions were recommended as the means to the end of better achieving the humanized man in a civilized society. This vision of an ideal society Arnold desired to actualize as the image of the real society.

CHAPTER IV

THE IMAGE OF MAN

Arnold's conception of human nature is implied or assumed in most of his critical writings. Hence the foregoing discussions of his images of God, of nature, and of society have necessarily involved, at least indirectly, some consideration of his image of man. Thus the background has been established for a fuller and more explicit exposition of his concept of human nature. On the one hand, it is evident by now that the background upon which his image of man must be projected is naturalistic. And, on the other hand, it is by now also evident that the image itself is essentially humanistic.

In Chapter II, "The Images of God and of Nature," we examined Arnold's concept of nature in his early poems and his concept of God in his later essays; and our examination indicated that the two concepts were practically identical. Thus God, in the general sense of "the stream of tendency by which all things fulfill the law of their being," is but a version of the Spinozist conception of the cosmic process in nature--the process whereby natural structures execute their natural functions. And God, in the specific sense of "the Eternal, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness," is

but an aspect of nature as experienced from the perspective of the moral viewpoint. So God is nature. There is no supernatural or transcendental dimension of being. "God," as an Arnoldian concept, is based upon naturalistic assumptions. It follows, then, that man is a creature of nature--unique and anomalous, indeed, but natural. We have observed how Arnold was even willing to grant the supposition of evolutionists that most of man's behavior patterns are ultimately traceable to his natural instincts for self-preservation and for reproduction. Also, the poem "In Utrumque Paratus," especially in its original ending, suggests an acceptance of evolutionary theory. Arnold's image of man, therefore, is thoroughly grounded in naturalistic assumptions.

And in Chapter III, "The Image of Society," our examination of Arnold's standard for evaluating social institutions indicated that his orientation was clearly based upon traditional humanistic assumptions. Society, with its cultural environment of social institutions, exists for the sake of man, not man for the sake of society. Man's aim is to achieve the ideal of excellence or perfection in the humanist sense of a general, internal, and harmonious development of his peculiarly human "powers." The ideal society is that which fosters the cultivation of ideal men. However, aside from a general notion of the ideal man as one who is cultivated in ideas, manners, and the arts, the precise content of Arnold's humanistic conception of the good man has not been explicitly explicated

at length and in detail. To do so is the purpose of this chapter.

The Image of Man in Poetic and in Secular Contexts

Although there is a fundamental consistency, I think, in the image of man that Arnold projected in all of his compositions, one may discern at least three distinct stages in its progressive development. First, in the poetry of the young man, there are the early intimations of his concept of human nature--intimations whose implications the older man was to develop more fully in the later prose. Second, in the prose essays devoted to secular matters in the 1860's, his image of man is projected at a more advanced stage in its development. And, third, in the subsequent succession of the essays devoted to religious subjects, Arnold set forth his concept of human nature in its final and most comprehensive form.

The Poetic Image: Man As He Is

In Chapter I, "Introduction," we suggested that at some time during his school years, either suddenly and dramatically or gradually and casually, young Matt Arnold shed his faith in the supernaturalistic assumptions of orthodox Christianity. Then in Chapter II, "The Images of God and of Nature," specifically in the section entitled "The Image of Nature in the Poems," we traced the efforts of the young poet to recreate for himself a naturalistic

cosmology in his early poetry. This effort we examined at some length in the poem entitled "Empedocles on Etna." Of course, at the same time that young Arnold lost faith in the supernaturalistic cosmology of Christianity, he also ceased to accept the traditional image of man as the child of God, his Father in Heaven. Therefore, he was simultaneously searching in his early poetry both for a new image of nature and for a new image of man. Thus "Empedocles on Etna" reflects the effort to recreate an acceptable concept of man as well as the effort to recreate an acceptable concept of nature. Empedocles, who in several ways closely resembles Arnold, is trying to find and to assert himself--or, in Hindu terms, his "Self." Indeed, the search for the self is also the theme of a number of the "other poems" that appeared with the title poem in the volume entitled Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems (1852), including especially "Self-Dependence" and "The Buried Life."

In an age of intellectual contention, Empedocles became estranged from his real self, neglecting the true needs of his whole being. The over-expression of his intellectual life, with a consequent suppression of his emotional life, caused him to become an unintegrated personality, a fragmented human being. The inhibition of his emotional and imaginative needs resulted in his inability to experience joy--the sign of wholeness. Identifying his own desire as that of every man, Empedocles says that we all wish to "be true/ To our own only true, deep-buried selves,/ Being one with which we are one with the whole

world" (II,371-73). The loss of integrity or wholeness in the person inevitably and simultaneously causes the loss of a sense of community in his relation to society and the loss of a sense of unity in his relation to nature or God.

A variation on the theme of the search for the self is expressed in the poem entitled "Self-Dependence." The poem begins with this quatrain:

> Weary of myself, and sick of asking
> What I am, and what I ought to be,
> At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
> Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

Figuratively, of course, the vessel is the "ship of self," whose captain in this case is uncertain or undecided as to his course and destination through the "sea of life." In the course of the poem, the speaker hears two voices. One is from the "star-sown vault of heaven." This voice from nature suggests to him, so he imagines, that the serenity of the stars is attributable to their self-sufficiency, to their being true to their natures without reference to the remainder of creation: they do not "pine with noting/ All the fever of some differing soul." The second voice, from within his own heart,expresses a like counsel: "'Resolve to be thyself: and know, that he/ Who finds himself, loses his misery.'" Nature has afforded images in which the speaker of the poem reads his problem and its solution.

When one "finds" himself, as the speaker realizes in the poem, one experiences an access of self-knowledge. And

to know the self, in this sense, is to know one's own heart. It involves a knowledge of the true needs of one's whole being. Happiness is to be achieved, if at all, not by fulfilling the needs of another person or the goals that society proclaims as admirable, the speaker senses, but by satisfying the needs of one's own self. And to be one-self involves, first, a process of introspection to discover the nature of the real self and, second, an uninhibited expression of the whole being. This would be the solution, but the problem is not solved within the context of the poem. Yet the speaker achieves insight into his situation and at least resolves to be himself, realizing that if he can but "find" himself, then he shall lose his misery.

Paradoxically, a man ought to be what indeed he is; but the difficulty is really to know and truly to be the self. This difficulty is dealt with in another poem, "The Buried Life". The poem is cast in the form of a dramatic monologue. However, although it is a "monologue," it is actually not very "dramatic." The situation is static. The speaker, a man, has been frustrated in his effort to communicate--intimately and authentically--with his beloved: each self assumes a mask, concealing its actual identity from the other self. This situation serves as the occasion to stimulate certain reflections in the man--reflections which, though presumably spoken aloud in the presence of the beloved, seem to be addressed primarily to himself. After the scene is set and the situation

revealed in the first twenty-nine lines of the poem, the speaker tells a fable to account for the difficulty of intimate communion and authentic action.

> Fate, which foresaw
> How frivolous a baby man would be,
> By what distractions he would be possess'd,
> How he would pour himself in every strife,
> And well-nigh change his own identity;
> That it might keep from his capricious play
> His genuine self, and force him to obey,
> Even in his own despite, his being's law,
> Bade through the deep recesses of our breast
> The unregarded River of our life
> Pursue with indiscernible flow its way;
> And that we should not see
> The buried stream, and seem to be
> Eddying about in blind uncertainty,
> Though driving on with it eternally.

Ultimately, so the fable suggests, the difficulty of communication in inter-personal relationships is attributable to the difficulty of intra-personal communication. Man is isolated from society because he is alienated from himself. It is almost impossible to reveal the real self to others because it is hidden even from the consciousness of the person himself.

Yet in certain respects this fabulous account is curiously inconsistent with the remainder of the poem. For the fable suggests that man actually conducts himself in accordance with his true nature, although unaware that he is doing so. He acts truly; but he does not reveal himself truly to others, simply because he does not know himself truly. However, elsewhere in the poem, the speaker definitely asserts that the actions of men usually do not reflect their true selves: "long we try in vain to speak and act/ Our hidden self,

and what we say and do/ Is eloquent, is well--but 'tis not true." And the reason given for this failure to communicate intimately and authentically is not self-ignorance but social inhibition: men do not reveal their real selves "for fear that if reveal'd/ They would by other men be met/ With blank indifference, or with blame reprov'd." The conditions for interpersonal communion, then, must be the opposite of those in the noisy and indifferent world: alone, hand in hand and face to face with a beloved one, the person may unveil himself. Strangely, it is under such circunstances--in the intimate and authentic revelation of himself to another--that the individual stands revealed to himself as well: "he knows/ The Hills where his life rose,/ And the sea where it goes."

The early intimations of Arnold's image of man, as revealed in these poems from Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems, insist on the dualistic nature of man, with his several "selves." Man has a "true" self, which consists of the real needs of his whole being; but this true self he conceals from society. The opposite of the true self is, of course, a "false" self. The false self is a fragmented or unintegrated version of the person's positive potentiality; it is merely a misrepresentation of the actual nature of the true self that is presented to the public. The true self is concealed and the false self is revealed either because the person himself is unconscious of the real needs of his whole being or because,

even if conscious of his true self, he is unable to realize himself: he cannot actualize his potential. One reason why he is unable to do so is the intellectual contention or "mental strife" of the age, as emphasized in "Empedocles on Etna" and again later in "The Scholar-gipsy." The image of man that Arnold projects in his poetry is that of a creature alienated from himself and, consequently isolated from the world, with no sense of community in his relation to society and with no sense of unity in his relation to nature or God. This, then, is Arnold's poetic image of man as he _is_--the false self that he reveals. But ideally man _ought_ to be what potentially he is--the true self that he conceals.

As suggested earlier, "The Scholar Gipsy" (1853) expresses Arnold's commitment to the ideal that the title character symbolizes--the unified self, the integrated personality, the way of wholeness. And the pastoral elegy entitled "Thyrsis" (1866) can be read, on the one hand, as a lament for the fragmentation of one whose wholeness was lost in the intellectual contention of the times (Arthur Hugh Clough) and, on the other hand, as the reaffirmation of Arnold's commitment to the quest for the ideal of human perfection, of what man ought to be. Finally, with the publication of _Culture and Anarchy_ in 1869, it is clear that, at least from Arnold's point of view, the "spark from heaven" had fallen.

The Secular Vision: Man As He Ought To Be

Culture and Anarchy is, as its subtitle indicates, An Essay in Social and Political Criticism. The author, as a social critic, discusses a problem in Victorian society and then recommends a solution. The problem that he discusses is the threat of "anarchy," and the solution that he recommends is the pursuit of "culture."

Now, the cause of the problem of anarchy, according to Arnold, is that the general practice of his countrymen is to follow the bent of their "ordinary selves." Each man asserts his ordinary self. And the bent of the ordinary self is, on the one hand, "ordinary" and, on the other hand, "selfish." The ordinary self is disposed to accept its inclinations without questioning their worth and to put them into effect with energetic activity. The disposition of the ordinary self is thus to do what it desires without evaluating the worthiness of its goals. It acts, so to speak, without stopping to think, without critical reflection. The consequence is anarchy, or a kind of chaos, both in the life of the individual and in the society as a whole.

This disposition to uncritical activity in his countrymen Arnold attributes to the effect of their religious inheritance, which he refers to as "Hebraism." The essential characteristic of Hebraism is "strictness of conscience," and its primary emphasis is upon conduct, behavior, action. At its best, the effect of Hebraism is to urge the individual to

conduct himself in accordance with what he knows is right and good. However, the Hebraism of Arnold's countrymen is perverted, he argues, because it is not checked or balanced by what he refers to as "Hellenism." The essential characteristic of Hellenism is "spontaneity of consciousness," and its primary emphasis is upon "sweetness and light," or "beauty and intelligence." Hebraism without Hellenism is truncated: it is reduced to energetic activity without an adequate awareness of good ends and right means. With its insistence upon spontaneity of consciousness, or intelligence and knowledge, Hellenism is the indispensable complement to the strictness of conscience in Hebraism. Either alone is incomplete. Yet the English are currently deficient in Hellenism, Arnold announces, and the bent to enact the will of one's ordinary self threatens to ensue in personal and social anarchy.

The solution to the problem, so he recommends, is "culture." And culture is nearly, but not quite, identical with Hellenism. In itself, Hellenism is simply that spontaneity of consciousness which delights in beauty and intelligence for their own sake. But when Hellenism is united with Hebraism--when the demand of the conscience that one conduct himself in accordance with what he senses as right is united with the effort of consciousness to learn what is good--then the resulting union is "culture." Thus culture is spontaneity of consciousness devoted to the quest for a knowledge of goods ends and right means. It is the exercise of <u>reason</u> upon human

activity, individual and social. The use of culture is intended to reduce the errors of anarchy by discovering generally acceptable ideas of the true, the good, and the beautiful--in short, of perfection. And in order to do so effectively, it must be disinterested--concerned to discover not who is right but what is right.

Such "culture" is the essential instrument of the social critic, and Arnold tried to wield it in his criticism of society. But he also recommended that every man should use it. The solution to the problem of anarchy, he believed, was a wide-spread and general practice of culture by individuals; for social anarchy is ultimately the consequence of individual anarchy. And the anarchy of individualism, as we have seen, consists in everyone's asserting his ordinary self. Yet the self does not ordinarily pursue perfection; rather, it pursues its own narrowly interested activities.

But what happens when one endeavors to be disinterested and to exercise reason in directing his life? The effect, so Arnold insists, is to take him out of his ordinary self. He begins to criticize the ends to which the self is ordinarily devoted; he begins to perceive that they are not truly good and beautiful, that they do not constitute an adequate ideal of perfection. Arnold assumes that if his countrymen, individually and collectively, will but exercise their reason in this manner, then they will surely arrive at uniform notions on important matters, or at least they will be much more likely

to do so than if they all follow their interested passions. The impulses of interested passions are various and lead to anarchy. But reason--if it is right reason--is authoritatively unifying. Relative to human nature, there are circumstances in the world that are bad and good and, among the good, the better and the best. Passion judges not; it accepts its impulse as a motive to action. But reason can discern, evaluate, and choose the right and the good.

After exercising his right reason upon the idea of human perfection, the individual will discover a more adequate conception of the ideal of the good man. Thus Hellenism or culture or right reason will refine and purify his knowledge of worthy ends. Then Hebraism, with its conscientious impetus to enact what it knows is best, will move the individual to realize his new vision of the ideal man: he will strive to transform himself, to actualize insofar as possible his potential to become the ideal. In so striving, he will transform his ordinary self and actualize the potential of his best self. The best self of the individual is the state nearest to perfection that he can achieve. It is the actualization of his potentiality to achieve an internal, general, and harmonious development of his human powers.

What precisely are the "powers" that constitute "the beauty and worth of human nature"? As we have had occasion to indicate before, the content of Arnold's concept of human perfection, of the fully humanized man, is succinctly summarized

in the "Preface" to Mixed Essays (1879): "They are the power of conduct, the power of intellect and knowledge, the power of beauty, the power of social life and manners."[1] These are the specific parts involved in a general whole that includes both Hebraism and Hellenism. Hebraism is to be identified with the cultivation of conduct, which is three-fourths of life; and Hellenism, the other one-fourth of life, is to be identified with the cultivation of social life, of beauty, and of intelligence. That this is an adequate conception of human perfection, that it is an ideal image of the good man, the disinterested exercise of right reason, so Arnold assumed, must readily concur. It is to this conclusion that culture--or Hellenism tempered with the moral motive of Hebraism--leads us. And Hebraism--tempered with the guiding wisdom of Hellenism--will then lead the individual to cultivate the development of his best self, rather than his ordinary self, by the active endeavor to realize this ideal in his own personality. It is to be noted that the spirit of culture, the intellectual quest for the best self, is itself incarnated in the ideal image of the good man; for the ideal man is one who cultivates his "power of intellect and knowledge." Right reason, which originated the concept of human perfection, is itself a power within the ideal that it envisions.

Finally, one of the correctives for social anarchy that Arnold recommends, it should be noted, is that the State

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[1]Arnold, Mixed Essays, p. x.

be so constituted as to represent the "best self of the nation." In the nation of England, as a republic with a monarchial figurehead, the political organization of the State consisted in its legislative representatives and administrative executives, the ministers of the crown. Arnold's recommendation amounts to a demand that voters elect (or that the crown appoint) only those from among them who are wise and good, those who have evidently realized their best selves to a certain extent, who exhibit indications of disinterested right reason in matters of state. It is in this manner that anarchy in high places may be lessened: by investing the state with the best of their best selves--the philosopher-statesmen.

In the "Conclusion" of Culture and Anarchy, Arnold cites Socrates as a concrete image of the abstract ideal of the Hellenized good man:

> Socrates has drunk his hemlock and is dead; but in his own breast does not every man carry about with him a possible Socrates, in that power of a disinterested play of consciousness upon his stock notions and habits, of which this wise and admirable man gave all through his lifetime the great example, and was the secret of his incomparable influence?[2]

The Image of Man in Religious Context

On an otherwise blank page immediately preceding the "Introduction" to his book entitled Matthew Arnold, Hugh Kingsmill juxtaposed the last stanza from Arnold's poem "Dover Beach" (with its image of the world as a "darkling

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[2]Super, V, 228-29.

plain") and the sentence, "Jesus hits the plain natural truth that human life is a blessing and a benefit . . .," from his essays on religion. The implicit significance of the juxtaposition is explicitly indicated in the "Introduction" itself: "The theme of this book is the collapse of a poet into a prophet."[3] The purpose of the juxaposition was to emphasize the contrast between the early poetic Arnold and the later prosaic Arnold. It also suggests an inconsistency in the visions of the earlier and later Arnolds.

The change in Arnold's communicative mode from poetry to prose is a salient fact in his career; but to characterize the change as a "collapse" is to misapprehend the complexity of Arnold's life as a man of letters. For as Arnold's imaginative vision broadened and deepened, as he began to perceive tentative answers to the great questions of his age, and as his personal and social purposes became more settled and clear to him, he naturally adopted the communicative mode that seemed most effective for his needs. He himself thought that he had done some of his best writing in his religious essays; and once he even expressed the hope that he would be most remembered for them. As to the suggested inconsistency between the early secular poet and the later religious essayist, the real significance of Kingsmill's juxtaposition is that, in Arnold's vision, human life <u>is</u> a "darkling plain" <u>unless</u> one practices at least the equivalent of a religious morality.

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[3]Hugh Kingsmill, "Introduction," <u>Matthew Arnold</u> (London: Henrietta Street, 1931), p. xii.

Nearly all of Arnold's later prose works are concerned, directly or indirectly, with an image of man as he ought to be. They are concerned with fostering the actualization of a humanistic vision of the ideal man. And the good man is, as Arnold conceived him, one who cultivates his capacities for intelligence, beauty, social life, and conduct. Thus Arnold's various writings are devoted to cultivating the development of these powers in his countrymen. But the most considerable of these powers, that which perhaps constitutes even so much as three-fourths of life, is the power of conduct. Therefore, it is natural that, holding morality in such high estimation, he should have written much to enhance this power for conduct in his countrymen.

Actually Arnold's four books on religion are more properly essays in morality; however, they are concerned not with a simple secular ethics but with a truly religious morality. In devoting so much of his writing to the matter of conduct, he developed a more complete and complex understanding of this dimension of human nature than of any other in his image of man. Yet this stage in the development of his comprehensive conception of human nature is also distinguished by the persistence of his doctrine of the two selves in man. His treatment of the moral dimension of human experience may best be understood by examing what he himself emphasized as the most important contributions of the Christian religion to the conduct of men--the "method of Jesus" and the "secret of Jesus."

The Method of Jesus

In Literature and Dogma, Arnold acknowledged the influence of Bishop Butler's approach in his own religious thought: "From Butler, and from his treatment of nature in connection with religion, the idea of following out that treatment frankly and fully . . . came to us . . . ."[4] William Blackburn has studied the nature of Butler's influence on Arnold. What Arnold admired in the Bishop, Blackburn concludes, was not his knowledge of human nature and religion but the soundness of his approach to the understanding of such matters. For Butler's approach was essentially naturalistic, and this accorded well with Arnold's consistent emphasis on the "natural truth of Christianity" and its experiential validity in human life. But in carrying out his naturalistic approach, Bishop Butler had arrived at an almost mechanistic conception of man. Even in his early poetry, Arnold had repudiated the rationalistic faculty psychology of the Bishop in his sonnet entitled "Written in Butler's Sermons." And much later in the essay entitled "Bishop Butler and the Zeit-Geist," published in Last Essays on Church and Religion, Arnold asserted that the spirit of the times had rejected Butler's view of human nature but accepted his naturalistic assumptions. Bishop Butler's enduring value, he insists,

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[4]Arnold, Literature and Dogma, p. iv.

abides in his experiential approach to religion, in his treating it thus with intellectual seriousness.[5]

This insistence on an experiential perspective in ethical matters Arnold also admired in St. Paul. All morality, Arnold believed, has its origin in our experience of two selves--the moral self and the immoral or amoral self. In a passage from the "Preface" of Last Essays on Church and Religion, he describes this experience of the two selves in human nature.

> It will generally be admitted . . . that all experience as to conduct brings us at last to the fact of two selves, or instincts, or forces,--name them how we will, and however we may suppose them to have arisen,--contending for the mastery in man: one, a movement of first impulse and more involuntary, leading us to gratify any inclination that may solicit us, and called generally a movement of man's ordinary or passing self, of sense, appetite, desire; the other, a movement of reflection and more voluntary, leading us to submit inclination to some rule, and called generally a movement of man's higher or enduring self, of reason, spirit, will. The thing is described in different words by different nations and men relating their experience of it, but as to the thing itself they all, or all the most serious and important among them, agree.[6]

Of course, in our post-Freudian world, we describe this experience in terms of the conflict between the id and the superego--the primitive biological drives of the person as opposed to his culturally conditioned "conscience," with its social inhibitions and prohibitions concerning the good and the bad, the right and the wrong.

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[5]William Blackburn, "Bishop Butler and the Design of Literature and Dogma," Modern Language Quarterly, IX (June, 1948), 199-207.

[6]Arnold, "Preface," Last Essays on Church and Religion, p. 166

But this identification of the "selves" as Arnold conceived them is not so easy and simple as it seems. In general, the doctrine of the two selves here set forth in a religious context corresponds to the dualism of the "ordinary self" and the "best self" explained in Culture and Anarchy. However, the concept of the "best self" has been extended and enlarged to that of the "higher self." In Culture and Anarchy, the "best self" was associated with Hellenism, the element of right reason. In the "Preface" to Last Essays on Church and Religion, the "higher self" seems closely associated with the conscience, the element of Hebraism. Yet, even in Culture and Anarchy, the best self functioned somewhat as a conscience, opposing the passionate impulses of the ordinary self. And, on the other hand, the higher self is represented as much more than a limited set of inhibitions and prohibitions: it functions as "a movement of reflection and . . . reason . . . ."[7] It is clear, then, that the "higher self" cannot be strictly identified with the superego. Nor can the "best self" be strictly identified with the ego of Freudian psychology--the reality-oriented rational consciousness. Rather, both the best self and the higher self are obviously closely related. In the terms of modern depth psychology, they refer to a psychological process that involves both the superego and the ego; and in Arnold's terms, this

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[7] Ibid., p. 166.

psychic process represents a synthesis of Hebraism and Hellenism: in other words, it is "culture" at work in another context. The "higher self" is the "cultured self," using both its power of intelligence and its power of conduct--"spontaneity of *consciousness*" and "strictness of conscience."

Our understanding of Arnold's concept of the higher self may perhaps be enhanced by recalling our discussion of "Empedocles on Etna." In discussing the poem, we had occasion to refer to the Hindu doctrine of the Self, as opposed to the self, with which Arnold was acquainted from his reading of the Bhagavad Gita. Indian religious philosophy distinguishes between the lower self, or jiva, which is attached to an individual body, and the higher Self, or Atman, which seeks to unite with Brahman, the universal spirit.[8] This is not to suggest that Arnold adopted the Hindu conceptions, for the dualism was available to him through his own Christian tradition in the Pauline distinction between the "flesh" and the "spirit," warring against each other in human nature. Rather, Arnold probably found in the Indian doctrine an additional confirmation of the universal moral experience of the two selves within man.

Of course, there are not really two selves inside man. The term "self," used in this sense, is to be understood not literally but figuratively. Experientially, it is as if there

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[8]Troy Wilson Organ, The Self in Indian Philosophy (London: Mouton and Company, 1964), p. 46.

were two persons within the one body--a holy spirit and an evil spirit--each seeking dominion. Perhaps the words of St. Paul, which Arnold quoted on more than one occasion, describe the experience of conflict between the flesh and the spirit in a manner that is more readily apprehensible to our occidental modes of perception: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Romans 7:22-23). The conflict is here represented as one between the "law" of the mind and the "law" of the members--the body as conceived apart from the mind. In other words, the conflict, even as experienced through the linguistic forms of primitive Christian culture, is between the insistent pressure of the physiological drives in the biological organism and a restrictive influence recognized as having its source and origin in the "mind." However, for Paul, who was both Hebraized and Hellenized, the mind was the rational soul, the Greek psyche, which participated in the nature of the universal logos, the spirit of God. But, for the humanistically oriented Arnold, the mind--as the source of the best or higher self--is an organic and self-sufficient process. Nevertheless, the experiential effect is much the same. One is conscious of a conflict between, on the one hand, the impulses of the flesh, the passions, the id, or the lower self and, on the other hand, the evaluative response of the spirit, the reason, the ego-superego, or the higher self.

One of the great effect of Jesus' teachings, Arnold declared in Literature and Dogma, was to restore emphasis on this source of moral wisdom within and to recommend a procedure for drawing upon it--the method of Jesus:

> Christ's "method" directed the disciple's eye inward, and set his consciousness to work; and the first thing his consciousness told him was, that he had two selves pulling different ways. Till we attend, till the method is set at work, it seems as if "the wishes of the flesh and of the current thoughts" were to be followed as a matter of course; as if an impulse to do a thing must mean that we should do it. But when we attend, we find that an impulse to do a thing is really in itself no reason at all why we should do it; because impulses proceed from two sources, quite different, and of quite different degrees of authority . . . . And the moment we seriously attend to conscience,to the suggestions which concern practice and conduct, we can see plainly enough from which source a suggestion comes, and that the suggestions from one source are to overrule those from the other.[9]

The purpose of the "method" is to enable the person to learn, in a particular situation, what would be the right and good course of conduct to pursue. The method amounts to a process of stopping and thinking before acting. It is a process of meditation in which one consults both his rational "consciousness" and his moral "conscience"--the Hellenistic and Hebraistic elements in his personality. It is the habit of counting to ten, as it were, before the pitch of passion quite overwhelms one--of having second thoughts and reflecting on what is best for the whole man as a member of the social community, not immediately implementing the irrational impulse

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[9]Arnold, Literature and Dogma, p. 182-83.

of an unintegrated physiological drive in a burst of anger, fear, or lust. This method, it should now be clear, is perhaps as much that of Matthew Arnold as of Jesus Christ.

Arnold was also wise not to identify the higher self strictly with the "conscience," in the narrow sense of what we now know as the superego. Rather, his concept of the higher self also comprehends the rational "consciousness" of the ego. In this respect, his ideas are in accord with those of the modern depth-psychologist, Erich Fromm. In his book entitled Man For Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics, Fromm distinguished between what he designates as the "authoritarian conscience" and the "humanistic conscience." "The authoritarian conscience is the voice of an internalized external authority, the parents, the state, or whoever the authorities in a culture happen to be."[10]

> The most important point . . . is the fact that the prescriptions of authoritarian conscience are not determined by one's own value judgment but exclusively by the fact that its commands and tabus are pronounced by authorities. If these norms happen to be good, conscience will guide man's action in the direction of the good . . . . If they are bad, they are just as much a part of conscience.[11]

Arnold, like Fromm, was aware that conscience is culturally conditioned. In a passage defending the wisdom of the Protestants in breaking with the authoritarian structure of

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[10]Erich Fromm, Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics (Premier edition; Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications Inc., 1965), p. 148.

[11]Ibid., p. 149.

of Roman Catholicism, he wrote: "The true force of Protestantism was its signal to return to the individual conscience,--to the method of Jesus. But a man's conscience does not necessarily tell him right on all points all at once . . . ."[12] The demands of the superego can be as irrational as the impulses of the id. Therefore, the rational consciousness must supplement the conscience: the ego must complement, and even correct, the superego. And this is precisely the point that Fromm makes in his discussion of the "humanistic conscience." For the humanistic conscience is not the "voice of an internalized external authority" but the "voice of our true selves which summons us back to ourselves, to live productively, to develop fully and harmoniously--that is, to become what we potentially are."[13] Here the "humanistic conscience" seems to be operating much as the "right reason" of the best self in Culture and Anarchy, enunciating an inward, general, and harmonious ideal of perfection for the ordinary self to actualize. Arnold's doctrine of the best or higher self, like Fromm's conception of the humanistic conscience, unites the motive of goodness with the guidance of wisdom. And goodness and wisdom (with beauty) are, of course, the sweetness and light of culture.

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[12]Arnold, "Preface," God and the Bible, p. xxviii.

[13]Fromm, Man For Himself, p. 163.

The Secret of Jesus

> Thus after putting him by his method in the way to find what doing righteousness was, by his secret Jesus put the disciple in the way of doing it. For the breaking the sway of what is commonly called one's self, ceasing our concern with it and leaving it to perish, is not, Jesus said, being thwarted or crossed, but living.[14]

The "method of Jesus," as Arnold understood it, enables one to learn what is the true, beautiful, and good thing to do. This process of consulting the "humanistic conscience" is superior to other ethical systems, in Arnold's view, because it emphasized the spirit of wisdom and goodness rather than the letter of the law. In any situation, the use of the method is designed to afford one access to his best understanding of the good end and of the right means. In its way, the method of conscience is a version of "situation ethics," But it is in no sense an endorsement of moral relativity, for it is based on principles that, if not absolute, are at least imperative; and the application of its principles to specific situations is governed by rules that, if not dogmatic, are nevertheless general--not to be broken, unless, in an exceptional circumstance, the principles could be better served by other means. It is interesting in this regard to note a statement by Arnold in his essay entitled "Count Leo Tolstoi," included in Essays in Criticism, Second Series. Commenting on Tolstoi's reduction of Christ's sermon on the mount to five

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[14]Arnold, Literature and Dogma, p. 184.

absolute commandments, he offers a critical reservation: "Christianity cannot be packed into any set of commandments."[15] Rather, it is a source or temper, he says, not a system.

> And the reason mainly lies in the character of the Founder of Christianity and in the nature of his utterances. Not less important than the teachings given by Jesus is the temper of their giver, his temper of sweetness and reasonableness, of epieikeia.[16]

But knowing what is best, hard as it may be to learn, is yet only half, and that the easier half, of exercising one's power of conduct aright. There still remains the matter of bringing oneself to act in accordance with what one knows. And the great superiority of a religion over an ethical system, and of the Christian religion over other religions, is in the aid that it affords to the moral life. The function of religion, we remember, is to motivate morality by affording emotional inspiration. The use of the Bible, as religious poetry, is one means of attaching emotional associations to matters of conduct. But the greatest aid to the moral life is, so Arnold believed, the emotional motivation afforded by the "secret of Jesus," which complements the "method of Jesus."

In St. Paul and Protestantism, Arnold declares that the secret of Jesus (although he had not so labeled it then) was the essential doctrine of Paul, his central teaching:

> This is Paul's conception of Christ's sacrifice. His figures of ransom, redemption, propitiation, blood,

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[15]Arnold, "Count Leo Tolstoi," Essays of Criticism, Second Series, p. 295.

[16]Ibid., p. 296.

> offering, all subordinate themselves to his central idea of identification with Christ through dying with him, and are strictly subservient to it.[17]

The italicized phrase refers to the "secret of Jesus" that modern man may also use. Arnold describes the secret at greater length in another passage:

> If any man be in Christ, said Paul--that is, if any man identifies himself with Christ by attachment so that he enters into his feelings and lives with his life,--he is a new creature; he can do, and does, what Christ did. First, he suffers with him. Christ throughout his life and in his death presented his body a living sacrifice to God; every self-willed impulse blindly trying to assert itself without respect of the universal order, he dies to.[18]

As Arnold interprets Paul, Jesus' secret was, in effect, to associate the two selves--the lower and the higher--with two ways of life: the way of "death" or spiritual atrophy and the way of "life" abundant. In committing himself to the way of life and to the higher self as "the real law of his being," Jesus symbolically put to death his lower self and, in every situation of moral decision, reaffirmed the sacrifice.[19] In the conflict between the flesh (which leads to "death") and the spirit (which leads to "life"), we must identify with Jesus and commit ourselves to the side of the higher self and of life. "The motions of sin in ourselves we succeed in mortifying [putting to death], not by saying to ourselves that

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[17]Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 95.

[18]Ibid., p. 64.

[19]Arnold, Literature and Dogma, p. 185.

they are sinful, but by sympathy with Christ in his mortification of them."[20] Of course, at this point we are very close either to Medieval asceticism or to Victorian prudery--the denial of the flesh. As a man of his time, Arnold was prudish in his way, denouncing the excesses of French "lubricity" and praising the virtue of purity, although he enlarged the concept to include the whole of conduct, not the sexual drive alone. But he was not ascetic, for more than once he criticized the practices of the Medieval ascetics as perversions of Christian morality. Ultimately he was concerned to control the expression of the physiological drives, not to extinguish them entirely. The lower self is not literally but figuratively put to death: it is to be subordinated to the discipline of the higher self. This is but to say that the ego and the superego must direct the expression of the id with goodness and wisdom for the sake of the whole person as a member of the social community.

It is interesting to consider Arnold's doctrine of identification with Christ in the light of modern depth psychology. Indeed, the word "identification" is now used as a technical term to designate a particular psychological process, and its present use is quite close to the sense in which Arnold used the word. It refers to the psychological process whereby one person so admires another individual that

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[20]Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 67.

he tends to assume his attitudes and traits: the person begins to imitate and to act as if he were the individual and thus, in the process, to condition his character accordingly. To the person, the individual with whom identification is made represents the sum of desirable manhood. In psychological terms, he is referred to as the "guiding fiction" or the "ego-ideal."

One psychologist, Ernest M. Ligon, has discussed the use and effect of psychological identification with Jesus in the formation of character. In his book, Dr. Ligon presumes neither to question nor to affirm the ultimate validity of Christian doctrines; rather, he is primarily interested in their effect on the personality when an individual assumes that they are true and commits himself seriously to the task of living in accordance with them. As a psychologist interested in the conditioning of character, he asserts: "It is not intellectual assent to a code of ethics that constitutes character education. It is the transformation of the emotional attitudes so that the natural reaction of the individual is in conformity with the code of ethics."[21] And the most effective means of conditioning traits and attitudes is, he thinks, the psychological process of identification. But the choice of the "ego-ideal" must be carefully made, for the ideal with

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[21]Ernest M. Ligon, The Psychology of Christian Personality (Macmillan Paperbacks edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 344.

which the ego-consciousness chooses to identify may not be an adequate example of good character. From the perspective of psychology, the ego-ideal should be a maturely integrated personality, an example of psychological wholeness. And, in Dr. Ligon's estimation, the ethical character of Jesus is an excellent ego-ideal to use in conditioning the character of children. To integrate the personality around the social values that Jesus taught will surely result in the healthy self-control and the happy interpersonal relationships of a mature character. Not only must the ego-ideal be carefully chosen; the desirable ego-ideal must be presented effectively:

> If we are to bring up children to identify themselves with Jesus . . . we must cause them to admire and love him. To make him the personification of a set of very disagreeable rules of conduct will leave them perfectly indifferent, and Jesus will become for them like the model boy next door whom they despise but do not emulate.[22]

Dr. Ligon is less optimistic about transforming the character of adults, for the transformation of adults involves not a simple process of conditioning but a more complex process of reconditioning. Nevertheless, if the personality of adults is to be transformed or even altered, their adoption of an ego-ideal will be the best means of fostering the change. Thus "adults are also changed by the process of identification."[23] To this extent, then, the soundness of Arnold's

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[22] Ibid., p. 363.

[23] Ibid., p. 367.

insight in fixing upon the "secret of Jesus" as central in the religious morality of Christianity is corroborated by a modern depth psychologist.

In concluding Culture and Anarchy, Arnold pointed to the figure of Socrates as an ideal of the "best self" in action. In St. Paul and Protestantism, he pointed to the figure of Jesus as the ideal image of the "higher self."

> Socrates inspired boundless friendship and esteem; but the inspiration of reason and conscience is the one inspiration which comes from him and which impels us to live righteously as he did. A penetrating enthusiasm of love, sympathy, pity, adoration, reinforcing the inspiration of reason and duty does not belong to Socrates. With Jesus it is different.[24]

The difference between the two is that Socrates represents a rational secular ethics and that Jesus represents a religious morality--that is, morality touched with emotion--which may afford greater inspiration and motivation for ethical conduct. In a way, what Arnold recommended was, on the one hand, the use of the Socratic "method" in a dialogue between the selves within one in order to learn what is best and, on the other hand, the use of the process of psychological identification with Jesus in order to motivate one to do what he has learned is best.

The ideal image of the good man that emerges from Arnold's critical writings is complex. Human nature is represented as involving two "selves"--a positive self and a

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[24]Arnold, St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 66.

and a negative self. When man chooses to heed the intimations of his positive self, then he is led to actualize his human potential--his powers of intelligence, beauty, social life, and conduct. But if he elects not to oppose his negative self, then he will remain a mere fragment, never realizing the complete humanity of his positive self--"the real law of his being."

Arnold's conception of human nature, his ideal image of the good man, has occasionally been criticized as too eudaemonistic and ego-centic, which is another way of charging that he held a humanistic rather than a supernaturalistic ideal of human perfection. The orthodox objection to the humanistic position consists in a rejection of the humanist's faith in human nature, of his assumption that man has either the power to envision an adequate ideal of perfection or the resources within himself to actualize it.[25]

Arnold's reply to this criticism would probably be that his ideal is not self-centered, but "Self"-centered. Never did he suggest that man should affirm and fulfill his ordinary or lower self. Rather, even against his will, for the sake of his own integrity and for the sake of unity in the human community, man is called to a way of life that requires him to discipline himself. It is true that although

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[25]This objection of orthodox Christianity to traditional humanism is given expression, for example, by A. Dwight Culler in The Imperial Intellect: A Study of Newman's Educational Ideal (New Haven; Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 234-8.

it conflicts with the impulses of his lower self, the call to this vision of a different way of life also come from within man rather than from a supernatural dimension of being beyond human knowledge and, to that extent, is an affirmation of man's self--but of his higher Self. And, as a naturalist, Arnold would no doubt comment that, after all, even the traditional orthodox religious visions of the human ideal have the same source as that of the humanist ideal--the creative imagination in men of genius.

As to the difficulty of living up to the ideal, Arnold had no illusions. Unlike secular rational humanists, he did not assume that reason alone could control passion. As a more eclectic humanist, he was himself drawn to use and to recommend the ritual practice of religious meditation and psychological identification as aids to sustain the moral life. Evolved over a long period after much trial and error, the techniques of the religious life were, he recognized, grounded ultimately in sound psychological principles. They had "natural truth" in them, although orthodox Christianity gave them supernaturalistic explanations. To Arnold, they were effective techniques for drawing upon otherwise untapped resources of human nature in the psychic depths. And so he used some of the same religious techniques in pursuit of his humanist ideal as orthodox Christians used in striving to live the Christian life.

As an eclectic humanist, Arnold assimilated much of the Christian ideal of moral perfection within the larger context of his ideal of human wholeness--intellectual, esthetic, and social, as well as moral. Besides the Christian virtue of goodness, his image of man as he ought to be also included the more Hellenistic virtues of truth and beauty.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The thesis announced in the "Introduction" to this dissertation is that the works of Matthew Arnold express and create an imaginative vision of the human condition, naturalistic humanism, which assumed certain religio-mythic functions. Arnold was led to create his religio-mythic imaginative vision in order to resolve for himself the great questions of human existence--those concerning the nature, purpose, and relations of God, of nature, of society, and of man. His works express a vision that proposes a modern resolution for the anxiety implicit in the human condition: our conscious involvement in the mortal situation of peculiar creatures in a strange universe. After this initial enunciation of the thesis, most of the "Introduction" was devoted, first, to a discussion of Arnold's awareness that the original basis of the traditional Victorian cultural ideology, supernaturalistic Christianity, was inevitably disintegrating and, second, to a discussion of his conscious intention to foster the acceptance of naturalistic humanism as the new basis for the cultural ideology and to use its resources to fulfill the religio-mythic needs previously satisfied by a religious mythology.

The three chapters that constitute the body of the dissertation, then, were devoted to a topical analysis of Arnold's concepts of God, nature, society, and man, designed to reveal the naturalistic assumptions and humanistic principles that pervade, determine, and inform them. Now, having examined at length and in detail the conceptual content in the focal images of Arnold's imaginative vision, we are in a position to elaborate on the religio-mythic effect of his naturalistic humanism.

The statement that Arnold's imaginative vision has a religious function is not so surprising, of course, when we recall the circumstances of its origin. It was originally created to fill the vacuum of a disintegrating religious faith. Arnold's imaginative vision of naturalistic humanism is greatly different from the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity, yet both may be apprehended as ministering to certain religious needs. Only one has traditionally been cast in the mode of myth proper, yet both share the religio-mythic function: to resolve the anxiety implicit in the human condition (our conscious involvement in the mortal situation of peculiar creatures in a strange universe); to answer the great questions of human existence by providing satisfactory images of God, nature, society, and man; and to supply the sanctions for social institutions and for a cultural life-style.

The purpose of this concluding chapter, then, is to elucidate the sense in which Matthew Arnold's naturalistic humanism qualifies as a religious vision; to illuminate further how even in the nineteenth century his imaginative vision assumed certain of the religio-mythic functions previously fulfilled by the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity; to indicate to what extent Arnold anticipated and perhaps even partly inspired the contemporary movement of naturalistic humanism; and to suggest the continuing relevance and significance of Arnold's imaginative vision insofar as it is related to a small but impressive group of modern religious thinkers. In order to accomplish these aims, it is necessary, first, to discuss as briefly as possible the complex nature and function of religion and, second, to examine at greater length the religious position in the contemporary movement of naturalistic humanism (especially as it is articulated in certain writings of John Herman Randall, Jr.), relating and comparing it then to Arnold's imaginative vision.

The Nature and Function of Supernatural Religion

The institution of religion, like all social institutions, has experienced many changes, both in its nature and in its function, during the course of its development from primitive societies to sophisticated civilizations. Yet it has also retained a certain persistence of purpose and consistency of effect.

Most anthropologists and social scientists agree that religion had its roots in primitive man's practice of magic. Primitive religion evolved from early magical practices. But there is a distinct difference between magic and religion. According to one view, the practice of magic is associated with animatism, a primitive structure of belief that is to be distinguished from the later development of animism. The structure of beliefs in animatism is the natural consequence of normal imaginative processes operating in the primitive mind. As Clyde Kluckhohn suggests,

> The mere recurrence of certain motifs in varied areas separated geographically and historically tells us something about the human psyche. It suggests that the interaction of a certain kind of biological apparatus in a certain kind of physical world with some inevitables of the human condition (the helplessness of infants, two parents of different sex, etc.) bring about some regularities in the formation of imaginative productions, of powerful images.[1]

The relative uniformity of the human psyche and of the environmental and organic conditions for human life have almost inevitably and universally resulted in early animatistic beliefs, with slight cultural variations, as man evolved his hyper-consciousness and consequently emerged from his animal ancestry. The imaginative effect of animatism, as a primitive belief, is to invest the world of nature with a source of supernatural but impersonal power. The existence of this supernatural power, which anthropologists now call

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[1]Clyde Kluckhohn, "Recurrent Themes in Myths and Mythmaking," Daedalus, LXXX (Spring, 1959), 270-71.

mana, explained for primitive man the motive and process of extraordinary phenomena. All such manifestations of power in nature--the force of the wind, the motion of water, the animation of creatures, the great strength of certain men--were ascribed to concentrations of this supernatural but impersonal power. Thus mana was regarded as the cause of these effects.[2]

Against the background of this animatistic world-view, the emergence of magical practices may be understood; for the techniques of magic were evolved as a means whereby primitive man could relate himself to his animatistic universe and exert (so he believed) a certain measure of human control over the expression of the mysterious power of mana. The aim of magic, of course, was to use the power of mana for the benefit of the individual or society by exercising influence over nature and against enemies. In accordance with the psychology of the primitive mind, the basis of magic was the holophrastic principle that the part represents the whole and

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[2]Convenient summaries of anthropological conclusions about primitive magic and religion are presented by Ralph L. Beals and Harry Hoijer in "Religion," An Introduction to Anthropology (second edition; New York: Macmillan Co., 1959), pp. 527-563, and by Samuel Koenig in "Religious Institutions," Sociology: An Introduction to the Science of Society (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1957), pp. 107-128. One of the most comprehensive and authoritative treatments is that by George B. Vetter in Magic and Religion: Their Psychological Nature, Origin, and Function (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), to which this entire discussion is indebted.

and the sympathetic principle that like produces like. Ritual procedures--verbal formulas and action sequences--were used practically to implement and specifically to apply these general principles of magic. Thus, for example, the name of a person (or a hair from his head) was regarded as in some sense representing his essence, so that the manipulation of the name by words (or of the hair by actions) resulted in a corresponding effect upon the person--friend or enemy. To the primitive mind, magical practices were simply the use of certain mechanical means intended to achieve certain "natural" effects as their inevitable end. If the ritual procedure were precise, both in word and in act, then the expected consequence was assumed to be almost automatic: mana would deliver. Magic was thus a means of coercing the expression and manifestations of mana for human purposes. The intricacy of magical practices, which had to be precisely performed in order to secure results, fostered the development of the social role of magician, a specialist in such matters. The failure of a magical procedure could be easily rationalized, and such rationalizations were readily accepted. However, because of the psycho-somatic unity of human nature, the magician (shaman, witch-doctor, or medicine-man) often achieved a high degree of success. Easily inducing a receptive faith, anticipation, and suggestibility in the primitive minds of his patients and customers by his impressive ritual procedures,

the magician could often generate desired effects in their bodies, much as a modern hypnotist may do.[3]

Religious Mythology

The step from magic to religion was made with the advance from animatism to animism, which represents another stage in the mental history of mankind. Animism differs from animatism in that the concept of the supernatural is literally transmogrified. The supernatural dimension of existence is conceived not in terms of a mysterious impersonal force, mana, but in terms of certain mysterious personal powers--spirits. The psychological process which results in the personification of natural phenomena is that of anthropomorphic projection: the interpretation of the natural in terms of the human. At a certain stage in the mental history of mankind, apparently, the most plausible explanation of the world was that it is animated by superhuman persons with supernatural powers. Animism is tenacious. It is perhaps the most "natural" way for the human imagination to apprehend its universe and to account for its operation. Animistic beliefs have determined the world-views of the masses from prehistoric primitivism to twentieth-century Fundamentalism. Animism began to disintegrate only after the general cultivation of the analytical processes of the rational intellect

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[3]See Dr. Bernard C. Gindes, "Mechanisms of Hypnosis," New Concepts of Hypnosis (Hollywood, California: Wilshire Book Comapny, 1964), pp. 59-79.

in the modern period started to challenge the analogical processes of the intuitive imagination.

The mysterious spirits in animistic beliefs vary greatly. They range from vague beings scarcely differentiated from the impersonal mana of animatism through the highly personalized gods and goddesses of polytheistic mythologies to the mysterious "great spirit" of the higher monotheisms and (closing the circle) the almost impersonal "world-soul" of pantheism, doubtless the ultimate in animism. But, in nearly every case, the apprehension of the universe as "peopled" with spirits resulted in the emergence of a different procedure for interacting with the spirits in order to influence them.

> The belief in impersonal power [the mana of animatism] calls for a procedure . . . which does not involve the establishment of rapport with anyone. The individual seeks to effect the desired end by following a mechanical course of action, such as touching certain objects, pronouncing formulas, or even merely possessing the object endowed with power . . . . The belief in personal power, however, requires a procedure identical with the one used to establish rapport between two persons, or rather, between a man and his superior. Hence the use of devices such as love, reverence, and humility, but also, under certain conditions, command, sacrifice, and abstention or taboo.[4]

The aim of magic, grounded in the animatistic world-view, was to coerce and control the use of the impersonal power of mana; but the aim of religion, grounded in an animistic world-view, is to persuade and influence a personal spirit (or superhuman

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[4]Koenig, "Religious Institutions," Sociology, pp. 118-19.

person) to exercise its supernatural power for the benefit of the society or individual. Even as the effective practice of magic usually required a trained magician, so religion has its specialist, the priest--one on good terms with the gods and highly trained in the rhetorical techniques of divine persuasion.

Since primitive man believed that the personal spirits or gods were responsible as causative agents for all natural phenomena, he strove to placate the appropriate gods and to persuade them to assure the success of his endeavors, especially in those involving a large element of chance or great danger. Anthropologists have classified three clusters of experiences in which primitive men habitually sought supernatural resources of aid: "(1) the physiological facts of birth, puberty, disease, and death; (2) the contacts of man with the world around him and with the forces of nature; and (3) the individual's clash with his fellow men."[5] Anthropologists also distinguish between "two kinds of religious leaders in primitive societies--those (e.g., healers) who perform the rites of passage and help individuals in their personal crises, and those (e.g., rain-makers) who conduct the rites of intensification and intervene on behalf of the whole group."[6] Thus the specialization of the spirits--gods of the sea, of

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[5] Ibid., p. 111.

[6] Ibid., p. 119.

the earth, of the sky, and of the underworld and gods for all the affairs of mankind--required a corresponding specialization of priests.

The history of animism--the belief that natural phenomena are animated by supernatural spirits--is almost coextensive with the history of religion. Although the development has not been absolutely uniform, animism has generally evolved in most cultures through several successive phases: from a belief in multitudinous vague spirit beings through the gods and goddesses of the polytheistic mythologies to the later monotheisms and pantheisms. The evolution from the polytheistic phase to the monotheistic phase of animism represents a process of consolidation: the various functions of the many gods are ascribed to one comprehensive God-- the "great spirit." Usually the transition from polytheism to monotheism is initially characterized by the emergence of a "greater" god from among the "lesser" gods of the pantheon. Thus the God of the Hebrews, Jahweh, enucniated as the first of his ten commandments, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exoduc 20:3), and so squelched the recognition and worship of alien gods until He Himself was established as the one true God of Israel. And the latter stages of polytheistic mythology in Greece were marked by the growth in stature and significance of Zeus, the Father of gods and of men.

Religious Morality

Concurrent with the monotheistic process of divine consolidation, there is usually an increasing emphasis on ethics. The conceptual development of monotheism tends to become increasingly dominated by a process of moralization. The primary concern of the God becomes the social conduct of His worshippers. Indeed, the successoof human ventures, as determined by God, is finally conceived to be relative to the ethical goodness of the individual or society, to their executing the moral commandments of God. Success is determined not by the effective practice of divine flattery and bribery (prayer and sacrifice) but by the earnest practice of "godly" behavior--righteousness rather than burnt offerings. This evolutionary process is clearly discernible in the developing characterization of Jahweh as apprehended by the prophets through the course of the Old Testament, and there are traces of it in the gradual transformation of Zeus by the Greeks of the classical period from the capricious and lustful god in the ancient myths to the God of moral law and order.

Although the emphasis on morality emerged as the primary concern of God in the advanced monotheistic religious, anthropologists generally agree that morality is only a foster child of religion, that moral rules originally emerged from the trial and error of interpersonal interactions within the social organization, and that religion only adopted and

sanctioned the moral code later, after it was already created. "Ethics is believed to be the product of social evolution."

> Ethical values . . . are arrived at by man in the course of living, but they may be, and often are, appropriated by and incorporated into religion, giving the illusion of having been created by religion. Obviously religion plays an important part in promoting ethical values. In incorporating these values, religion strengthens and returns them . . . to the people, often in a refined and crystallized form.[7]

It is clear, then, that the general development of religion proper (as distinguished from early quasi-religious magical practices) may be divided into two fairly distinct stages--a primitive stage and a "civilized" stage. The civilized stage emerged when ethical demands rather than material welfare began to be emphasized as the primary concern of religion in the advanced monotheistic phase of animism. The singular insistence of advanced monotheisms upon the significance of ethical conduct has resulted in their being designated as the "higher religions." This civilized stage of religion has been predominant for nearly three thousand years and continues as the predominant form of religion in the present.

However, the evolution of religion from its roots in magical practices through a primitive stage to the civilized stage has not been a steady process of inevitable progress. Even in the higher monotheisms of the civilized stage of religion, one may still discern vestiges of magical beliefs and practices. For

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[7]Koenig, "Religious Institutions," Sociology, p. 121.

example, the concept of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament (the "power of God" invested in man) is apparently a modified version of the animatistic belief in mana, to be manipulated by quasi-magical techniques. Although the Holy Spirit was eventually elevated in orthodox dogma to the status of the third "person" in the trinity, it seems to be a vaguely impersonal power in much of the New Testament. Among the early Christians, dramatically sudden "possession" by the Holy Spirit, manifested through speaking in tongues, was apparently regarded as the necessary sign of true discipleship. And the ritual procedures through which possession by the Holy Spirit was accomplished closely resemble magical methods for manipulating mana. The ritual procedures were the verbal formula of praying over the convert ("Receive ye the Holy Spirit") and the action sequence of the laying on of hands. Evidently, the supernatural power was transferred to another through the hands, much as the closing of a circuit enables an electrical current to conduct its power to another object. (The analogy of electricity is often used to illustrate the concentrated power of mana.)

Yet in Christianity, as a higher religion, the use of this supernatural power was dedicated to ethical purposes, such as healing. Again, on the basis of recent knowledge about the dynamics of psychosomatic interaction and its amazing effects, modern psychology and medicine readily accept the reliability of most accounts of "miraculous" healing in the

New Testament (with a certain allowance for hyperbolic accretions in the early oral tradition). The early Christians did not use this amazing power for immoral or selfish ends. In the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where Simon the Sorcerer (or magician) offered to buy the power of the Holy Spirit from the disciples, Peter refused his offer, denouncing it as sacrilegious. Thus, although vestigial remnants from its magic roots and from its primitive stage continue to characterize religion even in its civilized stage, these are subordinated to the superior ethical purpose, which is primary and pervasive.

Conversely, it is interesting to consider, according to one of the foremost authorities, the basic function of mythology as the psychological sanction for morality even in the primitive stage of religion. In concluding The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology, Joseph Campbell uses three terms from classical Indian philosophy to designate "the ends for which men strive in the world": kama, "love and pleasure"; artha, "power and success"; and dharma, "lawful order and moral viture."[8] Identifying kama and artha (pleasure and power) as the basic "erotic and aggressive" character of man's biological nature, Campbell states that the development of dharma (social responsibility) is necessary to control this biological nature and to effect the socialization of the individual.

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[8]Joseph Campbell, "Conclusion: The Functioning of Myth," The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology (New York: The Viking Press, 1959), p. 464.

> Dharma, the sense of duty, the knowledge of one's duty and the will to abide by it, is not innate, but the aim instilled in the young by education . . . . The unsocialized thought and feeling of the very young child are egocentric but not socially dangerous. When the primary urges of the adolescent remain unsocialized, however, they become inevitably a threat to the harmony of the group. The paramount function of all myth and religion, therefore, has always been, and surely must continue to be, to engage the individual, both emotionally and intellectually, in the local organization . . . . The infantile ego . is. is dissolved for recombination in a ritual and actual experience of death and ressurrection: death of the infantile ego and resurrection of the socially desirable adult.[9]

In order to achieve a sufficiently authoritative sanction, the moral code is imposed as the will of an ultimate source. According to the level of culture in the society, this ultimate source and sanction may be conceived as "the will and magic of the 'ancestors,' the will of an omnipotent all-father, the mathematics of the universe, the natural order of an ideal humanity, or an abstract, immutable imperative seated in the moral nature of every man who is properly a man."[10]

It is clear, then, that the moralization of man has always been, as it continues to be, the great effect of religion, perhaps even as much so in its primitive state (at least among the members within the local tribe) as in its civilized stage. The ethical transformation of human life is the essential function of traditional religion. However, after this background of information about what the complex

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[9] Ibid., pp. 466-67.

[10] Ibid., p. 467.

nature and function of supernatural religion has been, we are prepared to proceed to a discussion about what, from the contemporary perspective of naturalistic humanism, the nature and function of modern religion should be, as adumbrated by Matthew Arnold and elaborated by John Herman Randall, Jr.

The Religious Vision of Naturalistic Humanism

Because of the changing nature and function of religion during the course of its long history, it is difficult to define. The attempt at definition often issues in statements that are either too vaguely general or too exclusively specific. One definition that hovers in the general yet points to the specific is suggested by this statement: "Most authorities maintain that religion includes a belief in supernatural or mysterious powers, that this belief is associated with feelings of awe, fear, and reverence, and that it expresses itself in overt activities designed to deal with those powers."[11] In the light of the previous discussion, it is clear that the existence of a religion involves the presence of at least three elements: (1) an assumed cosmology; (2) a personal goal or a class of social goals, based on certain human needs and their supposed relation to the assumed cosmology; and (3) a set of techniques and activities intended to interact with the assumed cosmology or to condition the person so as to achieve the goal and to fulfill the needs.

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[11]Koenig, "Religious Institutions," Sociology, p. 108.

A religion assumes a cosmology. Historically, the cosmology in a culture has not been the exclusive creation and possession of its religion. Rather, it has tended to be a common heritage of the entire culture. Thus the cosmology as such has been not specifically religious but generally cultural. Hence the social institution of religion, as a cultural mechanism for human adaptation, originally emerged to mediate between the needs of man and the strange forces of the mysterious universe as conceived in terms of the generally accepted cultural cosmology. As a social institution, then, religion is adapted to enhance human existence. The peculiar nature of human needs and their supposed relation to the peculiar nature of the assumed cosmology, as variously envisioned in different cultures, have determined the peculiar nature and function of the religious institution. In this sense, religion is a cultural response to the challenge of the supernaturalistic cosmology (an extra dimension of reality), as apprehended in terms of the cultural ideology.

Historically, the cosmologies to which the religious institution has had to adapt itself, in striving to enhance human life by fulfilling certain human needs, have generally been derived from some phase of animism--polytheistic, monotheistic, or pantheistic. In a universe supposed to be animated by personal spirits, as in the primitive polytheistic

phase, the goal of primitive religion is to persuade the spirits or gods to satisfy the desires of the society, to grant it success in its various affairs--economic, domestic, military, and personal, as well as moral--through abasement, adoration, offerings, prayers, and sacrifices. In a universe supposed to be created and controlled by a single "great spirit," as in the monotheistic phase, the main goal of civilized religion is to attain the state of religious beatitude or spiritual blessedness (both here and, in accordance with the cosmology, hereafter) through exercising various techniques of moral discipline so as to satisfy the ethical demands imposed by God as the condition for such fulfillment.

The religious institution has consistently adapted itself to the assumed cultural cosmology and interceded with the gods on behalf of mankind. Until the modern period, all popular cosmologies have been supernaturalistic. But in the nineteenth century, for the first time in the history of culture, a non-supernaturalistic cosmology began gradually to be widely established and eventually to be generally accepted, at least among the intelligentsia. The emerging cosmology was naturalistic in its assumptions. Now, the essence of naturalism is to regard the cosmos not as "Thou" but as "It." Almost in the middle of the Victorian age, the assumed cosmology of traditional supernaturalistic religion became intellectually untenable. The impact of the Enlightenment

began to be more generally felt, and the findings of nineteenth-century scientists and thinkers (especially in geology, biology, and astronomy) began irresistibly to discredit the literal acceptance of the biblical account. For those who narrowly identified religion only with belief in the supernaturalistic listic cosmology, the acceptance of the new cosmology threatened to undermine the foundation of religion. Further, the goal of religion--"spiritual" fulfillment--seemed to have no basis; for if there were no spiritual dimension in the universe, how could there be a spiritual dimension in man? And the traditional techniques of religion, incapable of interacting with an impersonal universe, were consequently regarded as futile. God, free will, and the human soul--all seemed incredible. For many of those who thought and for some of those who accepted their thinking, the theoretical foundations on which the practice of religion was based seemed to be irreparably shattered. The emerging cultural ideology, with its novel comcepts of man, society, and nature, seemed to dissolve and to exclude the traditional nature and function of religion.

The contention in this dissertation is that the poems and essays of Matthew Arnold, as a Victorian man of letters, expressed and created an imaginative vision--that of naturalistic humanism--intended to supersede the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity which had been the original basis of the traditional Victorian cultural ideology. In many

respects, the position implicit in Arnold's imaginative vision of the human condition (with its answers to the great questions of human existence) anticipated and perhaps even partly inspired the religious attitude of contemporary naturalistic humanism, especially as it is articulated in the writings of John Herman Randall, Jr.

In 1957 the Institute for Religious and Social Studies published a volume entitled Patterns of Faith in America Today in its "Religion and Civilization Series." The volume consisted of scholarly expositions by eminent men of their respective religious faiths, including "Classical Protestantism," "Liberal Protestantism," "Roman Catholicism," and "Judaism." The volume also included "Naturalistic Humanism" as a religious faith, and the man chosen to represent and to explain the movement was Randall.[12] Anticipating objections to the inclusion of naturalistic humanism as a religious faith along with the established religious traditions in America, the editor of Patterns of Faith, F. Ernest Johnson, defended his decision in the "Introduction":

> Without doubt, many readers will cavil at the inclusion of "naturalistic humanism" in an admittedly limited and selective treatment of religious systems. Why go so far

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[12]In a volume similar to Patterns of Faith in America Today but international in scope--Religions and the Promise of the Twentieth Century, ed. Guy S. Metraux and Francois Crouze (Mentor edition; New York: The New American Library, 1965)--the president of the British Humanist Association, H. J. Blackham, was selected to represent and to explain the religious position of "Modern Humanism."

> off the reservation? The answer is to be found in the actual situation that we are seeking to portray and interpret. Nothing is to be gained for religion by refusing to recognize that in our day some of the most authentic expressions of religious feeling and aspiration come from men and women who have great difficulty with the forms and symbols of traditional religion.[13]

And in explaining the selection of Randall to represent this religious faith, the editor wrote, "Indeed, Dr. Randall, our chosen interpreter of naturalistic humanism, is the author of one of the most perceptive and reverent interpretations of the role of religion in human life of which I have any knowledge."[14] The interpretive account to which the editor referred is Part IV, "The Meaning of Religion for Man," in Preface to Philosophy (1946). Randall, who is perhaps most generally well known as the author of The Making of the Modern Mind (1926), has also written of religion with a unique combination of sympathy and scholarship in Religion and the Modern World (co-authored with his father in 1929), in his discussion of Santayana and Dewey under the heading "The Naturalistic-Humanistic Philosophy of Religion" in Philosophy: An Introduction (1942), and in The Role of Knowledge In Western Religion (1958).

In order to elucidate, to demonstrate, and to substantiate the religious function of Matthew Arnold's

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[13]F. Ernest Johnson, "Introduction," Patterns of Faith in America Today (New York: The Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1957), pp. 3-4.

[14]Ibid., p. 4.

imaginative vision, we shall analyze the religious attitude of contemporary naturalistic humanism in terms of the three stipulated elements in religion (its cosmology, its goal, and its techniques) and then relate this religious attitude to the position of Arnold. Like the editor of Patterns of Faith, we shall regard the religious views of Randall (set forth in his several writings on religion) as the typical and normative expression of the religious attitude of contemporary naturalistic humanism, although frequently supplementing his view by references to other naturalists and humanists.

Organic Naturalism

In our analysis of naturalistic humanism, the first element to be examined is the concept of "naturalism." In terms of the elements involved in religion, as stipulated by our definition, "naturalism" is the assumed cosmology to which "humanism," insofar as it constitutes a religious attitude or position, must accommodate itself. Indeed, as Randall asserts in his essay on "Naturalistic Humanism" in Patterns of Faith, "A 'humanism' that confines itself narrowly to man's activities and the human scene alone, without taking into account the broader context of the great universe with its challenges and its resources, it both philosophically and religiously truncated and inadequate."[15]

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[15]John Herman Randall, Jr., "Naturalistic Humanism," Patterns of Faith in America Today (New York: The Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1957), p. 164.

In Religion and the Modern World, Randall indicated the naturalistic cosmology to which contemporary religion must adapt itself by quoting a scientist's descriptive account:

> We have to conceive of a universe incredibly vast, with thousands upon thousands of suns accompanied by their satellites, each moving swiftly on its course with the utmost uniformity and precision, each isolated and apparently independent, yet all parts of a harmonious whole, kept in their places by the mutual influence of one upon the other. And in this complex of complexes all matter is undergoing constant change. Slowly but surely there is continuous transformation, evolution. All that we know as inorganic matter, all that we know as life, has been built up from simple elementary substance and passes again to simple elementary substance. Thus has the earth, a minute attendant of one of the younger and less important stars, come into being. Thus has man and all other types of life evolved. He is an infinitesimal part of the great scheme, like all the rest; governed by natural law, like all the rest.[16]

Is the universe, so conceived, to be regarded as inimical to religious and human values? Indeed, during the course of the New Humanism movement in America during the second and third decades of this century, there was a conflict between the "humanists" and the "naturalists." For instance, in a critical survey of the movement, The Challenge of Humanism: An Essay in Comparative Criticism (1936), Louis J. A. Mercier entitled his concluding chapter with the query "Naturalism or Humanism?" And in Humanism as a Way of Life (1930), J. George Frederick explained "humanism" as the middle way between "supernaturalism" and what he referred to as "naturism" and described as pessimistic, cynical, and even nihilistic.

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[16]Quoted in Religion and the Modern World by John Herman Randall, Jr. (New York: Frederic A. Stokes Company, 1929), pp. 176-77. The "scientist" who is quoted was not identified.

What the New Humanists were reacting against, of course, was not so much the conception of a naturalistic cosmology as the school of "literary naturalism," based on a particular version of naturalism--that of mechanistic materialism. The cosmology of mechanistic materialism is indeed inimical to religious and human values. It denies the very possibility of their existence or realization. As Sterling Lamprecht wrote in an article on "Naturalism and Religion": "Again, and particularly in the last few decades, antireligious forms of naturalism were framed in terms of a contrast between the aspirations of men, which were said to be as futile as they were noble, and the ways of nature, which were said to be as destructive as they were indifferent." These forms gave rise to "a widely entertained supposition that naturalism is committed to the idea of 'an alien world' in which ideals are sure to be crushed by 'the trampling march of unconscious power.'" However, such notions are "no more an integral part of a sound naturalism than are militant agnosticism and agressive atheism."[17]

In "The Nature of Naturalism," included in the same volume with Lamprecht's article, Randall distinguished clearly between the unsound and the sound naturalisms:

> Indeed, the popular meaning which "naturalism" still bears, and which it retains in antinaturalistic circles, has been

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[17]Sterling P. Lamprecht, "Naturalism and Religion," Naturalism and the Human Spirit, ed. Yervant H. Krikorian (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), p. 28.

> derived from the scientific materialism of the nineteenth century--a body of ideas founded on a reductive analysis of all processes to the motion of masses, on the mechanistic dogmas of nineteenth-century physics, and on the materialistic metaphysics . . . . That reductive analysis, those dogmas, and that materialism have very largely disappeared from the store of scientific ideas today . . . .[18]
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> . . . . . .
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> Whatever the label, however, the major facts stand out: the "new" or "contemporary" naturalism . . . stands in fundamental opposition not only to all forms of supernaturalism, but also to all types of the reductionist thinking which up to this generation often arrogated to itself the adjective "naturalistic" . . . . The richness and variety of natural phenomena and human experience cannot be explained away and "reduced" to something else.[19]

Certain of the religious implications in this new cosmology have been articulated by James K. Feibleman in a recent article entitled "A Religion for Materialism." In beginning his discussion, Feibleman makes it clear that the "Materialism" in his title refers to "the new materialism" which is identical with what Randall calls "contemporary naturalism." Thus he distinguishes the sophisticated modern materialism from the rather naive materialism that Karl Marx used as the metaphysical basis of Communism. The nineteenth-century dualism of matter and motion has been superseded by a twentieth-century monism in which mass and energy are regarded as only interchangeable forms of a single ultimate

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[18]Randall, "The Nature of Naturalism," Naturalism and the Human Spirit, p. 360.

[19]Ibid., p. 361.

constituent of existence that cannot finally be identified either as a "particle" or as a "wave." "The simplest forms of matter [the atom] has been found to be enormously complex."[20]

As the fundamental constituent in nature, the enormously complex atom is the building block of all being.

> Above the atoms and constructed of them are the chemical elements and compounds; and above the compounds and constructed of them are the organic cells; above the cells and constructed of them are the organisms; and finally above the organisms are the societies and cultures. This series is now known as the integrative levels, which are after all nothing more than disclosures of the complex structures inherent in matter.[21]

The inherent tendency of the various types of atoms to enter into increasingly complex and relatively stable structural relationships, with the capacity to perpetuate and even to reproduce their organizational patterns, eventually ensued in the evolutionary emergence of novel modes of existence, each with its own uniquely peculiar qualities--from the atomic to the galactic and from the organic to the psychic. Thus the religious implication of contemporary naturalism is that "the spiritual aspirations of man can be considered among the properties of matter just as much as man himself because all organisms and their behavior, including man and all his works, are natural developments of materials."[22]

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[20] [20]James K. Feibleman, "A Religion for Materialism," Religious Studies, II (April, 1967), 214.

[21] [21]Ibid., p. 215.

[22] [22]Ibid., p. 214.

The capacity of the ultimate constituents in nature to evolve the "integrative levels" and to create autonomous organizations (or holistic structures)--as much so in physics, for instance, as in biology--suggests the name of "organic naturalism" as an analogously appropriate designation for the contemporary metaphysics or cosmology, thus distinguishing it clearly from the "mechanistic materialism" of the nineteenth century. Especially the element of determinism implied in the term "mechanistic" has made the older materialism seem incompatible with the individual's freedom to commit himself to the cultivation of human and religious values. However, the concept of free will in relation to "organic naturalism" (as opposed to mechanistic materialism) is clarified in this statement by John Herman Randall, Jr.

> To be very brief, I judge a naturalist today would say that the old question, "Is the 'will' of man free?" is no longer meaningful. It is indeed essential to hold that "man" is in a humanly significant sense not wholly "unfree" or "enslaved." But "man" is free only in so far as what used to be called "reason" and has now been reconstructed into "intelligence" is free to discover truth--especially truth about what is good. In the measure that intelligence is "free" . . . man can hope to determine his "will" by knowledge rather than ignorance.[23]

That is, insofar as the psychic consciousness of ends and means is cultivated, the individual person may function as a self-determining organism, not as an organization of atoms entirely determined by the mechanical operation of its external environment.

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[23]Randall, "Naturalistic Humanism," Patterns of Faith, p. 174.

The cosmology of organic naturalism, then, is not inimical to the values of man. On the contrary, nature itself is the source and promoter of these values (insofar as they are not "false" values), which must consequently be regarded as in some sense natural. Our attitude toward the universe must be conditioned by the consideration that, as Randall observed, the world "seems uniformly to have provoked men to practice some form of religion. In seeking to understand and appraise that world, we can hardly afford to neglect the fact that it leads or drives men to religion . . . ."[24]

> The aims and ideals which religions proclaim and teach are not merely human hopes and imaginings. They are discoveries about the nature of the world in which man lives. They are not the inventions of a being alone in an alien and hostile universe. They are rooted in the nature of things and in the conditions which determine human life.[25]

Since man himself is a natural process, a peculiar organism with psychic consciousness, the values that he envisions as the consequence of interaction with his environment are the creation of nature itself: in man, nature has come to consciousness, with the potential to envision and to determine its own becoming within the conditions of being.

What is the religious attitude of the naturalistic humanist toward the universe, the cosmic process of nature?

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[24]Randall, "The Meaning of Religion for Man," Preface To Philosophy, ed. William P. Tolley (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), pp. 297-98.

[25]Ibid., p. 348.

On the one hand, he may be moved to a sense of awe or reverence, as Randall has indicated in explaining Santayana's concept of "piety."

> Piety is no longer directed toward a supernatural being but to the vast universe in which we are bred and in which we develop. Such a piety is justified by the fact that nature gives rise in us to those interests responsible for our aspiring to goals or ideals. Ideals always express natural impulses or interests. . . . Piety is the attitude that looks to the source of our existence and our ideals.[26]

On the other hand, the naturalistic humanist must ultimately hold an attitude of agnostic wonder. After defining "agnosticism" as the "renunciation of both affirmations and denials about what lies outside the reach of human thought," H. J. Blackham asserts: "Nevertheless, in all rigour, agnosticism is the only defensible position, and it does not advance anybody one step on the road to atheism nor one step on the road to theism."[27] To observe that nature in some sense stimulates the emergence of moral values is one thing; to insist that nature itself is the creation of a "God" whose being can be apprehended is another matter altogether.

Yet, in "A Religion for Materialism," Feibleman suggests, "It is not inconsistent with materialism to suppose that there is a reason why there is matter, and nothing is hurt if we use an old name for the reason and call it God,

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[26]Randall, "The Naturalistic-Humanistic Philosophy of Religion," Philosophy: An Introduction (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1942), p. 285.

[27]H. J. Blackham, "Humanism: The Subject of the Objections," Objections to Humanism (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1963), p. 14.

provided of course that our speculations in that direction end there."[28] And the noted naturalist, Loren Eisely, after defining miracle as "an event transcending the known laws of nature," declared that "nature itself is one vast miracle transcending the reality of night and nothingness."[29] Moreover, in recommending a religious attitude toward the universe for modern man, Eustace Chesser wrote:

> Ths basic experience is that we are involved in a cosmic process, which extends from the infinite abysses of space to an infinitesimal electron spinning in one of our blood cells. No new information is given about this mighty process of unceasing change whether it is labeled Nature, Tao, Brahman, or God. The important thing is not the words we use, but what we feel. Since we are a conscious part of the universe we know it from the inside. When the mind becomes intuitively aware of its oneness with the Whole it finds peace.[30]

Thus the final religious attitude of naturalistic humanism toward what Spinoza always referred to as "Nature or God" is that of a reverent, perhaps even almost mystical, agnosticism.

It is evident that the images of God and of nature in the imaginative vision of Matthew Arnold, as explained in Chapter II, are closely related to the concept of "organic naturalism"--the assumed cosmology to which the contemporary religious attitude of naturalistic humanism has adapted itself. In general, Arnold's affirmation of

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[28]Feibleman, p. 221.

[29]Loren Eisely, The Firmament of Time (New York: Athenum Published, 1960), p. 171.

[30]Eustace Chesser, Life Is For The Living (London: George G. Harrap and Co., Ltd., 1962), p. 206.

human values set him apart from the radically reductive mechanistic materialists of his own day, while his definition of God in terms of Spinoza's pantheistic naturalism (or naturalistic pantheism) set him apart from the transcendental teleology of the supernaturalists. More particularly, his distinction between nature as it exists generally in the universe and nature as it exists specifically in the constitution of man (who must live in accordance with the moral law of his own being) closely resembles the concept of "integrative levels" of atomic organization in contemporary organic naturalism. In addition, his assertion that "God"--an aspect of nature as experienced from the perspective of the moral viewpoint--"makes for righteousness" is quite similar to Randall's interpretation of nature as the matrix of human and religious values. And, finally, Arnold's agnosticism (his refusal to make statements beyond experiential verification about the essential and ultimate <u>being</u> of God) is an attitude which marks his position as clearly consonant with that of contemporary naturalistic humanists.

Eclectic Humanism

In accordance with our stipulated definition, the second essential element involved in a religion (after its assumed cosmology) is a personal goal or class of social goals. In naturalistic and humanistic definitions of religion, emphasizing the positive function of the higher monotheisms in their civilized stage of development, the

traditional goal--the moralization of man--has been elevated as the supreme element. Thus Lamprecht states, "The religious life is . . . a life in which multiple interests and diverse values are brought into effective and organic unity through central allegiance to some integrating ideal." After observing that this definition is "one which both historically and philosophically seems legitimate," he insists that "at its best the religious life is a kind of fulfillment of life's most urgent moral needs."[31]

The concept of religion developed by Randall in Religion and the Modern World (from the perspective of naturalistic humanism) centers on the redefinition of "spirituality" and of "divinity." The concept of spirituality, as it must be conceived in contemporary terms, Randall indicates by quoting a statement of Santayana:

> A man is spiritual when he lives in the presence of the ideal, and whether he eat or drink does so far the sake of a true and ultimate good. He is spiritual when he envisages his goal so frankly that his whole material life becomes a transparent and transitive vehicle, an instrument which scarcely arrests attention but allows the spirit to use it economically and with perfect detachment and freedom. This spiritual mastery is, of course, no slashing and forced synthesis of things into a system; it is rather an inward aim and fixity in affection that knows what to take and what to leave in a world over which it diffuses something of its own peace.[32]

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[31]Lamprecht, pp. 20-21.

[32]Quoted by Randall in Religion in the Modern World, pp. 191-92.

"Spirituality, therefore, is a quality of the life that has organized its ends about some ultimate principle," so Randall suggests, "and acts always with that supreme end in view."[33]

The concept of divinity, as it must be redefined in contemporary terms, Randall indicates by quoting another modern philosopher, Bertrand Russell.

> If life is to be fully human, it must serve some end which seems in some sense outside human life, some end which is impersonal and above mankind, such as God or truth or beauty. Those who best promote life do not have life for their purpose. They aim rather at what seems like a gradual incarnation, a bringing into our human existence of something eternal, something that appears to imagination to live in a heaven remote from strife and failure and the devouring jaws of Time. Contact with this eternal world--even if it be only a world of our imagining--brings a strength and a fundamental peace which cannot be wholly destroyed by the struggles and apparent failures of our temporal life . . . . By contact with what is eternal, by devoting ourselves to bringing something of the Divine into this troubled world, we can make our own lives creative . . . .[34]

The "Divine" is a transcendent ideal--the kingdom of heaven--that exists in an eternal dimension envisioned by the imagination. In the religious tradition of western civilization, Christianity, the Divine in this sense has been personified and projected into the cosmos as "God." Or rather, it would seem, the originally envisioned ethical ideal was gradually attached to the greatest nature deity and eventually refined, purified, and elevated to the highest eminence in the hierarchy of concerns under the dominion of the "great spirit."

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[33] Ibid., p. 193.

[34] Ibid., pp. 242-43.

The effect of divinity (the "call" or appeal of God) is to create spirituality in man--supreme devotion to an ultimate ideal.

In "The Naturalistic-Humanistic Philosophy of Religion," Randall quoted the philosopher John Dewey's definition of religious faith as "the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive ideal ends, which imagination presents to us and to which the human will responds as worthy of controlling our desires and choices."[35] The distinctive characteristic of this definition is the insistence that religion is not a matter of fact but a matter of value. Religious faith is not belief in certain dogmas, like that of a mythological cosmology, as factually valid. Rather, it is concerned with the spirit, not the letter. The essence of religion is faith in the supreme value of a transcendent ideal--an imaginative vision of the ultimate good--to which one dedicates his life. Thus religion is never to be identified with the literal acceptance of any cosmology, "for the religious life may be lived under all the differing pictures which philosophy may present of the world."[36]

The Good Man. The German theologian Rudolf Bultmann has asserted that humanism and the Christian religion

> stand together in their faith in the possibility of objective knowledge of truth, in their faith in the validity

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[35]Randall, Philosophy: An Introduction, p. 290.

[36]Randall, Religion and the Modern World, p. 178.

> of moral norms, and in their faith in the idea of a law determined by justice. Thus they stand together in their faith in an invisible spiritual world beyond the visible world and in the conviction that man by his very nature belongs to this spiritual world.[37]

From the perspective of a Christian theologian, then, humanism is recognized as having these points in common with a traditional religious faith. But how does humanism differ from Christianity and from all other traditional religions? This is a matter beyond the scope of Bultmann's article, which was devoted to the delineation of similarities. However, in terms of our approach in this study, the religious vision of humanism is to be distinguished from that of traditional religions by the specific content in its particular concept of the ultimate good--the nature of its ideal goal. From the humanist's viewpoint, the ideal of traditional religions has been the "moralization" of man; but the ideal of naturalistic humanism is the "humanization" of man, a more inclusive goal. The ethical ideal of "the good man," as envisioned by an eclectic humanism, involves an insistence upon human wholeness.

Of course, the goal of human fulfillment is not uniquely the possession of humanism, for even traditional religions promise such fulfillment, the realization of what is of true worth in life, as at least the indirect effect of devotion to the ultimate good, which is God. Yet the religious vision

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[37]Rudolf Bultmann, "Humanism and Christianity," The Journal of Religion, XXXII (April, 1952), 81.

of humanism differs from that of traditional religions in that, first, its goal of human wholeness is primary and in that, second, the content of its concept of "wholeness" differs rather significantly from the more exclusively moral ideal of traditional religions. What, then, is the distinctively humanistic ideal of the good man, the fully humanized person? Human wholeness has been the historic ideal of humanism, although the specific content of the concept has gradually changed as man's knowledge of human nature has advanced. As conceived in terms of contemporary naturalistic humanism, the good man is one who has actualized his peculiarly human potentialities: physical and psychical, personal and social.

The value of the flesh has been affirmed by humanists since the ancient Greeks extolled the classical ideal of mind and body held in dynamic balance. H. J. Blackham has reaffirmed it:

> This body with which the human spirit is formed, which transcends itself in the work of its hands and in the utterance of its mouth, is the ancestral home, and at all times separation from it is the alienation of exile, and the return to it is the restoration of selfhood, breed, tradition, the recovery of health and love.[38]

Although the humanist heartily affirms the earthy flesh, he also insists on the affirmation of the human spirit. Man is not merely a body or "soma," for he also has a mind or "psyche." And, as we now understand, the two are

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[38]H. J. Blackham, The Human Tradition (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1953), p. 144.

inextricably interrelated: man is a psychosomatic unity--an organism whose physiological functions and psychological processes are reciprocally interdependent. The process of "mind" is the function of the "brain." Yet other animals also have the enlarged nodule of nerve tissue called the brain. The peculiarity of man is that of all the animals, he alone has developed cortical consciousness. The growth of the cortex or "gray-matter" in the higher center of the human brain, the cerebrum, resulted in the emergence of a high degree of intelligence. As Ernst Cassirer explained in An Essay on Man and as Susanne K. Langer explained in Philosophy in a New Key, the human mind eventually evolved the unique capacity for "symbolic transformation" of experience. Other animals can respond to "signals," but man is the only creature who creates and recognizes "symbols." The ideological creations and technological inventions of human culture are the end-products of various modes of symbolic transformation.

The great survival value of cortical consciousness is that it enabled man to respond more flexibly to his environment (than other animals bound by instinct) and even enabled him to create his own cultural environment. But the evolution of hyper-consciousness had another consequence: the emergence of human self-consciousness. Although other animals are aware of their environment, man is aware of himself as well. He is the self-conscious creature who senses the separation of "self" from all the "other," the remainder of

nature. As Erich Fromm has explained in Man For Himself, the emergence of the capacity for self-consciousness in man had the effect of creating certain "existential dichotomies."[39] Alienated from the world (in the sense of nature, society, and even aspects of himself), man now has a psychological need to express his powers and to relate himself to society and to nature in self-satisfying ways. In Fromm's view, man fulfills his psychological needs (as distinguished from his physiological drives) by relating himself to the world, mentally and emotionally, through "productive love" and "productive reason."[40]

Similarly, Herbert J. Muller has described the source of man's phychical uniqueness.

> Ripeness means a complete realization of potentialities, and the distinctive potentialities of man lie in his nervous system, more particularly in the cerebral cortex. Hence that is valuable, generally, which heightens, extends, and refines consciousness, and thereby increases the significance of experience; the traditional humanistic ideal of maximum consciousness, a full, harmonious development of human faculties, is a moral expression of the biological fact of growth. Hence that is bad which cramps, blunts, distorts . . . . In this view one can make out clearly the source of value in science, art, religion, philosophy, and all the interests and activities we call civilized. One can also make out the source of their abuse: the excesses that make for narrowness, disharmony, incompleteness.[41]

The humanist tradition has consistently emphasized that man should pursue "the true, the good, and the beautiful."

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[40] Ibid., pp. 102-113.

[41] Herbert J. Muller, "The Naturalistic Basis of Values," Science and Criticism: The Humanistic Tradition in Contemporary Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), p. 29.

These are values that fulfill the psychological needs of cortical consciousness. The full expression of psychic processes--sensuous, emotional, imaginative, and intellectual--ensues in the creation and appreciation of beauty, wisdom, and love. Other animals have a body, but only man has a spirit that can experience these values. To cultivate them is to actualize uniquely peculiar human potentialities. For this reason, at various times even in the history of humanism, the value of the body has been de-emphasized as insignificant. But the general attitude of the humanist tradition has advocated the classical ideal of balance, a harmonious relationship between soma and psyche with mutual fulfillment, although based on the controlled subordination of the physical to the physical in the hierarchy of human values.

But man is even more than soma and psyche. A modern holistic approach requires that we conceive of him as a "psycho-socio-biological" entity.[42] The ideal of human wholeness insists upon the cultivation of social values as well as of personal values. The "humanization" of man demands not only his "personalization" but also his "socialization." The humanistic conception of the good man has traditionally emphasized that man must experience a sense of community and of responsibility in his relationship with society.

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[42]Douglas W. Orr, M.D., Professional Counseling on Human Behavior: Its Principles and Practices (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1965), p. xi.

To experience a sense of community in relation to society, individually or collectively, is essential to the human wholeness both of oneself and of others, so modern psychology asserts. Without love, in the sense of satisfying interpersonal relationships, man is nothing. He feels so, and he acts so. The loneliness of personal isolation is crippling to the humanization of the person. The need for social interaction, sympathetic communication, and intimate affection is undoubtedly the strongest of psychological needs, the one that man neglects with greatest peril; for to do so may even jeopardize his very sanity. The violent man is the socially alienated man. Whether it is the love that we get or the love that we give which saves us, love is in any case necessary for salvation. One of the most essential elements in the universe of human experience is love.

In addition to the psychological need for satisfying interpersonal relationships with other individuals, man also has the need to fulfill himself as a unit in the communal organization as a whole. He needs to identify himself as a member of the social group and feel himself accepted as an integrated unit, contributing to the health of the communal body. The condition for this process of socialization is his assumption of a sense of social responsibility. The person must fulfill his "duties"--the essential requirements, as culturally prescribed, of his various social roles: as son, brother, friend, student, lover, husband, father, worker,

and citizen of the body politic. The relation of community is granted to him who assumes his social responsibility. Again, this "social contract" is needful both for the person and for the society.

Yet in the hierarchy of human values, "there must be an ultimate conviction," so Randall asserts, "by which lesser goods are judged."[43] And elsewhere he affirms, "The great religions have offered men a transcendent or 'spiritual' ideal that goes beyond their finite ends, and raises them above the mere search for material goods, for social goods, even for others."[44] Moreover, in explaining the effect of such an ideal on the person, he writes:

> The highest peace and the deepest satisfaction come to men only when their lives are centered, not in what is best in their own attainment, but in that beyond all possible attainment which is better than their best. No one ever becomes aware of his deeper spiritual possibilities, no one ever awakens to the nature of his true self, until he has found some transcendent ideal to which he dedicates the best he has to give.[45]

Further, Randall identifies the "core of the Hebrew-Christian moral tradition" as a "faith in the sacredness of the spiritual nature of every man," and he suggests that modern religion, although based on naturalistic and humanistic assumptions, must assimilate this core as its integrative focus.[46]

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[43]Randall, Religion and the Modern World, p. 227.

[44]Randall, Preface to Philosophy, p. 367.

[45]Randall, Religion and the Modern World, p. 206.

[46]Ibid., p. 227.

Finally, by "faith in humanity," he asks, do we not signify our conviction "that in every man there lies the possibility of developing higher capacities, the moral and spiritual qualities of character?"[47]

Now, the "spiritual nature" of man, as conceived by contemporary naturalistic humanism, is the human capacity to organize the ends and means of life in accordance with an ultimate principle. As Randall quotes Santayana, "To be spiritual is to live in view of the ideal."[48] Yet the transcendent ideal of naturalistic humanism, its imaginative vision of the ultimate good, is that of human wholeness. Is there a paradox here? On the one hand, religious humanism seems to assert that man must dedicate his life to an ideal that transcends the self, that he must live in the service of a cause greater than his immediate aims. On the other hand, religious humanism seems also to assert that the ultimate goal of life is individual fulfillment. Does humanism thus merely affirm that the highest value to which a man can devote his life is simply that of fulfilling his own desires? Does it affirm only that the organizing principle of life--the "spiritualizing" idea to which one should dedicate his supreme allegiance--is simply the cultivation and satisfaction of himself?

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[47] Ibid., p. 237.

[48] Quoted by Randall in Philosophy: An Introduction, p. 286.

The resolution of this paradox is indicated by Rudolf Bultmann in his article on "Humanism and Christianity." "It is . . . a complete misunderstanding," he writes, "to think that the ideas of freedom and autonomy deliver man from every transcendent norm, giving free course to his subjective, arbitrary will." For "humanistic faith," he explains, is not "faith in man as an empirically definable phenomenon."

> Rather humanistic faith is faith in the idea of man which stands as a norm above his empirical life, prescribing his duty and thereby bestowing upon him dignity and nobility. Humanism is faith in the spirit of which man partakes, the spirit by whose power man creates the world of the true, the good, and the beautiful . . . .[49]

The goal of humanism is not the affirmation of what man <u>is</u> but the aspiration to realize a transcendent ideal of what man ought to <u>become</u>. Dedication to an <u>ideal</u> of the "Self" is certainly not dedication to the <u>self</u>. The concept of "Self," as a human potentiality, is an unactualized ideal; but the self is already realized, and devotion to it is merely the perpetuation of the extant, the maintenance of the <u>status quo</u>. To respond to the impulses of the non-humanized self is merely "animality"; but to live in quest of an ideal, even of the Self, demands "spirituality."

At the very heart of the humanist ideal of the good man, the concept of what man ought to become, is the insistence that the individual must endeavor to contribute to the

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[49]Bultmann, "Humanism and Christianity," <u>The Journal of Religion</u>, pp. 80-81.

wholeness of other persons. And the greatest contribution one can make to the wholeness of others is that toward the fulfillment of their greatest need: not merely to provide them with material goods (although these must be shared) but to awaken them "spiritually," to introduce them to a self-transcending ideal. "If we take the word 'God' as the symbol of man's supreme allegiance. . . then faith in God may mean faith in the possibility of sharing ever more fully this vision of the highest perfection."[50] Again, "Faith in divinity is the hope that men may see more clearly the ideal possibilities of human life, and, seeing, reweave the tangled fabric of their lives."[51] Even in humanism, there exists the paradox of "Self"--fulfillment achieved through self-renunciation. The "good" humanist is engaged in the process of spending his life for the ideal of wholeness; and, if necessity requires, he may even feel impelled to sacrifice his life for the sake of love, as some have done in order to uphold for all or to extend to one the ultimate good.

Thus humanism is not the satisfaction of self but the cultivation of "Self," the quest to actualize an ideal. As such, it has the power to "spiritualize" the person who dedicates himself to the realization of that ideal in himself and in others. He is required to order his life by the light of an

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[50]Randall, Religion and the Modern World, p. 247.

[51]Ibid., p. 248.

"idea," not to live in the darkness of an ego-centric animality of immediate impulse. Yet the idea to which he dedicates his life is one that envisions human wholeness--physical and psychical, personal and social--as its goal, so that even the physiological drives of the biological organism, although subordinated and controlled in an integrated pattern of personality, are also to be satisfied in due order.

The Good Society. The humanist ideal includes the concept of "the good society" as well as that of "the good man." Although individual humanists may indicate that only a particular social order constitutes the good society, the tradition of humanism as a whole has not achieved specific agreement except upon certain general principles. The fundamental humanist assumption about the structure and function of institutions in the good society was stated well in the "Humanist Manifesto" of 1933:

> Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism.

As an individual humanist, Randall has advocated such social goals as "democracy," "social justice," and "a new world order" in which "great cultural ends shall at length replace in the life of nations the old ends of domination and greed and war."[52] The implementation of such goals, in accordance

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[52]Randall, Religion and the Modern World, pp. 238-41.

with the principle that society exists for the sake of man (not man for the sake of society), is the ultimate task of humanism as it strives to actualize an ideal vision of the good society.

The Good Life. As a way of life, humanism has been criticized as inadequate. The critic of humanism may even concede that the humanist ideal of the good life--one devoted to the humanization of man--is indeed good but insist that there is a better or even a best. This is a perennial criticism of humanism by traditional religions. But the humanist answer is that, far from upholding an inadequate ideal, the vision of humanism is more nearly complete and perfect than that of traditional religion. The inclusive goal of the humanization of man includes and transcends the more exclusive goal of the moralization of man. As Lewis Mumford has stated: "The good life is not only good for one's conscience; it is good for art, good for knowledge, good for health, good for fellowship."[53] Humanism has always remained eclectically open to assimilate worthy values from all sources, as it has often done. However, every proposed ideal must be compatible with the assumptions of a naturalistic cosmology in order to be acceptable to the humanist who values his intellectual integrity. Again, as Mumford has written:

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[53] Lewis Mumford, "Toward an Organic Humanism," The Critique of Humanism: A Symposium, ed. C. Hartley Grattan (New York: Brewer and Warren, Inc., 1930), p. 349.

> Just as the tormented abstentious of an Alexandrian hermit may be further away from true chastity than the physical union of a happy marriage, so every ideal end which ignores the nature of the universe and of man's constitution tends . . . to be both meretricious and ineffectual, since it is divorced from the means of realization.[54]

Besides those who criticize humanism as inadequate because its ideal of the good life is too "low," there are those who critize it on the ground that its ideal is too "high" for the common man. The ideal of contemporary naturalistic humanism is indeed high. In a chapter entitled "The Compromise of Liberal Religion" in Religion and the Modern World, Randall castigates the "social gospel" to which nineteenth and early twentieth century intellectual and ethical compromises led. The "social gospel," insofar as it advocated only the distribution of material goods and the satisfaction of physical needs in human animals, did not offer men an inspiring and ennobling ideal to arouse their spiritual capacities. Similarly, in Humanism As A Way Of Life, J. George Frederick discussed the "spiritual awakening" of Man:

> the "miracle" of lifting the individual out of pure instinct and animal self to a certain selflessness, a contact with forces greater than the petty, pedestrian, fleshly concentration on the lower man. No human being is a complete, individual human being until that spiritual awakening has occurred.[55]

This is too much to ask of the common man, so one line of criticism runs. It is unrealistic to expect the masses ever

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[54] Ibid., p. 349.

[55] J. George Frederick, Humanism As a Way of Life, (New York: The Business Course, 1930), p. 199.

to respond to such values, which can be accepted and practiced by only a small elite.

In replying to this criticism, H. J. Blackham remarks:

> Surely, all that has been said shows how sophisticated a position humanism is, suitable only for intellectuals, unintelligible and unattainable to simple people? Not at all. On the contrary, the simplest people will for themselves think that we don't know and can't know about ultimate things, that ethics are much the most important and certain part of the great religions and say much the same in all of them, that if you don't know the difference between right and wrong the parson can't tell you, that we should respect other people's convictions and way of life, that the Bible should be judged by common sense and moral sense, that it is reasonable to co-operate in a society which is regulated to serve the interests of all and not merely of a few or of some, that this is the only life we are sure of and we better make the most of it.[56]

Further, in response to charges of exclusiveness, the humanist replies that his ideal, that of human wholeness, is to be understood as inevitably transcendent in essence. It is an ideal vision of excellence, even of perfection, in man and in society that can never be realized. It is assumed and expected that, of course, every man can achieve only a measure of excellence, a degree of perfection. The goal of humanism is not for every man to become the complete and perfect incarnation of the ultimate good; rather, the goal is that every man should actualize his own vital potentialities insofar as he is able--that he become his own true Self, not that of another. The range of achievement will correspond to the variety of men.

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[56] Blackham, "Humanism: The Subject of the Objections," Objections to Humanism, pp. 22-23.

The third great criticism of the humanist ideal of the good life is that, even if true and even if good, it is nonetheless pointless. The imminent prospect of inevitable and utter annihilation is intolerable: before the fact and face of death, all human endeavor is futile, and the only authentic response to the mortal condition of human life is utter despair. Without more or better, life is meaningless. In discussing this attitude, Randall notes, "It is important to be clear that the question of the "meaning" of life is not primarily a question about facts, about what exists, but rather about what is worth while, about what it is all for, about what is good.[57] The humanist position asserts that although no supernatural source imposes a cosmic significance upon human life, there is nonetheless potential value in being. The pattern of life, from birth to death, may indeed be sensed by the individual as worthwhile for its own sake. It is better to have lived and then to die, most men will judge, than never to have lived at all. And those who want eternal life, after all, only want more life.[58]

That Matthew Arnold's imaginative vision was essentially humanistic and eclectic is evident. The close correspondence between the values in his vision of human "perfection"--intelligence and knowledge, social life and manners, beauty,

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[57]Randall, Preface to Philosophy, p. 357.

[58]See H. J. Blackham's defense against "The Pointlessness of It All" in Objections to Humanism.

and conduct--and Lewis Mumford's concept of "the good life" (good for conscience, art, knowledge, health, and fellowship) is obvious. The affirmation of the New Humanists that social institutions exist to enhance human life, to foster the humanization of man, was the principle that Arnold used in his criticism of Victorian culture as he strove to point the way toward "the good society," the state of true civilization. His reiterated criticism of civilization in Victorian England was that it is "impaired by a defective type of religion, a narrow range of intellect and knowledge, a stunted sense of beauty, a low standard of manners."[59] As Walter J. Hipple, Jr. states, "Victorian England, as Arnold saw it, was characterized by vulgarity, hideousness, ignorance, violence--the defects of the four powers of social life and manners, beauty, intellect, and conduct."[60] In short, Arnold's aim in all his endeavors was to encourage his countrymen to achieve the goal of eclectic humanism--human wholeness: the good man living the good life and working for the good society. The humanist ideal of "human wholeness," then, is virtually identical with Arnold's own concept of "the good man," his vision of "human perfection." In making man the measure of all things and in measuring man himself by an ideal standard of completeness and perfection, Arnold is definitely related to the general tradition of

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[59]Arnold, "A Word More About America," Five Uncollected Essays of Matthew Arnold, p. 6.

[60]Walter J. Hipple, Jr., "Matthew Arnold, Dialectician," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXXII (October, 1962), 8.

humanism and is certainly a significant ancestor of contemporary naturalistic humanism. Thus, for instance, in Objections to Humanism, editor H. J. Blackham quoted Arnold twice in his introduction and once in his conclusion. And, again, Sterling P. Lamprecht remarked on the resemblance of Santayana's treatment of religion to that of Arnold in his article on "Naturalism and Religion."

Spiritual Discipline

According to our stipulated definition, the third essential element of religion (after its cosmology and its goal) is a set of techniques and activities intended to interact with the cosmology or to condition the person so as to achieve the goal. Because the assumed cosmology of contemporary humanism is naturalistic, it is no longer tenable to suppose that religious techniques can persuade or influence the spirits of the air to break the laws of nature in order to favor one's own enterprise beyond that of one's neighbor. Consequently, contemporary religious techniques must rather concentrate on conditioning the person so that he may achieve the goal--the actualization of his vital human potentialities.

In "The Naturalistic-Humanistic Philosophy of Religion," Randall invoked John Dewey's distinction between having a "religion" and being "religious."[61] The "religious" individual is one who holds a certain attitude toward human

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[61]Randall, Philosophy: An Introduction, p. 275.

experience, but a "religion" involves an organized institution. Ac
According to this distinction, humanism has traditionally been more "religious" and less a "religion." It has not been a religion because it has largely lacked the spiritual techniques and organized activities of the traditional religions. However, contemporary naturalistic humanists are beginning, like Matthew Arnold, to exhibit an increasing appreciation for the value of these practices. The two religious practices, or spiritual disciplines, that have been most effective for conditioning the character of the individual in traditional religions are various forms of meditation and of communion.

Meditation. As Kingsley Martin has written: "Prayer may be the concentration of the mind upon purposes which are more likely to be fulfilled if clearly formulated and deliberately repeated. The West has forgotten the value of meditation."[62] The pragmatic experience of religious traditions, based upon centuries of trial and error, has consistently recommended the practice of meditation as an aid to the spiritual life and to psychic health. Now, modern depth-psychology is learning why meditation is a useful practice and how it can be made even more effective.

It is a phenomenon of man's mental life that he tends to experience certain of his psychic processes--id, ego, self-image, and superego--almost as if they were separate and

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[62]Kingsley Martin, "Is Humanism Utopian?" Objections to Humanism, pp. 99-100.

distinct persons within him. The motivations to behavior originating from the several psychic sources may be apprehended as inner "selves" whose still small "voices" urge man to act or to refrain from action. After noting that psychologists have long described "personality as a cast of characters," Jerome Bruner remarked: "It is far from clear why our discordant impulses are bound and structured in a set of identities--why one pattern of impulse is the self-pitying little man in us, another the nurturing protector, another the voice of moral indignation."[63] And Wayne E. Oates explains "demon possession" as the alienation within the disintegrated personality of an isolated pattern of impulses which assume an individuated character and control the behavior of the "demon-possessed" person.[64] The psycho-dynamics of spiritual mediums, through whom the dead are supposed to speak, has been described in similar terms by Ira Progoff.[65] Thus, in both normal and abnormal mental experience, man tends to interact with personified versions of his psychic processes. However, normally, the several psychic processes are integrated and usually resolve their conflicts by accepting the decision of

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[63]Jerome S. Bruner, "Myth and Identity," Daedalus, LXXX (Spring, 1959), 352.

[64]Wayne E. Oates, "The Religious Dimensions of the Destruction of Personality," The Religious Dimensions of Personality (New York: Association Press, 1957) pp. 197-218.

[65]Ira Progoff, The Image of An Oracle: A Report on Research into the Mediumship of Eileen J. Garret (New York: Garrett Publications, 1964).

the ego; but in the abnormal personality, one or more psychic process may be alienated from the others, beyond the control of the ego.

The thesis of Bruner's article on "Myth and Identity" is that "personality imitates myth in as deep a sense as myth is an externalization of the vicissitudes of personality."[66] Such a mythological figure as, for instance, the medieval conception of Satan--who closely resembles a crimson satyr with Neptune's phallic trident--is obviously a personified projection of the id, especially of the libido or sexual drive. Opposed to this "evil spirit" who tempts man to sin, there is the "holy spirit" (a personified projection of the superego in this simplified dualism) who urges man to acts of goodness. This projection or externalization of psychic processes is natural and useful to the mythically oriented imagination because of "the human preference to copy with events that are outside rather than those that are inside."[67] The specific characteristics of the mythic projection, as externally imagined or (in hallucinations) even experienced, are largely determined by the mythic world-view of the culture in which the person lives. This is the approach applied by S. V. McCasland, for instance, in The Pioneer of Our Faith: A New Life of Jesus (1964). After the mythic world-view of primitive and medieval

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[66]Bruner, p. 352.

[67]Bruner, p. 349.

Christianity started to break up with the advance of the modern period, men eventually began to apprehend and to interact with their psychic processes as internal rather than external phenomena, yet the practice of personification continued. Within the personality, now, we may sense the existence and activity of several "selves," unless we have learned to experience them otherwise.

The various "voices" within may accuse, advise, demand, or plead; and the several "selves" for whom they seem to speak are the wishes of the id, the prohibitions and admonitions of the superego, the suggestions of the self-image, and the reflections of the ego. The wishes of the id express the urgent biological drives of the physiological organism; the pronouncements of the superego are the ariculation of "duties" as assimilated from authority figures or of convictions as learned from one's own deeply felt experience and reflection; the suggestions of the self-image are, on the one hand, the repeated judgments on the inferiority, adequacy, or superiority of one's personality as learned from constant interaction with others and, on the other hand, either the confirmation or the correction of these judgments as occasioned by one's own experience; and the reflections of the ego may press the claims of unfulfilled psychological needs, arbitrate and resolve the conflicts of other impulses ("voices" or "selves"), and designate a certain action as essential to the health or happiness of the whole person in his environment.

In a popular exposition, one of the foremost English depth-psychologists, Eustace Chesser, has described the dialogue among the various voices of our several selves in these terms:

> Gradually, you will become aware [during introspection] of a kind of double consciousness. There are the thoughts that come unbidden, and there is the self which silently observes those thoughts, blotting them out as they arise. There are really two selves, each going about its own business. There is the restless ego, conjuring up scraps of memory and piecing together bits of material already in the mind; and there is the Self which watches this process and to some extent controls it.[68]

Chesser differentiates between these two selves--the "ego" and the "Self"--by referring to the former as the YOU (the lower or apparent self) and the latter as the I (the higher or real Self). Chesser's simplified dualism thus distinguishes between, on the one hand, the subjective impressions from irrational psychic processes--the wishes of the id, the pronouncements of the superego, and the suggestions of the self-image--as experienced in arbitrary succession and, on the other hand, the objective articulation of cortical intelligence, which may exert more rational control for the sake of the whole and thus integrate the personality, if cultivated and exercised in self-determining reflection and decision. Chesser recommends a type of introspective meditation intended "to intensify consciousness of the 'I' so that it assumes control, and you think and act deliberately instead of automatically."

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[68]Eustace Chesser, Life Is For Living (London: George G. Harrap and Co., 1962), p. 207.

Although Chesser suggests the use of the personal pronoun "I" to designate the psychic process of cortical intelligence with which the individual should identify and which he should cultivate in order to achieve the best integration of his personality, the choice of the grammatical person in which one experiences this and other psychic phenomena is immaterial. The person, gender, number, or even mood in which one addresses himself to his psychic processes in prayer and meditation does not alter their effect. Whether one imagines that the access of inspiration which he occasionally experiences has its origin in a source within himself or beyond himself (as good and bad spirits); whether one addresses it as "You," "I," or "He"; and whether one commands, questions, or supplicates it, are all matters that depend upon cultural and individual assumptions. What actually determines the effect is the content of the imagery in the mind, as it envisions a certain goal, and the intention behind whatever words are addressed to whatever supposed source. If an effect is physiologically or psychologically possible (and human potential is usually far beyond our image of normality), then a pattern of belief, expectation, and imagination can actualize it. Such is the conclusion of Dr. Bernard C. Cindes, one of the foremost American authorities on the psycho-dynamics of hypnosis and related psychic phenomena.[69]

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[69]See Bernard C. Cindes, New Concepts of Hypnosis (New York: Julian Press, Inc.), 1951.

But one must test the spirits or voices to determine whether they are good or bad. As one writer has observed,

> The Freudian Super Ego, made up as it is of the prohibitions, threatenings and thunderings of all the morbid and misguided authorities we have ever met . . . becomes our conscience . . . . Such a morbid conscience is negative *and destructive* of life, and itself has to be destroyed before its possessor can possibly be whole. On the other hand a true conscience presses forward towards all things which we see to be good and true and beautiful: it brings peace of mind, a sense of well being and integration. A sin against this true conscience is to see the light, and to choose the darkness, "to love the darkness rather than the light."[70]

The pronouncements of the superego and the suggestions of the self-image are culturally conditioned and imposed upon the person. These may be either sound or unsound. Along with the wishes of the id, they must be judged by the objective intelligence of the reality-oriented ego, which should be the court of last resort. The cortical consciousness of the ego (which is identical with Eustace Chesser's "Self" and with Matthew Arnold's "Best Self" or "Higher Self") may be used as a psychic source of inspiration to guide man to human wholeness.

Thus the critical power of the ego may transform a morbid, negative, and destructive superego into a positive and constructive ego-ideal, a healthy guiding fiction. As old traits and attitudes have been "learned" by us from others, so we may "teach" ourselves new traits and attitudes by

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[70]E. N. Ducker, A Christian Therapy for a Neurotic World (First American Edition; New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., Inc.), pp. 40-41.

regular meditation designed to confirm new insights and reinforce new qualities of character by intensive impression, association, and repetition. In this respect, the pragmatic effectiveness of formula prayers and set biblical texts, as encouraged by traditional religious organizations, has been demonstrated by modern psychology.[71]

Communion. The second traditional religious activity that contemporary naturalistic humanists recommend, like Arnold, is that of actively supporting an established religious organization. Randall is insistent on this point. His "The Meaning of Religion for Man" is in large part a defense of religion as an organized social institution, which should be supported by the individual both for his own sake and for the sake of society.

> That some form of religion is indispensable to any society seems no longer an open question. It has been long debated whether a society could get along without any religious organization of its life. Recent experience has made it clear that if a traditional religion disintegrates, men will not calmly proceed to live without any religion at all. A new religion, or, if we prefer, a new substitute for religion, will spring up to fill the vacuum and to perform the historic functions of a religion. And this new "religion" will be much worse than the old one it supplants. For it will be onesided and fanatical. It will forget much of what has been learned through the bitter experience of generations because it will lack what the great historic religions have received, the criticism and clarification that have been born of centuries of human experience. The new social faiths of Europe [Nazism and Communism] reveal their rawness and crudeness at every turn.[72]

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[71]See, for instance, Dr. William J. Bryan, Jr., Religious Aspects of Hypnosis (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Published, 1962), in which the state of true prayer is described as a natural kind of hypnotic condition.

[72]Randall, "The Meaning of Religion for Man," Preface to Philosophy, pp. 318-19.

Identifying himself as a supporter of the Congregational Church and of the Wider Quaker Fellowship, Randall urges modern man not only to be "religious" but also to have a "religion," preferably a traditional religion.[73] Of course, the naturalistic humanist cannot accept the language of traditional religion--myth and ritual--in a literal sense. Rather, he must understand that the function of myth and ritual is not cognitive but affective: it is concerned not with facts but with values--not the letter but the spirit. The function of religious language is to move the emotions and to motivate the will rather than to instruct the intellect about the nature of existence. This is the essential significance of myth and ritual, Randall asserts, even though the mass of men have always accepted them in a literal sense. "Religious language provides a set of symbols in terms of which men can express and share the experiences they feel deeply, and relate them to the 'things which are not seen.'"[74]

In summarizing the cultural worth of traditional religious institutions, Randall writes:

> The three fundamental functions of religion . . . are first, celebration, the social observance, in appropriate form, of the values to which a group is devoted; secondly, consecration, the cooperative dedication to those values; and thirdly, clarification, the reflective criticism and appraisal of their significance and worth.[75]

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[73]Randall, "Naturalistic Humanism," Patterns of Faith, p. 157.

[74]Randall, Preface to Philosophy, p. 323.

[75]Ibid., p. 319.

Thus the spiritual discipline of social communion is commended by contemporary naturalistic humanism as well as that of personal meditation. Yet Matthew Arnold insisted in the nineteenth century that the retention of religion as a social institution was essential for the well-being of society in general and of its individual members, as we have seen in our discussion of his essays on the religious institution of Victorian England in Chapter III. Further, we have noted his recommendation of certain practices as valid spiritual disciplines for modern man: the use of the Bible (reinterpreted by Arnold for the Victorian reader) as a source of emotional inspiration for ethical conduct; the cultivation of the Best Self or Higher Self; identification with Jesus in dying to the lower self and living by the higher self; and private meditation (as exemplified in Arnold's own Notebooks). In these several ways, Arnold has anticipated the growing respect of contemporary naturalistic humanists for the usefulness and effectiveness of traditional religious techniques in conditioning the character of the person to achieve the goal of religion--the moralization and, ultimately, the humanization of man.

Through this discussion of the cosmology, goal, and discipline in the contemporary movement of naturalistic humanism and its comparative relation to Arnold's imaginative vision, we have been enabled to understand and to appreciate more clearly how Arnold's own naturalistic humanism may be

apprehended as an imaginative vision with a religious effect; how even in the nineteenth century his imaginative vision assumed certain of the religio-mythic functions previously fulfilled by the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity; how Arnold anticipated and perhaps even partly inspired the contemporary movement of naturalistic humanism; and how his imaginative vision, insofar as it is related to a small but impressive group of modern religious thinkers, continues to bear a definite relevance and significance. From the religious perspective of twentieth-century naturalistic humanism, Arnold showed one way for modern religion to go. His imaginative vision, although naturalistic and humanistic, ministered to certain religio-mythic needs in man.

In "From Secularism to Humanism: An Aspect of Victorian Thought," John Gillard Watson writes, "By now, Victorian humanism can be seen to be not only a broadening out from, and away from eighteenth-century rationalism; it is also the foundation of twentieth-century humanism." And, again, "Whether we are religious or not, we owe a debt of gratitude to those great Victorian families--the Arnolds, the Huxleys, the Stephens, the Macaulays, the Trevelyans, and the like--who made a culture out of a dogmatic quarrel."[76] Especially is this so, as we have seen, in the case of Matthew Arnold: for, to repeat the thesis stated in Chapter I, the essential unity

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[76]John Gillard Watson, "From Secularism to Humanism: An Aspect of Victorian Thought," Hibbert Journal, LX (January, 1962), 140.

both in the variety of literary works and in the life of Matthew Arnold is to be apprehended in his dedication as a humanist to the humanization of his countrymen by a program of humanistic education, which he effected through his poems and his essays in criticism (literary, educational, religious, social, and political)--wherein he created an imaginative vision of the human condition in a naturalistic universe and advocated the actualization of an ideal of the good man and of the good society--so that his countrymen would be enabled to assume the social responsibilities and to pursue the personal opportunities involved in the inevitable development of the modern world as an industrial and as a democratic civilization.

A Final Comment: The Vehicle of the Vision

It has been emphasized in this study that the imaginative vision of Matthew Arnold fulfilled certain religio-mythic functions. He originally created his vision to supersede what he regarded as an inadequate religio-mythic system. Indeed, he regarded it as inadequate precisely because it was mythical. Yet he undertook to articulate a new vision of reality that, if accepted, would assume many of the religio-mythic functions previously fulfilled by the religious mythology of supernaturalistic Christianity: to provide an explanation for natural phenomena, to supply sanctions for the social institutions and for the cultural life-style, and to resolve the anxiety implicit in the human condition--our conscious involvement in

the mortal situation of peculiar creatures in a strange universe--by expressing images of God, nature, society, and man through which answers to the great questions of human existence are suggested.

Now, the traditional mode of religion is myth. The normal vehicle of myth (in I. A. Richards' sense of the term) is a narrative structure of metaphorical images; and the tenor of myth, as A. J. M. Sykes has indicated, is the cosmic or social "attitudes," "beliefs," and "values" that are assumed, implied, embodied, and affirmed in the narrative structure of metaphorical images.[77] The religio-mythic effect of a system of religious mythology, then, is to communicate its tenor: to condition and reinforce cosmic or social attitudes, beliefs, and values by embodying them in an effectively pedagogical and propagandistic vehicle, which not only clarifies but also sanctions these attitudes, beliefs, and values as self-evidently validated within the context of the literally accepted narrative structure of metaphorical images. Sykes even suggests that the vehicle need not necessarily be literally accepted; for, even if it is accepted as only symbolically expressive, it may nonetheless effectively perform its function.

As we have seen, there is a fundamental consistency in Arnold's imaginative vision: it is pervasively unified by a complex of basic naturalistic and humanistic concepts. This

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[77]A. J. M. Sykes, "Myth and Attitude Change," Human Relations: Studies Towards the Integration of the Social Sciences, XVIII (November, 1965), 324.

complex of basic concepts (of God, nature, society, and man) may have evolved and developed, yet the evolution represented an organic development from earlier to later stages in their formulation and articulation. These concepts--with the cosmic and social attitudes, beliefs, and values that they assume, assert, and affirm--constitute the religio-mythic tenor in Arnold's imaginative vision. And insofar as the tenor of his vision was successful in resolving the human condition by answering the great questions of human existence, his vision effectively fulfilled the religio-mythic function traditionally fulfilled by a system of religious mythology.

Thus Arnold's vision ministers to certain religio-mythic needs; but it is not cast in the traditional mode of religion. For the normal mode of religion is myth, whose vehicle is the metaphorical image, set in the dramatic context of poetic narrative. Yet, in Arnold's shift from supernaturalism to naturalism, from poetry to prose, and from narration to exposition, the mythic mode of religion is lost. Indeed, Arnold's "images" of God, nature, society, and man are not really concrete images at all. They are not even literal much less metaphorical images. Rather, they are abstract concepts.

Now, although abstract ideas (attitudes, beliefs, values) are also the tenor of myth proper, its vehicle is concrete images. However, the abstract tenor of Arnold's imaginative vision was never effectively embodied in a concrete

vehicle. Rather, instead of creating concrete images of supernatural realities, he expressed a complex of abstract concepts about naturalistic realities--the "Eternal," the Zeit-Geist" or "modern Spirit" (the historical process), "Culture," and the "Best Self."[78] And, instead of formulating a narrative structure, he composed expository and argumentative essays.

It is true that the comparison-and-contrast organization in many of Arnold's essays (as suggested by Robert A. Donovan in "The Method of Arnold's Essays in Criticism"[79]) is organically accommodated to the dialetical structure of his thought (as suggested by Walter J. Hipple, Jr. in "Matthew Arnold, Dialectician"[80]). It is also true that the texture of his style is often admirably adapted to his rhetorical purpose of persuasion (as suggested by John Campbell Major in "Matthew Arnold and Attic Prose Style"[81]). And granted,

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[78]Interesting studies of Arnold's ideas of the historical process (which we examined in the "Introduction" to this dissertation) are Fraser Neiman's "The Zeitgeist of Matthew Arnold," PMLA, LXXII (December, 1957), 977-996, and N. N. Feltes' "Matthew Arnold and the Modern Spirit: A Reassessment," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXXII (October, 1962), 27-36. However, neither sufficiently grasps that Arnold's concept of the historical process, like his concept of God, is not in any sense a transcendental power but the effect of causes immanent in nature and in man.

[79]Robert A. Donovan, "The Method of Arnold's Essays in Criticism," PMLA, LXXI (December, 1956), 922-931.

[80]Walter J. Hipple, Jr., "Matthew Arnold, Dialectician," University of Toronto Quarterly, XXXII (October, 1962), 1-26.

[81]John Campbell Major, "Matthew Arnold and Attic Prose Style," PMLA (December, 1944), 1086-1103.

in Imaginative Reason: The Poetry of Matthew Arnold, A. Dwight Culler has demonstrated the existence of recurrent images in the poems that may be arranged in a fairly coherent pattern that symbolically represents the cycle of human life. But the fact remains that no narrative, dramatic, or poetic structure of metaphorical imagery pervades--consistently, comprehensively, and insistently--the entire canon of Arnold's works in which his imaginative vision is expressed and created. The tenor of his vision fulfilled certain functions of a religious mythology, at least for Arnold himself; but the vehicle of his vision is far removed from the traditional mythic mode of religion.

Arnold valued the Bible for its poetry, which he believed afforded an emotional inspiration to ethical conduct. And he believed that someday, perhaps, a poetry of "imaginative reason" would fulfill its function even better. If the literary vehicle of his own imaginative vision had been a narrative, dramatic, or poetic structure of metaphorical images (effectively embodying his naturalistic and humanistic attitudes, beliefs, and values), then his own works would perhaps qualify as that poetry of the "imaginative reason," designed to appeal both to the "emotions and the Heart" and to the "senses and understanding" of the "modern spirit." This is to say that if the mode of his religious vision had been more nearly mythic, then it would have fulfilled religio-mythic needs more effectively. But a man writes as he must and as he can.

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