

The Cultural Theory of Mathew Arnold

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Introduction:

Xiii - A Theory Too Beautiful

Arnold's literary theory did not take place in isolation. Rather, it takes place within a comprehensive vision of man's place in nature and in history.

XIV – Four Distinct Phases in MA's Work:

- 1) The Period of Discontent represented by the early poetry
- 2) The Modernist Hellenism culminating in Culture and Anarchy
- 3) The Eight year period of biblical studies
- 4) A final decade wherein Arnold returns to his modernism but attempts to integrate the doctrines of critical reason within the reverential imagination of Romantic poetry.

His theory is based on an objective moral and aesthetic order revealed in western history. But it is always grounded in the observed facts of cultural history.

All within Senancour's ghost. Arnold's affiliation is to the German line that extends from Lessing through Goethe to Heine.

Xviii MA Likes reason that is historically grounded, like the Germans
Xviii through ix.

The first two chapters will demonstrate that Arnold succeeds in establishing a coherent cultural theory

Chapter 3 will look at the personal, social and intellectual reasons for Arnold's absorption in religious topics. It will end with the view that poetry is the spiritual foundation of modern life.

Chapter 4 will establish the doctrinal parallelism between Arnold and the neo-classicists and to show that much of his practical criticism derives from that of his predecessors.

In Chapter 5 we see how Arnold situates himself as heir to tradition of German Cultural theory. Here he praises Goethe, but Goethe is largely a historical.

It synthesizes the modernism of Lessing and the dichotomy of Hellenism and Hebraism formulated by Heine.

PART ONE:

CHAPTER ONE: Aesthetic Compromises

- 1) The purpose of the Preface to MA's 1853 Preface is to explain the exclusion of Empedocles on Etna from that collection.
- 2) In Empedocles, modern is synonymous with declining. Page 2 also gives the plot background to Empedocles. It discusses the self-involved intellectuality of Hamlet and Faust. In the preface MA proposes that artists withdraw from modern life to contemplate noble actions of a heroic time.
Callicles the young musician whose songs drift up to Empedocles from lower down on Mount Etna, represents the innocent freshness of an undisturbed traditional culture.

6 – Empedocles cannot enjoy normal joys. Empedocles holds out to Pausanias that joy can still happen in simple traditional joys; but this cannot help Empedocles. Arnold says the problem comes from personal and historical situation.

The conflict is an irreconcilable division between life and mind. Mind and thought have no home; they are strangers of the world.

11 – MA putting Sohrad and Rustrum above The Scholar Gipsy shows how far spiritual anxiety could impel MA into aesthetic moralism. In a letter of 1853 he is judging poetry almost entirely through the moral quality of its supposed effect.

The Scholar Gipsy is a modern poem, a meditation concerned with the pursuit of an intellectual ideal and aware of cultural change.

11 – Greek time ideal and poetry should uplift. But, your age is less eternal and so pristine truths must recognize history.

12 He looks at the lost romantic age of his youth. We cannot recapture Wordsworth or Goethe. They came of age at a more peaceful time.

Too fast we live, too much are tried, Too harass'd to attain
Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's wise and luminous view to gain.

14 Sometimes praise of nature works, often the life of the mind destroys connections.

15 – MA Will replace the insufficiently intellectual romantics

16 – Sophocles not so morbid. In Dover Beach the surety of language rescues it from morbidity; like Sophocles

17 – In our age, not sorrow, but doubt slays us

19 – Young MA says poetry must include religion. By 1867 religion redeemed in desire

20 – In the 1867 version of Empedocles, religion ceases to appear as a symptom of a futile spiritual craving and becomes instead a constructive element in the education of humanity.

God creating nations in alphabets. None has been right and it has always been necessary to start again.

23 – Only once does MA propose domestic fidelity as a consolation for metaphysical anguish. Love is a bleakly subintellectual form of mutual commiseration. Empty individuals would possess very little to which each might be true. Euphrosyne is a nasty poem about sad love 1852

24 – Poets then, like Blake created characters.

25 – By Culture and Anarchy we have a moral code in nature. He is walking between two worlds, “One dead, The Other powerless to be born.”

25 -26 Describes the modern dilemma

27 – He compares his retreat from the hardness and frivolity of the modern age to a medieval retreat into religion. Here he looks at death which he does not understand.

28 - Religion holds on as a lingering regret. In Carthusians he effects a compromise between the subjectivist mode of Romantic poetry and the classicist objectivism of the 1853 preface

The lyrical poetry of Scholar Gipsy, Thyrsis and the songs of Callicles give a unity of moral impression, which subsists only as a fragile world that no longer has any substantial reality.

He does not put an image of the self-inflated into the spiritual void like Byron. His is dispassionate in the first person plural so he can be detached.

30 – H. F. Lowry says “The Grande Chartreuse is the apex of Arnold’s effort to achieve a compromise between his cultural dilemma and his aesthetic standards.

Arnold’s best poetry achieves its classical stature by struggling to attain “an Idea of the world.” The only alternative to this intellectualism is confused sense impressions like Keats and Browning or Tennyson’s superficial prettiness.

31 for MA Antique tragic grandeur serves as an antidote to introspective melancholy.

32 - Merope and Polyphontes explore the conflict between pragmatic and absolutist values.

33 – Trilling discusses the retreat from poetry. He sees it in a letter to K in which he says we must leave the aimless ways of our youth for refuge in morality and character.

34 – Creative poetry is high, but literary criticism too and this creates an atmosphere wherein poetry can thrive. Here and 35 the relative value of poetry and criticism get a look at. Criticism can, unlike poetry and literature, control the era in which it emerges. The Muse accompanies life but does not guide it.

This age being un-poetical needed criticism to guide it that poetry could not provide.

36 Goethe is not important as a poet, but as a critic, as a modern thinker. Good thing that MA quit poetry. He was a fine poet but a # 1 critic.

37 – Coleridge did not have enough of a sense of purpose

CHAPTER TWO: An Intellectual Deliverance

The modern spirit

38 – MA conflates “Modern” and “criticism.” & so launches progressive intellectual effort. In the early phase he shows intellectual release from spiritual distress. The critic must work to find the master current of literature in an epoch. In his later religious work the “free play of the mind on all subjects, for its own sake “ gives way to concentration on moral salvation. In his last decade he works to integrate his Hellenic and Christian epochs. Poetry becomes the new modern religion. This search for spiritual perfection gives MA’s whole career coherence.

He seeks intellectual expansion and moral concentration.

39 – Uses both Athens and Jerusalem to reach for perfection. This perfection goal unifies all his thought

40 – Be an explorer not a doctor. The “Modern Element” signals MA’s entry into genuine cultural criticism. It repudiates the insular preoccupation with national literature and the isolation of literature proper from the entire cultural complex of which it is part.

It marks positive engagement indicated by 1) A willingness to confront the contemporary world and 2) to give guidance to it.

Here we see a western, not nationalist culturist orientation.

IN THE BOOK: He can tell Marguerite that Athens and Jerusalem study make people brighter.

PG 40 – The modern element went unpublished for over 11 years. It was not finished. It repudiates national literature and literature’s separation from the entire cultural context.

41 MA uses the words, “human and humanity “

42 and 43 The course of culture is in some measure subject to intelligent control. This is the central definition of "modern."

Civilization comes from civil peace and growth of a tolerant spirit; a spirit patient of the diversities of habits and opinions." The supreme characteristic is "the intellectual maturity of man himself; the tendency to observe facts with a critical spirit."

47 Perfection, not freedom is the goal.

50 The ordering of the separate elements of knowledge is the work of critical intelligence and evaluating the whole range of human experience. It reconciled man with himself and the universe.

51 To have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive. Imaginative reason captures both the genius of poetry and the ruling divinity of prose. Imaginative reason is also the element by the modern spirit lives. It is in contrast to religious sensibility.

53 The modern world has a pagan spirit

54 After looking at different ages we learn that the comparison is not a matter of greater or lesser complexity but of qualitative cosmological change.

55 Byron and Shelly alone made an attempt to apply the modern spirit to English literature, but they both failed. Byron's poetry draws its force from his "titanic personality." But like other romantics, he did not know enough.

Shelly had neither an adequate grasp of reality nor an adequate sense for intellectual order. He understood sounds, but not words, should have been in music.

56 The English did not have a disruptive revolution like the French. While good, it dulled their critical faculties.

English lit has declined as their international influence has.

The French Revolution was great as it appealed to reason, not just law or tradition.

57 MA loves Burke. The British Constitution is a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines.

58 A civilization requires nations know of the past and each other. Progress depends on them submitting themselves to the critical spirit.

59 On the issues of democracy, the French Revolution, the nature of historical change, and the religious function of literature, Arnold differs from Goethe. The goal

is not to renounce the world of pleasure and activity, but to assimilate it and make it meaningful.

60 Modern time has institutions which have come down and are not modern. And we must do our lives in these systems, but we know they are not ours.

61 We need an ethic that corresponds to the needs in an individual experience. The task of the critic is to use reason to free us from outmoded social arrangements and yet create a new ethos that will nurture the instinct for development. Hence the "disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world."

62 "Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a study of perfection." With this definition he is "broadening the idea of criticism to include the regulation and direction of the whole collective life of humanity according to the idea of "perfection." Criticism must end in culture in the search for perfection.

Hi culture diffused in society reconciles the tension between his democratic principles and elitism.

66 - France is best; England not so good.

67 - The aristocracy represents the material ideal of spirit and wealth, the weight of property. And this is the ideal that operates on our middle classes. So he wants a nonviolent getting rid of the Aristocracy. But the middle and lower classes are coming into power with no guidance.

68 - To cope we need improved public education for the middle class and a more positive attitude toward the state as the agent of national well-being.

THE CULTURAL DIALECTIC

"Culture without character is, no doubt, something destructive frivolous, vain, and weak; but character without culture is, on the other hand, something raw, blind, and dangerous."

Still the Puritans were the indispensable basis upon which perfection is to be founded.

Hellenism being defeated shows that it was not, alone, sufficient. It not being enough means we have the cultural ideal and progress.

72 Hebraism gets strong from resisting sin. Hellenism has no such mechanism. So it gave us nothing to deal with unconquered animality in people. It also did not provide solace for sickness and suffering, as Hebraism does.

We have Greeks, then Christianity, then the Hebraic Renaissance and then the neopaganism of the eighteenth century.

75 He rejects the idea of seeking the infinite and empirical Locke's break up of us.

77 ***Perfection is a good that we seek through history, not infinity.*** Perfection is strong character and high culture.

80 Spinoza is modern yet sublime. ***The problem being that he ignores history.***

82 Constructive adversity holds adversity to an individual ultimately gives development towards perfection. So criticism of culture helps.

83 – Hellenism and Hebraism bounce off of each other. Ultimately the Hebraic temper should be subordinated to Hellenic perfection. This is the harmony of moral and intellectual factors.

CHAPTER THREE: Poetry and Preservation

87-88 Religion is poetry given depth by our historical connection to it. 88 – 90 To get the moral kernels of the Bible takes a Hellenic flexibility of mind.

90 Immortality via Jesus' example of being perfect leading to involvement in the social order's perfection and perpetuation is a sort of life after death.

91 For 3 books and 7 years just religion, no Hellenism in MA's work.

92-93 Religion concerns conduct, which is 3/4ths of life, culture is the rest.

93-94 MA loses three sons.

94 The Franco Prussian War shows the defect of Hellenism alone.

96 – In terms of racism, community of practice beats community of origin.

97 – Athens fall in democracy looks a lot like our own. Culture needs both faith and ardor By 1875 modernism is not just a hope, but a threat as well.

100 – Religion is morality with emotion.

101 – Christianity has staying power. It can survive even without faith. But this is trouble for MA because how exactly will religion survive without faith?

103 – MA diminishes religion to be the guardian of poetry.

103 – 104 Early MA says Catholicism is the past and Protestantism the future. But later MA says both are the past.

104 Religion is not for science or studying history, but morals. Within that sphere, religion is safe and okay. It ties us to the past, but cannot help with the future. And once it is just poetic moralism, religion can give way to pure poetry taking over.

A FULL HUMANITY

107 “Human progress consists in a continual increase in the numbers of those who, ceasing to live by the animal life alone and to feel the pleasures of sense only, come to participate in the intellectual life also, and to find enjoyment in the things of the mind.”

108 Developing all of these powers will lead to social equality. And social equality is a prerequisite to society becoming harmonious and wise. As inequality, has the effect of materializing our upper class, vulgarizing our middle class and brutalizing the lower class. And this is to fail in civilization.

110 Expansion v. Concentration; One vital in previous years. Expansion is much like Hellenism and concentration much like Hebraism. It is similar, but here concentration is just a means. Expansion, Hellenism, is the express end. But in concentration we have an antidote to dissipation.

113 – Hellenism needs conduct. England provides hope as it came to culture late, it still has conduct. This belief is why he gets into boring political tangles at the end of his career.

115 – Late criticism - still finds romantics lacking, but now they have emotion that helps them replace religion.

117 – Wordsworth and Byron compared

118 – Wordsworth looks at humanity more and self less, so better. Character is the basis of conduct. So last criticism looks at poets' character.

123 - The ancients give us an ideal, but it cannot question and create the ideal future for us. The Pristine simple unity of the ancients limits us.

PART TWO:

CHAPTER FOUR: The Style of Reason

128 - MA's connection to neo-classicism is as great as connection to classicism.

129 – The French Enlightenment ditched Christianity, the English, not so much.

129 - Johnson was Christian so he conserved as he expanded.

130 - As a fan of modernism, MA deprecates the English as not sufficiently radical . Like the romantics, MA does not celebrate “the age of compromise.”

132 – The switch from Milton and Pope’s age means less Christian magic and more naturalism

135 – Swift says keep Christianity for conduct, but not truth

135 So Augustan and MA are same, but he subs in poetry for the earlier era’s poetry and so they are not the same.

137 – France is Hellenistic, England Hebraic; So the French do prose and the English Poetry – Dryden we learn, came up with this formula.

142 – Pope and Arnold both concern themselves with the big end of poetry, but Pope more it leads you to an ahistorical God; MA to society perfecting in time.

German cultural and historical theories intervened between the two. This sense of history is the difference between Arnold and the neoclassicists of the 18th century. In 1853, MA uses degenerative history, but not after.

144 – MA Understood the influence of neoclassicism on him. Neoclassicists include Dryden, Addison, ,Pope and Swift. Johnson chronicled all in his lives of the poet is also a neoclassicist.

MA bounces from rationalist universalism and historical progressivism. Dryden, Pope, Swift and Johnson influence the rationalist pole. Their aesthetics also get appropriated by MA.

146 MA quotes Spinoza as saying self-conceit and the resulting laziness are terrible. So, when people say English literature is the best; he thinks we gain most by being critical of our literature and looking at defects.

English works have genius, but not intelligence.

147 – 156 Arnold takes a lot of his criticism from Dryden. He is building on a tradition. *MA adds, however, the idea of culture in history to Dryden*; his criticism judges the person in terms of being in their epoch (like Johnson) or just a head of it or at the end.

167 Here I think I see evidence of people prior to MA including historical styles and tastes in their accounts.

The mark of high art for MA is seriousness. So comedy doesn’t count so much.

“Academies” is MA’s worst book. It is not subtle and slanders and makes Dryden’s point about intelligence being French and genius being English.

Early on MA thinks Pope too lyrical and not intellectual. Later, when he sees the romantics as replacing religion, he appreciated Pope much more.

MA comes to Swift late.

172 Johnson was all about reason. He called poetry, “the art of uniting pleasure with truth, by calling imagination to the help of reason.”

173 By his absence, Johnson is the most conspicuous person in “Academies.” Arnold calls Johnson modern and heaps other praise on him.

174 While conceding that a British equivalent of the French Academy will not likely happen, MA hopes we remember the sort of influence and correction such an

academy might provide. Johnson was like a one man academy in that he even made a dictionary to settle language disputes for England.

MA loved, used as a textbook, and tried to publish his own version of Johnson's lives. 175 In academies, MA defines a true classic as the work of a writer who is able "to express new and profound ideas in a perfectly sound and classical style." Pope defines wit as that which "oft was thought, but never so well expressed." Johnson says this takes wit from referred to finding that which is not obvious but becomes so upon reflection.

CHAPTER FIVE: The Shape of History

The Mainstream

In the first half of the 18th century the mainstream of modern European literature flows between England and France, but from the middle of the 18th to the middle of the 19th the central current shifts to Germany.

The three main critics are Voltaire, Lessing, and Goethe. Goethe, the greatest. Heine was Goethe's heir to the mantle. Arnold pushes himself as the heir of Heine. Arnold and Goethe denounce Voltaire as unimportant. Lessing to Goethe to Heine to Arnold had modernism in common. They, in fact, demonstrate Spinoza's influence.

183 MA does not have equal reverence for Heine, but still adopts much of his policy. Goethe and Lessing proposed solutions to the modern problem. In Heine, however, the problem remains manifestly unsolved. MA never entirely escapes this plight.

LESSING - 183

Lessing does a lot of criticizing other critics.

184 Lessing's most comprehensive formulaic work is "The Education of the Human Race."

Masterwork believes that life and art are accessible to rational comprehension. Poetry best helps us describe the world and elevate the world.

Lessing wrote, 185 footnotes, "Poetry is the roader art; . . . it commands resources of beauty which are inaccessible in painting." "Out of the limitless field of our imagination, out of the spirituality of its images, which can stand next to one another in the greatest abundance and variety without concealing or harming one another," "the unfolding of the inner perfections for which the external beauty serves only as a shell."

187 Praising poetry above all other arts in poetic verse. Arnold, unlike Lessing, introduces music into the debate and so out-romantics Lessing. Arnold says that painting are only episodic. They need a narrative to matter. Lessing originates this thought earlier. So music and painting fail to provide the full narrative punch of progressing time. Arnold only cares to know what is literary in these arts.

189 In his essay, "On Poetry," the merely sensual and the intellectual get contrasted. It is more interpretive than other arts.

190 Long meditation on movement and the impact of that word featured in italics. It ties the room together; ie it ties the narrative together. Synchronicity.

Poetry is the highest form of art because it rises above both sensual reality and personal passion and articulates a religious vision of the world. It is through transcendent intuition that the poet both enables himself to rejoice and attains the power of "cheering souls."

Wanting to change the end of Richard the III in order to make it more moral. The just daughter deserts of Lear too.

191 Joy and humanity are goals.

Disinterested moral and aesthetic values become goals for Lessing.

192 The right function of poetry is to animate, to console, to rejoice – in one word, to strengthen." A and Lessing. Both cheer for morals in poetry. Moral ideas such as "How to Live?" addressed.

Early MA Liked Lessing as an alternative to romanticism. Poetry can replace religion because religion is essentially moral in nature. It is with this in mind that Lessing constructs his theory of religious history.

1862 MA makes reference to Lessing in the Bishop and the Philosopher. Sermons must inform or edify.

193 Not leaving or attacking religion (ala Voltaire), but interpreting it. "A fresh synthesis of the New Testament data." "Putting a new construction upon them." (sounds like spin to me).

But Arnold does not buy the benevolent deity guiding stuff. MA also doesn't believe in life after death.

Lessing argues that biblical organization and history is progressive. The race has come to moral knowledge one step at a time.

194 First major idea in the stages of development are 1) the development of a national God and 2) a monotheistic God. Eventually, we will all get turned on by the disinterested recognition of the intrinsic excellence of virtue.

In religious terms MA preserves from Christianity, "the idea that the world is in a course of development, of becoming, towards a perfection infinitely greater than we

now can even conceive." Religiously MA says this is a revelation of God through history." Watch the Bible becoming.

Both express that religion is constructive and a great force. Biblical criticism; the folks in the bible were primitive and superstitious. "For the individual and for the race the goal of education is the attainment of moral maturity, the power of commanding oneself to act in accordance with the dictates of moral reason. Memempsychosis explains Lessing's mystical implications. The person is constituted anew in every generation. So as per memempsychosis, we must imitate the growth cycle of history and history develops and grows as an individual does. Growth!

196 "Men are born in a state of ignorance, sensuality, and egoism. To escape this condition, they must assimilate the "centuries of probation and discipline" that constitute the Christian interregnum. That soul that perfects itself through the preservation of culture has no expectation of personal survival, but it does participate, temporally, in "the eternal order."

MA takes equality from Lessing. But, MA never entirely transcends his elitism.

197 In the Bishop and the Philosopher, MA hardens the distinction between popular culture and high culture. High culture will always be reserved for the elite. And poetry is the highest form of human utterance. The heart and imagination are humanized and softened. This must happen before any knowledge seeds may be implanted with profit.

Herein MA gets tackled for elitism and must cow tow. Culture and anarchy comes. And later in his career elitism arises again.

197 Mass culture v. elitism: Elitism is best! But, people criticized MA for this and it hurt, he absorbed Heine's democratic thoughts and so is mellow in C & A. In his later writing he returns to elitism.

198 So in C & A he argues for broad enlightenment. The Bishop and the Philosopher" is elitist.

4 people typify democratic culture for MA:
St Augustine, Abelard, Lessing & Herder.
Great men of culture popularize it.

201 Literary history is a morgue!

202 Goethe enrolled in the transnational modern
Here we see the phrase "civilized nations."

MA loved Goethe as a critic based on his letters as Goethe wrote no critic essays.

MA Owes more to Heine

For example, Heine creates Hebraism and Hellenism

But Heine is cynical about H & H in the modern world. Not MA. So must distance himself.

205 Goethe also has Hellenism, But Arnold puts teleology leading to democratic modernism.

MA often uses Goethe as his bitch. He can make Goethe say whatever he wants.

206 Goethe turns away from reform and the practical material world. The material normal world only exists to give Art Gods material

209 Goethe Modern poetry sucks because it is so subjective and the modern world that it depicts is so petty.

210 Greece has good topics. We must use them because of intrinsic value, but also to teach.

MA sometimes, though, blasts Goethe directly

211 Like Dryden and Johnson, Goethe affirms the world rather than retreat from it in his use of classics.

I STOPPED HERE !!

212 In the 1853 Preface MA wants classicism and not this world. After he changes.

214 The Modern element reverses the 1853 Preface; he now likes this world.

Herein MA falsely describes Goethe as a social reformer / liberator

218 Goethe. Like neoclassic, withdraws from this world's current battles

220 History is the actual book of God. Not sure who says this, Heine or MA.

222 In MA's view, Byron's social involvement compensates for his defects of intelligence and artistry; Goethe sees this involvement as Byron's fatal flaw.

224 Because Byron lacked "culture" and "ideas," he wasted himself in ineffectual opposition to British society.

227 Goethe likes Byron as long as he restrains his passions.

G and MA believe in some animating order. "There are only two true religions, the one which acknowledges and worships the holiness that lives in and around us, entirely formless, and the other which acknowledges and worships holiness in the form of the most beautiful sort. Everything that lies in between is idolatry."

228 "Righteousness tendeth to life."

Whereas MA believes Art should assume the moral functions of religion and so become religious, Goethe believes that art is sufficient and religion is unnecessary. MA says that the desire to make all art sans religion gets rid of Hebraism.

231 HEINE!

Goethe's influence is unjustly overrated by MA and Heine's is underrated.

MA Finished a poem on Heine entitled "Heine's Grave" in 1863. In that year, Arnold also wrote an essay about him.

232 Heine has “the wild living intellect of man,” says Cardinal Newman in *Apologia pro Vita Sua*. MA paints him as pagan on only interested in the senses and understanding.

232 MA distances himself from Heine, why? Liberation from shadow? Cover-up for plagiarism? He fetishizes Goethe and disagrees with much of his implied, apparently, theory.

233”Heine provides, as Goethe does not, a real source for Arnold’s political modernism. It is from Heine that Arnold derives the idea that there are in human nature two basic impulses: one toward moral deliverance and the other toward intellectual deliverance. This dichotomy is apparent, already, in the modern element.

IN THE BOOK

I wrote about that in “The modern element.”

“What does modern mean?”

“Modern or modernism, as it is called, cont. . .

Whoa, whoa, wh, what is the diff between modernism and modern?”

“Good. Modernism is an -ism. It is just the ideology of the modern.”

“O.K. Sorry I interrupted. I probably already knew that if you know what I mean.”

“I do precisely.”

“But modern means?”

“It is the progressive efforts towards a better more rational society. And that takes a rational social philosophy, wherein people work within a mechanical, if you will, system. But, it makes for a materially improved world.

“In my father’s parlance, from an earlier, more religious generation, they might have said that muscular Christianity, a sort of tough and formidable sort of character was needed individually and in society. Someone willing to get up and do the work of society. But, herein, without Christianity, this modern mechanistic work had no meaning, it had no soul.”

“Can I digress?”

“By all means,”

"In social studies journals, I have read of the popularity of your zombie and vampire movies."

"Yeah, a lot of people like them, but I don't!" Marguerite cooed proudly.

"But their popularity reminds me of people with no soul, just consumerism, no religion, staring into the void and seeing nothing."

"I see."

"And, this presents a hole in modernism. And the modern, heart if you will."

"Yeah, I can see it."

"And, this genre, the gothic horror novel, comes from the time of the Irish potato and urban famines. And our mechanistic soulless system getting equated with death bodes poorly for modernism.

"Scary."

"But with no religion, there was only the machine. And, so we needed a new religion. And that is where poetry came in. Poetry is what the modern age needs in place of religion, in order to maintain a soul."

"That ain't gonna happen man."

"Beauty and civilization will not progress by means of work?"

"People don't care about beauty."

"This reminds me of the time some Sophists taunted Socrates with claims that 'people only live to create pleasure and avoid pain. They mocked his beauty-based ethics system, and brutally Socrates that people lie cheat and steal.

"What did Socrates say?"

"Well he shook his head and put it into his hands as if to say, "You fools!" But he merely uttered, though with a hint of sadness in disappointment in them, but with compassion, "We haven't been speaking of what men do, but of what they should do."

"We need something to fill the vacuum from the disappearance of believing, faithful Christianity."

"Well, I guess I don't miss religion cause I never really had it. I dunno."

“No. I think that is spot on. And, in life I always pointed out that it was harder for my generation than others because we remember Christianity, such as my father’s muscular Christianity, but it disappeared for us. But, your life is easier because you have forgotten how important it was.”

“Still, I mean, I understand about the horror of chain stores being everywhere, but I don’t think modern life is so bad.”

“I know I can tell you something?”

“What?”

“People, especially, in the post 1970s eras, from Carter to Reagan and on till today, have the greatest difficulty fully comprehending that in my era and for many generations prior, great poetry filled the halls of the best, wealthiest, most politically connected people. Poetry had a very important place in public discourse.

Today, you say, “I know lots of poets.” But, I tell you, you don’t understand what poetry is and how for centuries, millennia if you count the Bible, it ordered society. And, the common culture.”

“I guess you’re right. I mean, it is weird. Politicians today, don’t know about poetry, probably consider it stupid shit stupid people write for stupid people.”

“Well, I don’t exactly admire your choice of words; but, ‘twas a point well stated.” I gave her a broad devilish smile.

IN THE BOOK, she will pick up a bit of language he uses. She’ll transition to speaking more and more like him. And, he will, touchingly, use her phrases skillfully, but consciously.

Talk of what Arnold thinks of modernism today. Much of it is barbarianism write large. It is cheap romanticism. It flatters the actions of the indolent with dramatic significance. What we have here is not really, at some level, modernism. When trash reigns in terms of food and music and thought and theater, in any degree it denigrates us. And, modernism requires

what my father would have”

IN BOOK – MARGUARITE GET’S MARRIED and has CHILD Arnold, and Tom. We had Arnold first and Tom, like your father’s name, separate. We meet the husband. They met in college. Both loved Arnold. But, he went into the practical field of education monitoring to support the family. He teaches 8th grade English. She has created in her life, the sort of life she first fell in love with when reading MA’s encyclopedia entry. The kind found at

232 – HEINE

MA feels better for repudiating Heine in Heine's Grave and elsewhere, because now he can steal more liberally and still feel original.

From Heine he gets the idea of two poles in people, one toward moral deliverance and the other towards intellectual deliverance. That is optimistic!

The ideas in "Pagan and Mediavael Religious Sentiment" come from Heine. But in it, MA finds Heine not religious enough.

MA also owes being torn between religious imagination and critical intelligence to Heine.

235 From 1848 on, MA's estimation of Heine steadily grows. He even says he's better than Byron and Shelly because he has an intellect. And because they had less, they could not divine the modern spirit in English literature. He calls Heine's career as "a life and death battle with Philistinism."

235 direct political action is not the true function of literature.

236 IN THE BOOK MA sees "the risk always before me, if I cannot charm the wild beast of Philistinism while I am trying to convert him, of being torn in pieces by him and, even if I succeed to the utmost and convert him, of dying in a ditch or a workhouse at the end of it all."

Philistines do not go for modern ideas in Germany or England.

236 – 237 Pragmatism has made the English "most inaccessible to ideas and most impatient of them." A Philistine values, "practical conveniences" over "reason, the idea."

MA continues Heine's effort to combine high culture and democratic progressivism.

He sees Heine ultimately, as intellectually redeemed, but not morally redeemed. And, Heine reverences little.

This criticism shows how early MA's need for religiosity in poetry goes. Wordsworth had more a sense of life, but he retreated and so could not express the modern. Heine has the wit, but not the sensuousness of Wordsworth. Still, Heine's social analysis is perfect for MA.

243 Arnold says Hebraism is very against fleshly sin.

Heine thinks Shakespeare embodies the needed blend of Hellenism and Hebraism better than Goethe.

MA wants a synthesis of H & H. But, Heine says we must move beyond this. Heine thinks Christianity a great civilizer after Rome. But, shallow. And, we needed the Enlightenment as a balance. But, fears that with the end of religion, romantic imagination will fall away to practicality. Heine sees both H & H's weaknesses, plays them off of each other and so mocks.

247 Arnold sees both H & H driving us to teleological goals. Heine sees two types of knaves. MA looks for happiness; Heine is nihilistic; MA calls this a moral failing.

Beyond character, MA also attacks Heine's intellectual limits to show he didn't understand past works.

So Arnold needs a balance of H and H; Others do too much Hell and not enough Heb. All light and no morality.

IN "Pagan and Mediaeval" MA contrasts the pagan religion of sensual pleasure with the Christian religion of renunciation and "sorrow." The religion of sorrow is only a whole comfort under calamity.

249 Since poverty is widespread, the Greek ideal can never be enough. God's love subsumes this mechanical world. Greeks were sensual; St. Francis runs away from the sensual world into imagination.

MA finds Heine's ironic mockery unnerving.

251 When MA presents Heine simply as a proponent of pagan sensualism, it is disingenuous. MA doesn't like the Heine calls God insane. This instability, frightens MA so he marginalizes him. MA's system must retain logic and be progressive and coherent to bring joy in the modern world, with the resurrection of narrative, this too can return.

256 MA is bound to the neoclassicism of the English 18th century and to the Romanticism of the 19th. But, he is really heir to the German critical tradition. "From Lessing, Arnold takes the idea of religion as a progressive revelation of permanent moral truth, and Lessing confirms for him the doctrine that literature must serve as the voice of religious affirmation. From Goethe, Arnold derives support for a religious naturalism that he can relate to Hellenism. From Heine, Arnold adopts his basic cultural dichotomy and vision of synthesis. By combing Heine's spiritual division with Lessing's assumption of a purposeful cultural unity, he gains a "comprehension of this present and past." And all three teach him of cultural criticism.

257 CONCLUSION

Arnold never recognized the novel, which was as popular as poetry in his time.

Arnold also ditched comic poetry. His

High ideal for poetry should keep us from satisfaction with our utterances of the sensational, the eccentric, and the base.

He provides us a view other than the modern one wherein literature is all about the self.