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so much of the image he used to express it. As the vision grew in complexity from Synge to Moore to Joyce, the respective images had to take on shadings and perspectives. Joyce, who demanded more from art, put more into his art than did his compatriots. What is remarkable is that three artists, regardless of the varied results, underwent such similar experiences. Does this suggest something more than mere literary borrowing? Perhaps the primal urgings of an island people? The suggestion is worth further investigation, especially in light of the closing lines of W. B. Yeats's "On a Political Prisoner" (1921):

She seemed to have grown clean and sweet
Like any rock-bred, sea-borne bird:

Sea-borne, or balanced on the air
When first it sprang out of the nest
Upon some lofty rock to stare
Upon the cloudy canopy,
While under its storm-beaten breast
Cried out the hollows of the sea.



HARDY AND ST. PAUL: PATTERNS OF CONFLICT IN *JUDE THE OBSCURE*

By BARBARA FASS

DISCUSSIONS OF Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* have come a long way since that time when aesthetic judgments were based on what was contended to be the book's squalid subject matter and an outraged public discouraged the author from writing more novels. Today numerous essays provide insight into the patterns of conflict in the book and the central dichotomy between Christian beliefs and pagan impulses. Nonetheless, *Jude* remains controversial. Many who have recognized in it the Victorian quarrel between Hebraism and Hellenism still argue about whether the wind blows more strongly from Cyprus

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or Galilee.¹ Recently, William J. Hyde argued that as a result of his reading of John Stuart Mill, Hardy conceived of a theoretical union of the best elements in Hebraism and Hellenism, although his characters and the times combined to thwart such a merger on the practical level.² The present essay will also focus on such a union, to suggest, however, that Hardy despairs of reconciliation. That an ideal is longed for does not necessarily mean that it is attainable even on a theoretical level. Indeed, one could argue that *Jude the Obscure* explodes not only individual ideals but idealism itself.

There is another argument concerning Hardy's writing that feeds into the controversies described above. A difference of opinion exists about whether contraries in Hardy's poems should be viewed in terms of dialectics or antinomies.³ When this disagreement is applied to *Jude*, it becomes arguable that in this novel Hardy's tragic vision results from his inability either to take sides or envision a joining of antagonistic forces. In this matter, three influences on Hardy can be considered crucial. Foremost is St. Paul; with him Hardy could easily associate two major forces in nineteenth-century European thought, Matthew Arnold and Heinrich Heine.

The rest of this essay stems from Hardy's preface and statement — insufficiently heeded by critics — that he is writing in *Jude* about the "deadly war waged between flesh and spirit." (p. 3).⁴ This quasi-reference to St. Paul's conception of human dualism goes far towards explaining the nature of Jude's tragedy, and, perhaps more significantly, towards dispelling the still held belief that Christminster remains an ideal in the novel, holding out to Jude the tantalizing prospect of fulfilled aims. To the contrary, it is one of the final ironies that Hardy heaps upon his suffering hero that the university no less than man has a

1 For a running debate on this matter, see Robert F. Fleissner, "The Name Jude," *Victorian Newsletter*, No. 27 (Spring, 1965), 24-26; Ward Hellstrom, "Jude the Obscure as Pagan Self-Assertion," No. 29 (Spring 1966), 26-27; Myron Taube, "The Atmosphere . . . from Cyprus": Hardy's Development of Theme in *Jude the Obscure*, No. 32 (Fall 1967), 16-18.

2 "Theoretic and Practical Unconventionality in *Jude the Obscure*," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, XX (September 1965), 155-164.

3 See Samuel Hynes, *The Pattern of Hardy's Poetry* (Chapel Hill, 1961); and a reply by D. E. Mayers, "Dialectical Structures in Hardy's Poems," *Victorian Newsletter*, No. 27 (Spring 1965), 15-28.

4 All citations in this text are to *Jude the Obscure*, ed. Irving Howe (Boston, 1965).

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dual nature and thus could not provide that unity sought by one torn between conflicting and seemingly irreconcilable desires. In short, it will be argued that Hardy viewed conflict in terms of antinomies, not dialectics — at least in *Jude* — and that the novel is a penetrating and ruthless examination of modern existence, in which a man, divided to begin with because of the conflicting demands of flesh and spirit, fails to resolve his conflicts because all around him the universe is analogously split. St. Paul had described the basic and eternal human situation; the Victorian quarrel between Hebraism and Hellenism provided the exacerbating influence.

Like his own *Jude*, the young Hardy had contemplated an ecclesiastical career and, again like *Jude*, devoted himself to translating the Greek testament. If his poems are any indication, St. Paul's writing maintained a hold on his imagination even after he had turned away from orthodox Christianity. In the ironic "St. Paul's a While Ago," the "vision-seeing mind" of the "strange Jew from Damascus" seems to have very little to do with the cathedral that bears his name, for the tourists who admire its architecture and objects of art would consider the saint a mere "epilept enthusiast" were they to hear him speak. In contrast, the humble speaker of "In the British Museum" has little interest in art and reveres a stone from an ancient column only because it existed in St. Paul's time. Although his is an Hebraic view that vehemently excludes the values of Hellenism, his dramatic utterance suggests a passionate intensity on the part of the poet himself. A section of the poem is worth quoting in full:

—"I know no art, and I only view
 A stone from a wall,
 But I am thinking that stone has echoed
 The voice of Paul;

"Paul as he stood and preached beside it
 Facing the crowd,
 A small gaunt figure with wasted features,
 Calling out loud

"Words that in all their intimate accents
 Pattered upon
 That marble front, and were wide-reflected,
 And then were gone.

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"I'm a labouring man, and know but little,
Or nothing at all;
But I can't help thinking that stone once echoed
The voice of Paul."

It is difficult to believe that Hardy could claim to be writing in *Jude* about the deadly warfare between flesh and spirit without being aware that his novel, too, "echoed the voice of Paul."

Further echoes can be found in Hardy's explanation of *Jude*, offered after the book had been published and misunderstood. In *Romans*, St. Paul had written that he could not bring to fruition his good intentions, "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (vii. 19). In a strikingly similar vein, Hardy tells us that the "'grimy' features of the story go to show the contrast between the ideal life a man wished to lead, and the squalid real life he was fated to lead."⁵ In both instances the same problem is described. St. Paul writes how there is a "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" (vii. 23). Hardy says of Jude that the "throwing of the pizzle, at the supreme moment of his young dream, is to sharply initiate [the] contrast" between the ideal and the fated.⁶ Indeed, the scene Hardy alludes to appears to render St. Paul's words about the law in his members almost literally. Jude, in Chapter 6 ("At Marygreen"), is walking along completely absorbed in things of the mind, in his intention to study the classics and ecclesiastical history. He is distracted both immediately and ultimately by Arabella's throwing at him the pig's pizzle, that highly symbolic "member" of the animal. Later he muses that something in the girl was quite "antipathetic to that side of him which had been occupied with literary study and the magnificent Christminster dream" (p. 35). Both St. Paul and Hardy focus on that disparity between intention and actuality which results from man's enslavement to sexual desires.

"For," said St. Paul in the passage most closely resembling that in Hardy's preface to *Jude*, "the flesh lusteth against the

⁵ Florence E. Hardy, *The Later Years of Thomas Hardy, 1840-1928* (New York, 1930), 41.

⁶ *Ibid.*

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Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Galatians v. 17). What is crucial here for our discussion is the absence of dialectics in the struggle depicted. For St. Paul, flesh and spirit do not form a thesis and antithesis out of which some possible synthesis can be achieved on this earth, because flesh and spirit, although in conflict, do not in any true sense interact in fallen man. As one theologian puts it, St. Paul "carries the division between the flesh and the spirit to considerable lengths . . . the whole of the sinner, body and soul, is nothing but flesh, just as the risen man, body and soul, will be nothing but spirit."⁷ With baptism the spiritualization of the Christian begins, but the process can never be fulfilled on earth, and "will only be complete in heaven."⁸

In *Jude*, Hardy persistently rules out the possibility of dialectical interaction and hence reconciliation, and his imagery suggests an essentially Pauline conception of the warfare between flesh and spirit. Indeed, Hardy diagrams the antinomies in the novel as explicitly if not in as much detail as Yeats diagrams his dialectics with gyres. Two strikingly similar passages in *Jude* show the extent to which the author foreshadows the failure of his hero's quest for synthesis. When Jude first encounters Arabella,

He set down his basket of tools picked up the scrap of offal, beat a pathway for himself with his stick, and got over the hedge. *They walked in parallel lines*, one on each bank of the stream, towards the small plank bridge . . . They met in the middle of the plank, and Jude, tossing back her missile, seemed to expect her to explain why she had audaciously stopped him by this novel artillery instead of by hailing him (pp. 33-34, italics added).

Much later, at Christminster, after his marriage to Arabella has failed, Jude encounters Sue for the first time, and the scene evokes the reader's memories of his earlier experience.

He saw a figure on the other side, which turned out to be hers, and they both converged towards the cross-mark at the same moment . . . *They walked on in parallel lines*, and, waiting for her pleasure, Jude

⁷ Amédée Brunot, S.C.J., *Saint Paul and his Message*, trans. Ronald Matthews (New York, 1959), 101.
⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

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watched till she showed signs of closing in, when he did likewise (p. 81, italics added).

Both passages may be considered in terms of the unions entailed. The halfway meetings can hence be seen as symbolic commentary on the nature of the connections, one in which the parallelism is sustained: Sue and Arabella fail to satisfy more than one side of Jude, thereby thwarting any possible synthesis of his own unhappily parallel drives.

One may argue, and some have, that their qualities are not entirely exclusive and that Arabella's attraction to Jude in the first place speaks for something beyond coarse sensuality. In addition, Sue's sexual frigidity is a source of distress to herself, and it is significant that when she first appears in the novel, she has chosen between purchasing a statue of Diana or of Venus in favor of the latter. Hardy himself defended Sue, claiming that her sexual instinct was healthy although unusually weak and fastidious. Despite these qualifications, it is difficult not to agree with D. H. Lawrence that between them, Sue and Arabella form one bride. It was important for Hardy's theme that each conform to only one side of his hero: Jude's desire for spiritual and intellectual companionship *or* his sexual appetites.

The world of *Jude the Obscure* contains more schisms than that between flesh and spirit, but these serve to intensify the basic conflict. One period in Jude's life is described during which he is "rather on an intellectual track than a theological" one (p. 71), and another during which he had the idea that he could live the "ecclesiastical and altruistic life as distinct from the intellectual and emulative life" (p. 102). These alternatives are presented as if their mutual exclusivity is to be taken for granted, and Jude's troubles seem to have sprung from his ignoring an aunt's warning that "we've never had anything to do with folk in Christminster, nor folk in Christminster with we" (p. 16). It is in this context that the role of Christminster itself should be examined. For rather than being an ideal of unity, where Jude could have found the stability he sought, the university is drastically split: "At present intellect in Christminster is pushing one way, and religion the other; and so they stand stock-still, like two rams butting each other" (p. 120). Here indeed is a graphic thwarting of the dialectical process. Had

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Jude ever succeeded in receiving admission to Christminster, he would have found himself forced to ally with *either* intellect or theology in much the same way that he had formed a union with Arabella and then Sue, in both cases denied that combination which would allow him to reconcile his own divided impulses. The environment of *Jude the Obscure* can be summed up in Jude's view of the traditional "antagonisms of sex to sex" after he had quarreled with Sue, for he cannot find any "counter-poising predilections" (p. 132).

Jude's conflict between intellect and religion, between a life of knowing and a life of doing, is not an internal one so much as it is his internalization of a pervasive Victorian conflict. In *Culture and Anarchy*, Matthew Arnold describes the combatants as Hebraism and Hellenism, and claims that "between these points of influence moves our world" (V, 130).⁹ As he describes them, the "uppermost idea with Hellenism is to see things as they really are; the uppermost idea with Hebraism is conduct and obedience" (V, 165), a description that provides insight into Jude's sense of being torn between an ecclesiastical career and an intellectual life. In the novel, however, it is Sue Bridehead even more than Jude himself who reflects the cultural schism that Arnold describes.

Sue's conflict is introduced at the outset when the reader encounters her purchasing statues of Venus and Apollo. She is abashed at her temerity and suddenly aware that the statues are naked, an awareness that in the Garden of Eden indicated man's awakening consciousness of sin. But her intellect rebels against her conventional timidity, which had led her to tell her landlady that she had bought the figures of St. Peter and St. Mary Magdalen. After substituting Hebraic names for her Hellenic statues, she turns to Swinburne for bolstering. The quotation from his "Hymn to Proserpine," however, only focuses attention on the schism that results in her contrary behavior, and foreshadows her eventual defeat: "Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean: / The world has grown grey from thy breath!" (p. 77).

Sue's initial pattern of behavior as she vacillates between intellectual daring and convention is repeated throughout the novel, for as is explained, her "logic was extraordinarily com-

⁹ With the exception of the treatise on St. Paul, all citations to Arnold's prose are to the *Complete Prose Works*, ed. R. H. Super, 7 vols. (Ann Arbor, 1960-70).

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pounded, and seemed to maintain that before a thing was done it might be right to do, but that being done it became wrong; or, in other words, that things which were right in theory were wrong in practice" (pp. 172-173). It is Sue, then, who best exemplifies Arnold's distinction between Hebraic duty and Hellenic intellectuality. More important, it is the triumph of Hebraism in Sue that finally defeats any hope Jude may have had to reconcile for himself the disparate elements in his society; for, as we will see, his reaction to Sue's rejection of both Hellenism and himself is an equally strong rejection of religion.

That the pressures on Sue come from without rather than from within as they do when Jude responds to a basic human dichotomy in no way alters Hardy's essential conception of his novel, for he wrote about his book that "tragedy may be created by an opposing environment either of things inherent in the universe or of human institutions."¹⁰ We can go beyond that and say that by portraying the failure of a relationship between two characters, one of whom is torn by things inherent in the universe and the other by human institutions, Hardy is showing how compounded the problem is when these two sets of conflicts interact. The question for us, however, is whether it would be possible for Hardy to associate St. Paul with the cultural debate between Hebraism and Hellenism as well as with the human condition.

Again we can turn to Matthew Arnold, whose *St. Paul and Protestantism*, originally published in 1870, was reissued in 1892, during the period when Hardy was writing *Jude*. Arnold's treatise provides interesting connections between the two sets of conflicts that are at the tragic heart of *Jude*. First of all, it is crucial to note the impulse behind Arnold's intention to correct what he takes to be a perverse interpretation by dissenting Puritans of St. Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*, that same book of Scriptures that seems to have affected Hardy's view of the disparity between the ideal life a man might wish to lead and his actual fate. How Arnold deals with Romans and the theological issues at hand is less important for gauging Hardy's likely reaction to the book than an understanding of why Arnold has attempted this excursion into theology in the first place and how

¹⁰ Florence E. Hardy, 44.

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he views St. Paul with regard to the Victorian society of his day. When the book was first published, Arnold was criticized on the grounds that the Evangelical Party within the established Church of England held the same, supposedly erroneous, view of Romans as the dissenters Arnold was attacking. In a preface added to a later edition of the work, Arnold retorts, "the Evangelicals have not added to the first error of holding the unsound body of opinions, the second of separating for them" (p. viii).¹¹

It is not then the doctrine so much as the effect of the doctrine that concerns Arnold, for whom the unity of English society is a crucial goal. And in this Arnold bears significant comparison to Jude himself. It is even possible that Arnold's 1875 "Preface to *Essays in Criticism*," which describes Oxford and her "ineffable charm" that "keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection" (III, 290) helped mold Jude's (not Hardy's) conception of Christminster. Arnold's "Preface" speaks of how a modern age in dissolution seeks "anchorages for the spirit" (III, 288), a phrase that defines Jude's motivation throughout the novel. When he arrives at Christminster, Jude thought he had "at last found anchorage for his thoughts" (p. 74). There are other points of comparison with regard to the theme of *Jude*. Arnold's "Scholar Gypsy" describes a revulsion for the sick disease of modern life, with its divided aims, and in his 1853 preface to his poems, Arnold attacks romantic lyricism for being characterized by the dialogue of the mind with itself. How much he prized a reconciliation of discordant elements can be seen in one of the quotations that form an epigrammatic introduction to *St. Paul and Protestantism*: "It will be found at last, that unity, and the peace of the Church, will conduce more to the saving of souls, than the most specious sects, varnished with the most pious, specious pretences" (p. vi).

That it is the division in Victorian society and not a theological issue alone that concerns Arnold can be seen as he revives terms earlier used in *Culture and Anarchy* for his treatise on St. Paul: "Hebraism strikes too exclusively upon one string in us. Hellenism does not address itself with serious energy enough to morals and righteousness. For our totality, for our general

11 Citations are to *St. Paul and Protestantism* (New York, 1894).

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perfection, we need to unite the two" (p. xxxiii). If this does not come to pass, "unhappy and unquiet alternations of ascendancy between Hebraism and Hellenism are all that we shall see; — at one time, the indestructible religious experience of mankind asserting itself blindly; at another, a revulsion of the intellect of mankind from this experience, because of the audacious assumptions and gross inaccuracies with which men's account of it is intermingled" (p. xxxv). Perhaps there is nothing outside of the text of *Jude* itself that so perfectly describes the final break between Jude and Sue as this passage from *St. Paul and Protestantism*. As she insists that her marriage to Phillotson was "ratified eternally in the church at Melchester" and adheres stubbornly to her position, Jude is finally driven to retort, "You make me hate Christianity, or mysticism, or Sacerdotalism, or whatever it may be called, if it's that which has caused this deterioration in you" (p. 277). Sue's religious experience has indeed asserted itself blindly, and Jude's vehement answer is a revulsion of his intellect from her position.

Because it was Arnold's intention to promote unity, it is not surprising that he softened in his study of St. Paul that very point Hardy considered the core of *Jude*, the deadly warfare between flesh and spirit. "The philosophical explanation of this conflict," Arnold writes, "does not indeed attribute, like the Manichaean fancy, any inherent evil to the flesh and its workings." He claims that the forces within us "are in themselves beneficent, but they require to be harmonized with [our proper central moral tendency]" (p. 39). The flesh not being evil in itself, the evil that nevertheless results from this lack of harmony is "undeniable." But *St. Paul and Protestantism* supplies fewer tangible solutions to the problem of flesh and spirit than would be required to heal the split. All it really evidences is Arnold's desire for a dialectical solution to the problem. This makes readily understandable the position he takes with regard to Heinrich Heine in well-known essays, at least one of which, "Heinrich Heine," directly influenced *Jude*.

Where it comes to the quarrel between Hebraism and Hellenism, Heine can be considered an influence on both Arnold and Hardy. Not only had he written widely on the subject, but the legend that had grown up about him in Victorian England concerned a man torn between pagan and religious impulses. The

legend could derive sustenance from the fact that the conflict between flesh and spirit was one that occupied Heine throughout his career. With his inimitable and caustic wit he wrote in his critique of the German romantic school that when men repudiated spirit in France, it emigrated at once to Germany and there repudiated matter. In "The Gods in Exile" he puts more soberly the question that also bothered Arnold and Hardy: "The real question was whether the dismal, meagre, over-spiritual, ascetic Judaism of the Nazarenes, or Hellenic joyousness, love of beauty, and fresh pleasure in life should rule the world?"¹²

It would be just this kind of formulation of the question that would bother Arnold, this notion that Hebraism and Hellenism presented an either-or matter. Therefore when he praises the German writer in his essay, "Heinrich Heine," he does so because of the latter's synthesizing efforts: "It is because he thus operates a junction between the French spirit, and German culture, that he founds something new, opens a fresh period, and deserves the attention of criticism" (III, 120). But where the matter of flesh and spirit is concerned, Arnold has occasion in "Pagan and Mediaeval Religious Sentiment" to take Heine to task for his conception of how "the body and soul shall have made their peace together," since Heine had reacted against the Christian suppression of the physical by his own too exclusive exaltation of sensuous pleasure. Hence there is also implied criticism in the essay when Arnold goes on to note that in the last of his poems, Heine had "*divided* the whole world into 'barbarians and Greeks'" (III, 227; italics added). So, of course, had Arnold, when in *Culture and Anarchy* he described the way in which his world was moving between Hebraism and Hellenism. Moreover, in this book Arnold also stresses the Hellenic over the Hebraic, since, as he explains, his own time too exclusively favors the latter. But in redressing this imbalance, he was aiming for ultimate union, while in Heine's last poem, which Arnold refers to but neither names nor describes, such a union is deemed impossible.

There is reason to believe that Hardy not only knew Arnold's essays on Heine, but also this last poem, "Für die Mouche." But before looking at the poem and its relevance to this discus-

12 *The Works of Heinrich Heine*, trans. Charles G. Leland (New York, n.d., circa 1900), XII, 307.

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sion, let us consider briefly the relation of the double influence of Arnold and Heine on Hardy's *Jude*.

That Hardy was reflecting in *Jude* the struggle between Hebraism and Hellenism, is, as was noted earlier, hardly a matter for continuing debate. The issue now seems to concern which side in the dispute he favored, or whether or not he conceived a union between the two forces as possible in his own or any future time. It has been suggested that the matter may be clarified if we consider whether or not Hardy tended to view opposites dialectically. It is therefore important to realize here that in his readings of Arnold and of Heine, and, in particular, in his reading of Arnold *on* Heine, Hardy could scarcely help being aware that when it came to the dispute between Hebraism and Hellenism, Arnold and Heine differed on just this point of whether or not the two could be united. Arnold criticized Heine's last poem for dividing up the world between the two forces. This same poem may have served to confirm Hardy in a view of reality he had already acquired from St. Paul.

In "Für die Mouche," Heine imagines himself lying dead in his tomb, upon which are sculptured friezes whose subjects are drawn from both pagan antiquity and the Bible. He further imagines that the figures are embroiled in contentious debate, and tells how

From the dry stone breaks out the war of creeds,
The bas-reliefs dispose themselves for battle;
Pan's dying wail the pagan ardour feeds,
And Moses blasts his foe like Pharaoh's cattle.

Ah! evermore must this keen strife go on,
Beauty and Truth, alas! there's no uniting;
For while each power retains its garrison,
Greeks and Barbarians ever will be fighting.

Here indeed is "deadly warfare," not between flesh and spirit, but between forces that Hardy's reading had shown him were closely allied to the Pauline dichotomy. In the cultural sphere, Heine's poem could well serve as an analogue to St. Paul's dictum, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other."

The evidence for Hardy's having read this poem are admit-

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tedly circumstantial, but nonetheless compelling. The quoted translation is that of Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton, who included it in his own personal memoirs of Heine.¹³ Lord Houghton had been an acquaintance of Hardy since the 1880s, but during the period when Hardy was writing *Jude*, Houghton's daughter became a close personal friend.¹⁴ It was she who introduced the writer to his second wife, and Mrs. Hardy later claimed that her friend had been a model for Sue Bridehead. Thus, in the context of Hardy's interest in Heine to begin with, and his friendship with the Houghton family, it is more than likely that he read Houghton's account of the German writer and with it, this final, despairing poem. In any event, it is Heine's view that triumphs in *Jude*, as both the internal and external forces confronting each other are at best deadlocked. For both Heine and Hardy the warfare between flesh and spirit has been externalized and embodied in institutional conflicts that reflect an essential split in the world. Hence it is not a question of whether Hardy's viewpoint in *Jude* is pagan or Christian. Like his own hero and Matthew Arnold, Hardy could see the necessity for the values of both, but he seems forced to assent to Heine's final belief that reconciliation is impossible. It was a belief that echoed the voice of Paul, who centuries earlier had provided a world view still very much alive in Hardy's time — one in which parallel lines that never meet rather than dialectical interaction frustrate man's intentions and define his fate.

13 *Monographs: Personal and Social* (New York, 1873), 325.

14 An account of Hardy's friendship with Mrs. Arthur Henniker can be found in R. L. Purdy, *Thomas Hardy: A Bibliographical Study* (London, 1954), 342-348.

