CHAPTER - VII
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE HELD BY MATTHEW ARNOLD AND T.S. ELIOT.

An attempt may now be made to compare the concept of culture held by Matthew Arnold and T.S. Eliot. It is worthwhile to see how each approached the problem of culture in his own day. Matthew Arnold and T.S. Eliot exerted a decisive influence on the literary taste of their age. They both had an unusual self-awareness of their function which they considered as their mission in life. This self-awareness is revealed in their poetry, literary criticism and social criticism. Matthew Arnold and T.S. Eliot sum up the fine point of the literary consciousness of their age and to consider them in juxtaposition is to consider the changing sensibilities of historical periods, as much as that of the individuals. Eliot's sharp awareness of Arnold as the spokesman for an age shaped his own critical estimate of him.

In Rugby and Boston, Arnold and Eliot found a way of life which remained with them always, even though both became cultural cosmopolitans. Their literary careers have striking similarities. The early personal poetry led to poetry of a more public character. This led to literary criticism which, in its turn, led to social and religious criticism. As Professor of poetry at Oxford, Arnold found a platform, that enabled him 'to get at the English public'.
In that academic context, he began a career in criticism which started by examining the nature of contemporary Homeric translation and ended by proving the spiritual anarchy that threatened a nation. As editor of the 'Criterion', Eliot had 'the aim of bringing together the best in new thinking and new writing in its time from all countries of Europe that had anything to contribute to the common good.'

In 'Sacred Wood', Eliot initiates a life-long uneasy relationship with Matthew Arnold, who seems to have been a writer he could neither live with nor without. Eliot respected Arnold for his insight and understanding. Eliot repeatedly quotes him. Eliot Professes precisely the sort of internationalism Arnold had professed before him. Eliot invokes 'the European idea' and stresses the need to 'keep the intellectual blood of Europe circulating throughout the whole of Europe.'¹ His editorial position may be described as Arnoldian. In commentary after commentary, we find Eliot emphasizing, the virtues of detachment, of independent thinking.² The high regard for Arnold's writings is amply corroborated in the 'Criterion's' commentaries. The references to him are respectful to the point of open admiration.³ Significantly, Arnold's 'Culture and Anarchy' is repeatedly quoted or alluded to more frequently than any other modern book. Eliot recalls Arnold's picture of the

² Ibid., Vol.ix, P.3; Vol.xiii, P.452.
³ Ibid., Vol.ii, P.331; Vol.iii, P.4; Vol.ix, P.381.
Populace 'bawling, hustling and smashing'. He applies the criteria of 'Sweetness and Light' to the 'Sunday Express' just as Arnold might have done. He reproves his age for its incautious trust in 'machinery'. He recommends a variant of Arnold's 'Hellenism'. He quotes a passage from Arnold in great approval and thus signifies his kinship to Arnold. The passage refers to keeping communications open with the future. Arnold's influence extends beyond matters of content to matters of style.

Many abstract resemblances between the two critics can also be traced. They both had reverence for tradition and the classics. Both were pre-occupied with the relationship between literature and religion. They both had a conservative attitude towards morals. They both shared a distaste for eccentric individuality, joined to an admiration for genuine originality. They both insisted upon the idea of European cultural unity and at the same time uphold cultural pluralism and the necessity for knowing other cultures. Both maintained a genuine relation to the creative literature of their time as they were both poets in their own right. They maintained an Academic status. Both have concerned themselves with religion, politics, sociology, literary criticism in the widest sense and perhaps encompassing all these things, the problem of culture in the modern society.

5. Ibid., Vol. vii, P. 3.
6. Ibid., Vol. vi, P. 290.
7. Ibid., Vol. iii, P. 342.
8. Ibid., Vol. iii, P. 112.
Matthew Arnold and T.S. Eliot were both driven by a sense of disenchantment with their respective times to search for a means of salvation. They both found it in culture.

Eliot's formally declared reactions to Matthew Arnold are, most substantially, found in 'The Return of Matthew Arnold', part of a 'Criterion' commentary written in 1925; the essay on 'Arnold and Pater' written in 1930 and published in 'Selected Essays' (1932); a lecture on Arnold given at Harvard in 1933 and published the same year in 'The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism'; and some paragraphs in the first chapter of 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture' published in 1948. From these pieces, together with scattered remarks to be found elsewhere, we can see that Eliot's criticism of Arnold, though it may change in tone with the years, returns continually to the same basic objections.

The major points of difference between Eliot and Arnold turn out to be exactly the grievances of Eliot's one-time teachers, More and Babbitt. Arnold was deficient in religious insight (More); he led to Pater (More); he lacked a binding philosophy and avoided first principles (More); he was a fuzzy thinker who shied away from precise analysis (Babbitt); he tended to confuse genres (Babbitt).
These objections are elaborated by Eliot in his various writings. Arnold is more of a propagandist for criticism than a critic; he shows himself insufficiently aware of the technique of poetry and the specific nature of art. Arnold is a vague and imprecise thinker, an easy prey to the temptation of confusing genres. At the very beginning of 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture', after the initial definition of what constitutes culture, and after emphasizing the fact that culture must be seen in social as well as in individual terms, he says: 'The most easily remembered example of this selection is Matthew Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy". Arnold is concerned primarily with the individual and the 'Perfection' at which he should aim. It is true that in his famous classification of "Barbarians, Philistines, Populace" he concerns himself with a critique of classes; but his criticism is confined to an indictment of these classes for their shortcomings, and does not proceed to consider what should be the proper function or 'Perfection' of each class. The effect, therefore, is to exhort the individual who would attain the peculiar kind of 'Perfection' which Arnold calls 'culture', to rise superior to the limitations of any class, rather than to realise its highest attainable ideals. The impression of thinness which Arnold's 'Culture' conveys to a modern reader is partly due to the absence of social background to his picture.'

'Culture' can be used about an individual; so that finally 'the wholly cultured individual is a phantasm; and we shall look for culture, not in any individual, or in any group of individuals but more and more widely; and we are driven in the end to find it in the pattern of the society as a whole'.

He comments further: 'The facile assumption of a relationship between culture and religion is perhaps the most fundamental weakness of Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy". Arnold gives the impression that culture (as he uses the term) is something more comprehensive than religion; that the latter is no more than a necessary element, supplying ethical formation and some emotional colour, to culture which is the ultimate value'.

The closest analogy to Arnold is Eliot, even though the latter asserts that he is not a continuator of the Arnoldian point of view: 'we go to him (Arnold) for refreshment and the companionship of a kindred point of view to our own, but not as disciples.'

To compare Eliot with Arnold, therefore, is merely to demonstrate that Eliot shows signs of carrying on the 'great tradition' of European culture in English letters from the point at which Arnold relinquished it. He comments sarcastically: 'In "Culture and Anarchy" which is probably his (Arnold's) greatest book, we hear something said about "the will of God"; but "the will of God" seems to become superseded in importance by our "best self or right reason, to which we want to give authority", and this best
Eliot remarks further that the 'Inner Check' of Professor Irwing Babbitt, for whom Eliot has got great respect and admiration, looks very much like the 'best self' of Arnold. Eliot's critique of Arnold is complex, if not inconsistent. It has always been a mixture of admiration and distaste, from the very start. But Eliot's own career as a critic follows in a general way the pattern of Arnold's.

When we read Arnold's 'Culture and Anarchy', we are not forced to be aware of the standards of the specialized disciplines upon whose field he touches. There is a reasonable degree of assumption disciplined by close attention to the subject at hand. T.S.Eliot remarks in this context: 'His (Arnold's) culture survives better than his conduct because it can better survive vagueness of definition.... culture has three aspects according as we look at in "Culture and Anarchy", in "Essays in Criticism", or in the abstract. It is in the first of these two books that culture shows to the best advantage. And the reason is clear: Culture there stands out against a background to which it is contrasted, a background of definite items of ignorance, vulgarity and prejudice.... the book is perfect of its kind.' In an essay on Bradley in which he linked Bradley and Arnold as allies in the continuing fight against philistinism, Eliot carefully separated Arnold's religious writings from his other work: '....... "Literature and Dogma" is irrelevant to Arnold's main position as given in the

"Essays" and "Culture and Anarchy", ..... the greatest weakness of Arnold's culture was his weakness in philosophical training. Like his 19th century predecessor, Matthew Arnold, Eliot is deeply concerned over the decay in the standard of culture in a 'mass society organized for profit'. He analyses the causes which have brought about the decay and puts forward his own definition of culture as 'a whole way of life'. Eliot is using 'culture' in a holistic or organismist sense as something that pertains to whole life of a community, and which is more than the sum of its visible aspects. As he says, a man is more than an assemblage of separate organs; the animating principle is what religion and metaphysics have traditionally regarded as the soul. In Eliot's model of a society, the animating power is religion. It is this that makes culture more than the assemblage of disparate elements. In the first chapter of the book, he writes of the culture of a people 'as an incarnation of its religion'. He uses this phrase to express the difficult and elusive idea that culture and religion exist with regard to each other in a way that is closer than anything expressed by the idea of 'relationship' and yet stops short of actual identity. The idea of religion-culture (the clumsy hyphenation becomes inevitable) as the whole way of life of a people had been anticipated in the tradition of 'After Strange Gods' and the habitual, largely unconscious religious practice of the mass of the people in 'The Idea of Christian Society'.

'Notes towards the Definition of Culture' cannot be taken as a systematic treatise of a sociologist. It does not claim completeness or finality. Nevertheless, the argument is closely reasoned. At the end of our reading, we are more conscious of what culture is not rather than what it is. We can cite in this regard his pains to define the 'togetherness' of 'religion and Culture'. He warns us several times not to make Matthew Arnold's mistake of assuming that culture is something more comprehensive than religion. Equally, we must avoid the error of regarding religion and culture as two different things between which there is a relation; and the alternative error of identifying religion and culture. All these attempts at definition lack spiritual subtlety. The basic factor that flesh can be corrupted is forgotten when he says that culture is an indefinable way of life. It cannot be plotted or analyzed or scientifically communicated in any effective way. Very often, in the history of mankind, a corrupted church has been responsible for the disruption of a culture, for the destruction of a way of life. One of the many impressions that the book leaves is that of its sterility. It is as if he admits the futility of attempts at refining the uncultured nature of the people of his time. It is difficult to assess his attitude throughout. It is a major difficulty to find out just how serious Eliot is or intends to be taken. The reason lies in the fact that the standards that are assumed for the purpose of one page of argument are explicitly rejected on
the next or even by implication in the course of the argument itself. His arguments regarding C.E.M. Joad can be cited as an instance in this regard.

Eliot's book does not claim scientific analysis or the opposite. It belongs to neither category. Eliot's work will have value chiefly as a corrective of popular misconception regarding the number of things which are today mistaken for culture. Eliot's definition of culture proceeds through a series of eliminations, and the author moves with caution while considering the positive nature of culture itself. His best thought appears in his principle of counterpoise. It explains the proportion of space he has given to the defence of regionalism and of religious diversity and explains the reasons for his adoption of a class society. Eliot is careful enough to distinguish class society from both the caste system and the system of elites. The essence of culture is not defined clearly. He stops with calling it 'that which makes life worth living' and the 'unconscious background of all our planning.' In the later chapters, he discusses peripheral matters and persistently speaks as a sociologist. Perhaps, this is an indirect way of expressing the view that culture is ultimately not definable. The book as a whole seems directed at the bureaucratic delusion that everything is an administrative problem. He thus exposed the difficulties involved in the attempt to reform culture by applying political catchwords.
He seems to warn also against confusing culture with something material or mechanical.

Eliot writes of sociological problems in the language of the sociologist, treating in very brief space the question of class, caste, elites and of the relation of culture and religion. In asserting the dependence of western culture on dogmatic Christianity, he declares: 'I am convinced of that, not merely because I am a Christian myself, but as a student of social biology.' Eliot does not attempt a detailed historical demonstration though his conclusions require it. The extreme of his ambition, he says, is to rescue the word 'culture' from abuse. He wishes, in an entirely backward view, to establish the conditions under which culture is possible at all, by seeing what conditions of religion and class differentiation have supported it in the past. Despite the title, 'culture' is never satisfactorily defined in it. Eliot does not also suggest any permanent standards by which one culture may be compared with another. Eliot uses the word in different senses, sometimes inclusive, sometimes selective, sometimes merely descriptive and sometime eulogistic. His argument is highly abstract and full of equivocation. Because of the total lack of illustration, the 'Notes' lacks literary authority. Eliot's attempt to define culture consists in directing attention to what would be called culture by

educated users of the language and see what Eliot sees. The 'Notes' is quite informally written so that important topics are dealt with in places where one might not expect to meet them. It is the culture of the whole society that he considers fundamental. It is constituted by all the elements like urbanity, civility, learning, philosophy and artistic productions of that society. A cultured man is required to have some appreciation of all or most of these elements.

What is important in Eliot's cultural thinking is that he is making a plea for the human individual himself, whatever his talent or position may be and not for the superior or inferior individual. The very strong personal theme of the book lies in the search for the recovery of individual life from the mass or collective life, and for the renewal of private life. He runs counter to his time in this regard. In Eliot's context, culture has to do with the relation between the spiritual and material organisation in a society, as felt and lived by individuals. He identifies the elite with culture. He admits that the present upper class is in a state of decay. Yet he wishes to preserve our present culture. He does not offer concrete proposals and hence his contribution is robbed of its validity. One of Eliot's underlying premises is that both primitive and advanced cultures obey the same basic laws as regards their development and operation. They differ only in scale and content.
Eliot's argument seems to be as much a symptom as an analysis of the present state of culture. It is a symptom of the desperate lethargy now prevailing, as society is stalled with none of its problems solved. Eliot's familiar observations on the alienation of culture from society is largely a description rather than a diagnosis of the cultural malady. His prescription of religion as a remedy for the atomization of culture is only an elaborate metaphor of unity and it can be realised only through some form of clerical fascism. Eliot at best is not offering anything more, than a freezing of the existing social relations. Contradictions abound in some of the cultural phenomenon to which Eliot refers. Eliot nowhere faces the problem of the effect of any social change on creative life. He implies throughout that the modern tradition would carry on, only under more favourable conditions. The fact is that the intelligentsia, or the elite as Eliot prefers to call it, is scarcely an agency for the conservation of culture or the improvement of taste. The outcome of Eliot's concept of culture is bleak and disheartening. Facing this darkness, Eliot has faith to offer—faith in the possibility of 'common faith and order'. Since what may be called the traditional means of maintaining or renewing the culture are being destroyed by technological change, the remedy is in improving our means.

The main difference between the concepts of culture held by Arnold and Eliot lies in the fact that Eliot, in
principle, is concerned with culture in the broad or anthropological sense rather than the narrow Arnoldian sense. In other words, the whole way of life of a society with all its inherited manners, customs and style of living is the concern of Eliot as opposed to the 'best that has been thought and said' and the cultivation of the fine arts which is the concern of Arnold. Eliot, a democrat, is concerned with the culture of the society as a whole. He makes this assertion in an emphatic manner. But we have a feeling that he is more concerned with the perfection of the individual. When this is achieved, the perfection of society automatically follows. The culture of an individual, of a group and of a society as a whole mutually interact. In practice, Eliot, however, slides from one sense of culture to another in a quite disconcerting way. The anthropological use of the word is descriptive and value-free. Anthropologists have shown that seemingly primitive people can often produce very complicated cultural forms. When Eliot laments the decline of culture in the Twentieth century and contemplates a future 'of which it is possible to say that it will have no culture at all', he cannot be using the word in the anthropological sense because organised human life is bound to have its accompanying cultural forms. Clearly, Eliot is here using the word in a more particular, value-bearing sense, which is closer to the Arnoldian usage. Undoubtedly, Eliot is aware of this ambiguity, though the subtleties and circumlocutions of his prose do little to resolve it.
It is interesting to note how Eliot's own later critical practice is less at variance with Arnold's. While he always insisted on the boundary between religion and poetry, he became less sure as time went by and his distinctions about the use of the word 'culture' entail as many confusions as Arnold's assimilations. Eliot, for all his elaborate tentativeness of approach, was never really able to reconcile religion and culture. To bring the two names of Arnold and Eliot into conjunction seems less and less a matter of comparing their relative merits as social and literary critics. It is increasingly a matter of being able to see the way in which the criticism becomes part of their whole creative achievement.

The main difference between Arnold and Eliot lies in the emphasis that they place on the perfection of the individual. For Arnold, it is very important whereas for Eliot, the culture of society as a whole is very important. As a commentator on current policies and legislation, he found himself entirely in Arnold's position: never able to approve, constantly criticising, dissecting, attempting to expose the fallacies behind the catchwords of all the contemporary factions. Eventually, he put it that his business was 'to arouse dubiety'; to pose the Socratic questions which arrest sincere listener and bring assumptions under reconsideration.
Eliot shares the heritage of Arnold methodologically in that he has been concerned with the same problems as Arnold, if not always agreeing with his ideas. The minority, which produces the 'high' culture in Eliot's scheme of things, has to be placed in a hierarchical social model in the way that he recommends. This is not easy, Arnold was being more realistic when he too saw English society divided into layers, but with the Barbarians at the top and the Philistines in the middle, neither of them noticeable for their cultivation. As on earlier occasions, Eliot seems to be extrapolating from an idealising outsider's view of English society. Like Arnold, Eliot turned to the French for the intellectual virtues of clarity, and precision and also for the aesthetic virtue of seriousness and completeness. Arnold is seen by Eliot as the talented victim of circumstances which he had been the first to diagnose and fight against. When the general cast of Eliot's thought is contrasted with that of Arnold's, the same thing proves to be true again and again: whether it be due to a difference in historical period or a difference in personality, or both, Eliot invariably supplies an extreme solution for a problem that Arnold answers with a moderate remedy. The various components of culture like religion, state, class, Elites, politics and education have to be taken into consideration when comparing Arnold with Eliot.
Arnold's religious writings are the corner-stone of his work. Arnold is commonly thought of as the apostle of culture. In his opinion, the highest art possesses religiousness because of its height, depth and gravity. Arnold declared: 'At the present moment, two things about the Christian religion must surely be clear to anybody with eyes in his head; one is, that men cannot do without it; the other, that they cannot do with it as it is'. These words, taken from the preface to 'God and the Bible' (1875), aptly sum up the whole drift and intention of Arnold's religious writings. In these sentences, he takes up his characteristic position as a middle man. He is standing between and sharing the view both of the 'orthodox', who rightly hold that we cannot do without religion and the free-thinking liberals, who hold that we cannot do with it as it is. He has also felt the full strength of the modern spiritual East winds. To Arnold, religion was always a thing that mattered most. All his efforts in criticism, in politics, in education, really led up to it. It was, therefore, of vital importance to preserve it, and to find a basis for it which should make it invulnerable to 'scientific' criticism and yet leave it ethically as powerful as before. Arnold felt strongly that it is necessary to transform 'religion' radically so that it can be perpetuated. Arnold, from his own 'European' stand-point, saw that the 'zeitgeist' had undercut the Christian 'fundamentals'. Arnold's aim was
to awaken the English from their provincial unconsciousness. His aim was to supply them with a new and true basis for their religion, so that when the inevitable awakening came, it should not lead them to reject Christianity itself along with their untenable traditional beliefs. Arnold was attacked for robbing people of their simple faith. The religious transformation he looked for could only be achieved by applying to the Bible and the creeds the qualities of flexibility, perceptiveness and judgment which are the best fruits of letters.' In fact, culture could yield a better apprehension of religious truth than any theological skill. It is here that culture can play an effective role in religion. The plain man needs the help of culture to avoid that false approach to the Bible which seeks to extract dogma from poetry, or uses the text talismanically.

Arnold is sometimes criticised for his excessive deference to science. But the truth is that he was only anxious to separate from religion those elements which exposed it to scientific attack. By 'science', he means simply the search for truth, or more specifically, the modern spirit which seeks to prove all things and maintain only that which is sure. The elements in popular religion which were exposing it to scientific attack were partly the petrified formulae of Calvinism and more particularly the whole miraculous element in Christianity itself. Arnold was not bigoted and fanatical in his attitude
towards religion. He freely admits that without the extra-beliefs, Christianity would never have got established and commend itself to many of the faithful. Arnold would not like to unsettle those who enjoy a simple, traditional faith. He says it is better to have Christianity with extra-beliefs than no Christianity at all. Thus we see how very tolerant he was in his attitude towards Aber-glaube (extra-beliefs). Arnold's anger was directed at the Non-conformist religious organisations of contemporary England, the home of 'the Dissidence of the Dissent and the protestantism of the protestant religion.' He expresses very strongly his dissatisfaction with the life led by the Non-conformists. The puritans, considering themselves to be in possession of the one thing needful, the unum necessarium, have felt free in all else to follow the lead of their ordinary selves, have given free rein to their acquisitiveness and Mammonism and have vulgarised and debased even the precious truths of which they have been the witness. Arnold's conservatism comes out clearly in his praise of the Bible as a manual of righteousness. Arnold's attachment to the Church of England was profound. It was connected with some of his deepest instincts. He defines the church as a 'great rational society for the promotion of goodness.' The promotion of goodness through Christian ethics seemed to him the most important function of the church.
Even though Arnold admired religion profoundly, he insisted that culture went beyond it. Culture goes beyond religion as it conceives perfection as the 'harmonious expansion of all the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature.' Religion, as it generally operates, puts an exclusive emphasis on merely a few powers or even only one, namely, the moral. The English, more than any other people, desire to attain moral perfection. Yet this desire, embodied in puritanism and without the sweetness and light of culture has produced a religion of mere machinery. For Arnold, poetry and religion are aspects of a wider entity called 'culture' or the total current of ideas in which a given society lives. They are, for Arnold, different versions of human awareness of the human condition.

The chapter 'Unity and Diversity' in Eliot's book 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture' leaves us only with the cloudest notions of what faith, theology and religion mean to Eliot. The chapter contains a factual account of the development of the Church of England. But Eliot takes care to ensure that no mention of religion be offensive to anyone. The result is that he commits himself to nothing and appears to be convinced of nothing in particular. He saw in the Christian religion a panacea for all the ills of the society. He asserted in 'The Idea of Christian Society' that 'the only possibility of control and balance is a religious control and balance; that the only hopeful
course for a society which would thrive and continue its creative activity in the arts of civilization is to become a Christian." According to Eliot, Christianity is not simply a matter of feeling. What is required is that we apply our intellectual faculty in analysing the conditions of society in which we are living and see its difference from the Christian society of Eliot's conception. Then Christianity becomes for the individual a matter primarily of thought and not of feeling. He wants for Christianity the same kind of discipline and order which Eliot discovered in classical literature.

His structure of a Christian society may be thought too frail and chimerical. He anticipates it by saying that he is not presenting an idealized picture of a rural retreat. He seems to recognize that society cannot be reduced to such basic forms. He is also aware of the myriad forces that today oppose a truly Christian orientation of society. Where he finds un-Christian behaviour, he proposes uniform Christian belief. This, in all of its astonishing simplicity, is the instrument of his proposed society. Eliot does not concern himself with the actual working of this society in a world of coercions, the bases of which are not spiritual but material. Eliot admits the possibility of a Christian society, when once established, it may revert again to its old ways due to the working of power. He is aware that Christian social forms are ill-suited to the complex, modern world. Hence, he sees two possible solutions. The first solution would call for a
return to a much more basic and primitive mode of life. The second would 'accept the modern world as it is and simply try to adapt Christian social ideals to it.' He has reached a logical impasse and tries to ease himself out by simply declaring that the society he has in mind 'can only be realised when the great majority of sheep belong to one fold.' Logical contradictions are met by pontification. He seems to be pleading for his own variety of elitism. There is an avoidable inaccuracy when he says that Christian heritage can be traced to the existence of 2000 years of Christianity. It is only from about the 6th century that Christian institutions can be called, in any definable sense, vehicles for transmission of culture.

Eliot's attempt in the 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture' is to find a way of expressing the connection of religion and culture which suggests neither the separateness implied in 'relation' nor the fusion of 'identification'. His cultural thinking begins with two related difficulties: he does not believe that more than a small minority can ever be cultured in one strong traditional sense of the term - capable of subtle and complex response - and he does not believe that any particular way of life can be more than an inadequate embodiment of his deepest values. The distinction between levels of consciousness and the confident placing of these levels in direct relation to levels of society is

18. Ibid., P.37.
of great importance to Eliot's thinking. The communal
instinctive life which Eliot described in the 'Idea of
Christian Society' is now a major part of what is ment by
'culture'. Eliot is arguing for a common culture, a way
of life shared organically by a whole people; but the
culture will be shared at different levels and the levels
are determined by grades of unconsciousness. The society
will be stratified into social classes largely correspon-
ding to these levels, and the strength of the whole culture
will depend on the extent to which each class fulfils its
particular function.

Eliot thinks of the Church as it were, sociologi-
cally, as a social and political structure, rather than as the vehicle for individual religious life. Eliot has a
revulsion from the whole puritan tradition in Anglo-saxon
history. Eliot sees the existing role of the Anglican esta-
blishment in British society as an admirable state of affairs.
Eliot assumes that the Church of England is the only valid
vehicle for Christian belief. He ignores the part played
by Non-conformity and Roman Catholicism in the making of
English culture. He claims that, in a Christian society,
the mass of people would be probably not consciously commi-
tted believers. But they would pursue a Christian way of
life, both in observance and morality, in accordance with
traditionally accepted and inherited standards. Eliot
uses the term 'Christian society' in both its theological
and sociological senses. Eliot argues that he does not look for a society of saints, but a human order where Christianity is communal before it is individual. Eliot's central point in the 'Notes' is that we must see the 'culture of a people as the incarnation of its religion'. Culture is shaped by all worship, and in very complex, indirect ways, even though ultimately the quality of a given culture will depend on the character of its religion.

Arnold's fundamental political belief was that 'moral causes govern the standing and the falling of the States'. Arnold put his faith in all that he meant by 'culture' which included religion as well as education, the quest for perfection and light in all things. But his characteristic plea on the practical level is for State Secondary Schools on the lines of the French Lycees, not to replace Eton, Harrow and Rugby but to give the middle and lower classes their share in the best culture of the nation. The middle class, and pre-eminently the kernel of these classes, the protestant Dissenters, suspected State action in the past. But they should realise that times have changed. The State can now be their truest friend. Both the writers express their displeasure with liberalism and democracy. Matthew Arnold attacks democracy by giving a faithful picture of his own time. Eliot believes the only fruits of Liberalism's disorder are going to be inherited. For him, Democracy, in terms of which the social ends are defined, means too many things to mean anything at which a society can direct its whole life.
Arnold's discussion of the 'Real Intestacy Bill' brings out his attitude toward Liberalism very clearly. His concern is the attitude of the Liberals towards their axioms: their reliance upon them as if they were self-acting laws which will put themselves into operation without trouble or planning on our part'. Arnold places the reality against this Liberal philosophy. He believed that perfection was a long way off with things as they were and with liberal doctrines condoning and encouraging the increase of 'vast, miserable, unmanageable masses of sunken people.' Hence his dissatisfaction with Liberalism.

Eliot's preoccupation with contemporary politics can be seen in 'For Lancelot Andrews' and the commentaries in 'The Criterion'. He deals in these writings of his with the apathy of all elements in society to the responsibilities of intelligent representative government. He felt that in the democratic set up, people have lost sight of the value of their individual vote. The mass of mankind, unable to believe in any thing very strongly or to understand any situation very well, was in danger of being led astray by a show of power in the streets or by anything that appeals to their momentary passion. He spoke of the reintroduction of the idea of loyalty to a king who incarnates the idea of a nation. He saw in this idea the alternative to Nationalism. He condemned Fascism as representing Napoleonism, a doctrine of the worship of success. He confessed himself to be an
amateur in politics. He defended the distinction between political ideas and actual politics, a distinction particularly necessary in a period of social disruption. He objects to the modern worship of success which means an unscrupulous directness of action. By exalting man's petty triumph, it loses all view of anything more important than the petty individual.

Eliot pointed out that what he meant by a political philosophy was 'not merely even the conscious formulation of the ideal aims of a people..... What we are seeking is not a programme for a party, but a way of life for a people....' Eliot's position is that liberalism is not satisfactory as it offers only a negative conception of society and as such must yield to positive order and belief. For him, that order will be Christian. Eliot's political views were to some extent the expression of his temperament. He believed that political activity should be based on supernatural authority. Supernatural authority should be guaranteed by institutions of Church and monarchy. He preferred the idea of the Europe of Middle Ages with its unity of belief in shared values throughout the whole society to the modern West of fragmented aims and values. Politics meant to Eliot the defence of the forces of tradition within the society. He looked to politics for ideas and could not find any in England. Hence he did not identify himself with any

existing English political party. He thinks of principles and not in terms of political realities. Eliot eschewed power which alone can defend any political system.

For Arnold, culture shows the way of salvation out of the muddle of the modern society. Eliot is concerned with the whole way of life of a people but is not able to rise out of his Platonic abstractions and come to grips with reality. Both the writers express their displeasure with Liberalism, Individualism and Democracy. As a conservative thinker, Eliot has succeeded in exposing the limitations of an orthodox Liberalism. The social principles advocated by Eliot are contradicted by the principle of 'free economy' of contemporary conservatism. He insists upon the wholeness of a society which has to be dealt with. In his opinion, the existing society is 'worm-eaten with liberalism'. It is susceptible to the deleterious forces of Liberalism. A civilization, strong enough to be permanent, must recognise its positive elements, the very elements against which Liberalism acts. Liberalism can never control society. Modern society, as Eliot looks at it, is composed essentially of two elements - the Christian tradition and its adversary, the Liberal tradition. Liberalism is too negative and Christianity too weak to assume control. The worst that Liberalism can do to society is to let loose chaos. Until then, however, Liberalism and Christianity have to co-exist.
Arnold's judgement on Liberalism was, essentially, that it was mindless. It was too exclusively allied to the instinct for expansion. It did not minister enough to the human desire for manners, beauty and intellectual accomplishment. It pursued the wrong objects, such as the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, to the detriment of its true objective: the cause of eradicating the extremes of inequality. As a 'Liberal of the Future', Arnold prophesied: '..... so long as the liberals do only as they have done hitherto, they will not permanently satisfy the community.' In Eliot's mind, Arnold's objection becomes full-scale and a total rejection of Liberalism. Arnold's contention that Liberals and conservatives never really meet head on over principles is again, in Eliot, raised to an absolute: 'In the sense in which Liberalism is contrasted with conservatism, both can be equally repellant; if the former means chaos, the latter can become petrifaction.' Whereas Arnold worried about the future of Liberalism and tried to strengthen it by criticism, Eliot calmly prophesies: 'The attitudes and beliefs of Liberalism are destined to disappear, are already disappearing'. Similarly, Arnold's critique on individualism is taken to the extreme point by Eliot.

Both the writers are advocates of cosmopolitanism, concerned with the European community, and fond of

22. Ibid., P.18.
repeating Goethe's dictum that one cannot know one's own culture well without knowing another well. But their concepts of Europe were different. The great European figures for Arnold were Goethe and the great philosopher, Spinoza. The embodiment of Europe for Eliot is Dante, the poet of all western Christendom.

The concept of state held by Arnold and Eliot gives a clear picture of the different attitudes of the two writers. Arnold is of the opinion that the individualism of the English is likely to sweep them into anarchy. To avoid this catastrophe, the English must modify their attitude towards public authority. They must acquire 'the notion so familiar on the continent and to antiquity, of the State - the nation in its collective and corporate character, entrusted with stringent powers for the general advantage and controlling individual wills in the name of an interest wider than that of individuals.' 23 None of the existing social classes is fit to exercise this power. So the State must represent the 'best self' or essential 'humanity' of all its citizens just as an Academy represents their intellectual conscience. If some such firm state-power is to be established, Englishmen must change their attitude. By fostering an understanding of larger issues, culture will make them see the necessity for a just and impersonal State power. In this manner, it will

help them to avoid the anarchy to which 'doing as one likes' must lead. One task of this firm State power will be to promote a greater social equality than prevalent in England. Arnold recommends the State as the agent of general perfection. Arnold wished to base his State on the best self of each class in society that is the best reason of each social class without its vested interest. But it is a fallacy of definition to speak of a class without interest. In the end, Arnold must turn to the individual, to that possible Socrates in eachman's breast. But the possibility of growth and of the increasing dominion of the individual best self upon which the State is to be built, itself depends, as Arnold asserts, upon the State. Here is confusion in a circle.

Eliot does not give any clarification regarding the distinction between 'society' and 'State'. In considering the relationship between Church and State, Eliot says in 'The Idea of a Christian Society' that no form of government should usurp the functions of the Church for while the former is something transitory, the latter is permanent. Thus, Eliot ignores the concrete situation of the State as reflecting the culture of the individual or a group or a society as a whole. There is a feeling of remoteness. For Arnold, State is an important institution reflecting the 'best self' and 'right reason' of the society.
Arnold's analysis of the English into three classes is famous. The aristocrats are categorised as the Barbarians, the middle class as the Philistines and the working class as the Populace. He examines each class and finds all the classes to be ineligible to form the desired centre of authority. In the developed social structure, of a fully industrialised society, few reactions of any kind could escape a mixture of largely self-regarding feelings of class. The worst harm done by the stock notion of class was that it offered class feelings about human behaviour. Arnold did not wholly escape from the influence of the stock notions and habits of his class. Arnold was an excellent analyst of the deficiencies of the gospel of 'doing as one likes'. He relied on the idea of man's business as the pursuit of perfection and his criticism of the gospel of 'doing as one likes' arises from this idea. The consequence of the adherence to this false gospel was the danger of spiritual anarchy when individual assertion was the only standard. Second is the danger of social anarchy as the rising class exerted its power. Thus Arnold treats the subject of class.

In the 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture', Eliot surveys culture within the existing social structures during a time when classes seem to be on the verge of extinction to be succeeded by elites. Coming from America where there are distinctions of wealth rather than of class, Eliot is in a very good position to consider the relation of class
to culture. Eliot's view is that there is an amalgam of cultural activities, a harmony of diversities, within the unity that is culture. Thus, the arts, philosophy, scholarship and the civility of manners which Matthew Arnold thought of as culture are only aspects of culture for Eliot. One can very well be specialized in any of these and yet be uncultivated. What is common to all classes and specialisations of the culture is religion. Eliot's view is that for transmission of culture, the persistence of social classes is necessary and that without an upper class, there can be no continuance of a high culture. He sees the injustice of the class system. He thinks that the privileged existence of the upper class unjustified unless they benefit the whole society. Elitism is a threat to culture because it is a threat to those who are by heredity bound to traditions of which they are the guardians. He has a faint hope that the future society will offer a mixture of elitism and class distinctions based on the continuity of interest of the family. Arnold's 'saving remnant' and Eliot's 'Elites' seem to signify the existing social structures indirectly.

The last aspect of culture to be touched upon is education. During the twenty years since he first studied continental education, Arnold felt the necessity of three things: 'a reduction of those immense inequalities of condition and property amongst us, of which our land system is the base; a genuine municipal system; and public schools for
the middle classes.' On the third point, he repeats that the future lies with the middle class. But, at present, it is quite incapable of assuming power. It must be educated and that process can be gone through only in State Schools. Arnold had expert knowledge in most of the areas of education because of his professional experience. He wrote with the aims of a liberal, highly cultivated humanist who was moved by profound concern for the quality of individual and national life. In the field of education, as in literary criticism, Arnold's aim was to correct insular complacency and inertia by comparing England with other countries. He emphasised the necessity for improvement in the field of education of the middle classes in England. He opined that this improvement can be effected only through schools created and run by the state. He had expert knowledge of elementary education and felt that it was in relatively good shape. His continual preoccupation was with Secondary Schools. The upper class had its illustrious public schools. The middle class was left largely to what he called 'private adventure schools'. He expressed that the middle class was nearly the worst educated in the world.

Eliot's sour comments on education, the customary panacea of the liberal-minded, point out the absurdity of any artificial means to transmit culture. Too much talk about education can create problems where none existed before.
"Those who are conscious of their lack of education are discontented, if they cherish ambitions to excel in occupations for which they are not qualified." With discontent comes dislocation, and once again, the disintegration of culture. Hence education sometimes may be counter-productive.

In 'The Aims of Education', a series of lectures delivered by Eliot at the University of Chicago, Arnold's educational ideal, the pursuit of perfection, is allowed, but with the disclaimer that it is too individualistic in itself and must be supplemented with other, more social aims. Borrowing from Professor Joad, Eliot states that there are three inter-related aims of education: first, the professional or the preparation for earning one's living; second, the social, or training for good citizenship; and third, the individual, 'or in Matthew Arnold's way of putting it, the pursuit of perfection.' None of these three aims in itself is sufficient, and indeed, they may, on occasion, clash with one another. But all must be kept in mind in any adequate educational system. Eliot is of the opinion that education will work against culture. Eliot declares himself against equality of opportunity for education while Arnold wants more schools, on the model of Rugby and Eton, to be set up to cater to the needs of the middle class.

A brief reference to C.P. Snow's 'Two Cultures' may not be out of context at this point. "The Two Cultures
and the Scientific Revolution', the Rede Lecture which established him as an Intellect and a Sage, was delivered at Downing College, University of Melbourne in 1959. F.R. Leavis in his Richmond Lecture delivered in 1962 in the same University, expressed the view that Snow's lecture exhibited 'an utter lack of intellectual distinction and an embarrassing vulgarity of style.'

The general nature of Sir Charles Snow's position is that there are two uncommunicating and mutually indifferent cultures and that there is a need to bring them together. The two cultures are 'the Scientific Culture' and 'the Literary Culture'. Snow remarks that the scientists have their own culture. This culture has a great deal of argument, usually much more rigorous, and almost always at a higher conceptual level, than literary person's argument. It is true that thought does not admit of control by strict definition of the key terms. Realisation of this will make one more aware of the need to cultivate a vigilant responsibility. He identifies the 'literary culture' with the 'literary intellectual' by which he means the modish literary world. Snow takes it as representing the age's finer consciousness so far as a culture ignorant of science can. Snow's 'literary culture' is something that those genuinely interested in literature can only regard with contempt and resolute hostility. Snow's 'literary intellectual' is the enemy of art and life.
Snow, without any sense of there having been a shift, slips, with ease, from his 'literary culture' into the 'traditional culture'. Snow has no notion of the changes in civilization that have produced this 'literary culture'. He says 'At one pole, the scientific culture really is a culture, not only in an intellectual, but also in an anthropological sense.' The justification for the anthropological sense is: 'without thinking about it, they respond alike.' He adds: 'That is what a culture means.' Describing the characteristic traits of his scientists, he says: 'They have the future in their bones.' He describes the representatives of the traditional culture as: 'They are the natural Luddites.' It is a general charge. He includes in it the creators of English Literature in the 19th and 20th centuries. If one insists on the need for any concern, entailing forethought, action and provision, about the human future - any kind of misgiving other than that which talks in terms of productivity, material standards of living, hygienic and technological progress, then that person is a Luddite. He says that scientists 'see no reason why, just because the individual condition is tragic, so must the social condition be.' He is repetitious but he develops no explanation further than this. Snow offers some remarks on the importance of technology for human happiness and on the necessity for every intellectual to gain some sympathetic understanding of its
processes. There are some suggestions also for the reconciliation of the various academic disciplines at the tertiary level.

What is controversial is Snow's characterization of the 'two cultures' and his suggestion about the duties scientists and arts men have towards each other. There is emotive vagueness in the use of the word 'culture'. Snow's characterization of scientists as a group amounts to no more than the claim that they have a shared confidence in a common job and common pre-occupations and a special language in carrying it out. The same applies to other professional groups. But culture cannot be used to describe such groups as those of politicians, businessmen and lawyers. Thus Snow debases the use of the term 'culture'. Such uses depreciate the whole notion of a personal culture. Indeed there can be, no comparison between Snow's use of the term 'culture' and Arnold's or Eliot's use of the same. One wonders how Arnold would have characterised Snow's conception of culture!