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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONCERNS IN THE POETRY OF ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

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ABSTRACT:

A man who does not need or cannot relate himself to society is either a beast or a god. Man must live and work in society, Clough wrote in February, 1840:

He once set within these bounds of time and space, is committed to the work; and as wisely may he strive to shake himself loose from existence itself as believe that…he can escape to the no less wondrous mystery of relation… The earth too, as with a wise solicitude, urges the stranger to his task. She refuses the food he will not with his mates labour for; the shelter and security he will not co-operate to seek with cold and nakedness, hunger and thirst as per scourges (she forces) him to begin the work and once begun permits him not to intermit.[1]

KEYWORDS: *Social And Political Concerns , Poetry*

INTRODUCTION

From the same depression and sense of surrounding evil comes a striking metaphor of emotional and physical paralysis:

Yet to stand still avails not, nor is possible; …Yet action alone is not
enough; action holds its own terrors;
And yet it is far from enough to go forth bodily and readily.
We must add to our readiness caution and temper our boldness with discretion.

He that does not this may ore long have to fly like Timon from the world he so confidently entered, or worse…………have to rush in horror and despair from guilt now done and now no more to be undone, seeking with lifted hands for that he shall not obtain, to forget and to exist no more, like Cain from the murder of Abel.[2]

The imagery of fratricide and the most embittered social exile, strikingly out of keeping with the common place honesty to which it is attached and is incongruent, gives evidence of the emotional pressure. Ordinarily his prose conceals emotions which find expression in his poetry. When occasionally things escape into his prose as in the fragment beginning 'An Ill world, apemantus' or the third letter of Parepidemis" the effect as Clough once imagined his self-revolution would be, is indeed that of "a flood of lava boiling-hot amidst their flowery ecclesiastical fields and parterres".[3]

By now Clough was confused about his subject, the social structure and man's relations to it. To consider society is to recall the fall with a Miltonic sense of loss. The 'structure of human society' is now seen as a 'Tower of Babel', and –

some timidly shrinking, some hurrying madly forward, some goaded on by a taskmaster… he who through indolence… shows himself incapable of social action seeks to less than a man; who through courage and patience overcomes the evil of his social conditions rises at last to more … as we believe in existence, so we also believe in relation independent of those fluctuation and released from those trammels of necessity which render the one alike and the other in this our present state fit neither for beast nor god, for less or more than man.[4]

References to the dulling of conscience that no sins are forgiven in this world, no errors can be undone are evidences of a nearly obsessive sense of personal guilt and shame. Burdened as he was at this time by emotional and intellectual strains, this was not for Clough a period of exploration in social or political questions. Issues such as democracy, civil liberties and their acquisition, slavery, and marriage are not central to the essays and his opinions do not depart from those he might have learned from Arnold or Carlyle. Once Clough had taken his degree he become a freer agent than he was at Balliol and, in the forties, his adoptions of a certain relatively radical attitudes, and some Carlylean becomes striking.

During the years 1848 to 1853 Clough underwent intellectual emotional, economic, and professional crisis. He emerged from it a sadder but wiser man. Out of this crisis grew insight and energy which equipped him to write great poetry. But this was a time of great difficulty for him for in it many of the convictions that had moved him to act were tried and found wanting.

In these years Clough took three important trips abroad: to France in 1848 during its revolution, to Italy in 1849 during a similar crisis and to America in 1852, where a revolution had already established Republicanism and all its fruits. On one level Clough wanted to discover whether the fruits of Republicanism were bitter or sweet; for he was not to be pleased with his findings. But he was also searching for something in himself. Although he formed that new identity, yet the process was gradual and painful. His London years were largely those in which the old mould was broken and new one had not yet shaped.

In the beginning, Clough's was not quick response to the revolutions in France and Italy. But in March of 1848, he rejoiced that all these blessed revolutions were keeping him from sinking into hopeless lethargy. The revolutions were blessed to Clough because they brought him the message of triumph of liberal ideas over the old repressive politics of conservatism, as it had worked in the Holly Alliance of European monarchies and the church. It seemed as if it was the opening of a new era. People were waking up and wanted rights – the right to vote, the right to work and to be paid a living wage if not handsomely. Women wanted the right to own property and to divorce.

The movement was universal. In France, repressive governmental policies, economics depression and foreign revolution led finally in 1848 to explosion. Early in 1849 the provisional government began a number of ephemeral reforms, and socialists began a number of ephemeral reforms. But socialists overlooked the fact that these artisans and workers usually involved highly skilled and relatively sophisticated men. Clough could have rejoiced a system of National workshop created by a national government. Yet instead of being co-operatives, sweated labour and unemployement they resembled, rather, the English work hours system. On April 16th incited by Louis Blane, they made a great march through Paris. The government put it down.

A constituent Assembly elected on April 23 soon set up a professional Executive Committee which promptly repudiated even the technical reforms instituted in the preceding months. The socialists were out, successive uprising were systematically crushed, and Louis Nepolean, soon to be emperor, gained power until in December he was elected President of the Council. A year later, in 1849, the French government helped destroy the Roman revolution of Garibaldi and Mazzini, a bitter scene which Clough also witnessed. The French revolution of 1848 ended in a triple fiasco.' Social, political, and international, or as Clough commented in 1849;

God be praised for the downfall of Louis Phillippe. This with a faint feeble echo of that land last year's screaming of a'bas Guizot seems to be the sum total. Or are we to salute the rising sun with vive 1' Empereur and the green liveries.[5]

In the beginning of his stay in Paris Clough walked about Jerusalem and with Emerson attended the public meetings of the newly formed clubs which had become almost a traditional accompaniment to French revolutions. One of those was dedicated to women's rights against the rudeness of the Frenchman.

He investigated, too, the identities of some of the editors of the almost innumerable, anonymously written new Journals. Such knowledge was an essential preliminary to grasping the revolutionary political structure. The failure of the revolution becomes evident when the government put down a popular uprising on May 15, till now Clough was in high spirits. He wandered around Paris in the midst of the riots, unconcerned about his own skin, delighted with sights that showed there was some justice after all for the poor. Clough rejoiced in the grade mobile, a new militia, democratic in being open to all classes, full of youths, and regarded it as a reform:

I contemplate with infinite thankfulness the blue blouses, garnished with red, of the grade mobile; and emit a perpetual incense of devote rejoicing for the purified state of the Tuileries, into which I find it impossible, meantime, to gain admitting[6].

It was not all exactly as it should be, even then, says Clough;

> I growl occasionally at the sight of aristocratic equipages which begin to keep out again, and trust that the national Assembly will in its wisdom forbid the use of living servants. But there is not very much to complain of. Generally one cannot better express the state of Paris in this respect than by the statement that one finds it rather painted to be seen in the street which gloves on.[7]

The last observation is typical of Clough's sensibility. Like the legs of the dead man, seen through the crowd in *Amours de Voyage* the essence of the experience, the thing beyond the scenery after which you go awhoring' has been caught in these words –

> *Stopping, I saw through legs of the people the legs of a body.*
>
> (*Amours de Voyage, I,* 196-198)

Clough saw the failure and crushing of the workers' uprising of May 15, and knew it was all over. He uses mock Carlylean style to the expression of disillusionment and frustration; "Ichabod, Ichabod, the glory is departed. Liberty, equality and fraternity, driven back by shop keeping bayonet, hides her red cap in dingiest St. Antoine".[8]

The grade mobile had--- "dropped its dear blouse and red trimmings for bourgeoisie – praetorian uniform with distinctive green hired soldier epaulettes. The voice of club is silenced".[9]

In a tone in which indignation, disappointment, and an indestructible instinct for observation are catalyzed temporarily by the language burlesque, he proclaimed;

> wherefore – Bring forth, ye millionaires, the twelve month hidden carriages ………..ride forth, ye cavalier – escorted amazons in unfearing flirtation, to yours Bois de Boulogne, the world begins once more to move on its axis and drew on its kind gloves ……………….. The golden age of the Republic displays itself now, you see, as a very vulgar parcel – gilt era.[10]

The love of the burlesque was in fact only a mask designed to conceal from himself as much as from his senders the depth of his disappointment and frustration at this end to the affairs. He accepted it superficially with humour and contempt, but ultimately, when its meaning, the base impermeability of society to attack, became clear in the following year, it became a lesson that was to influence him more and more as time went on.

Before the work of the revolution had been completely undone Clough was grateful for what he hoped would be its result. But later, Clough reflected that the best part had been the first fortnight, when he had seen the real nation in its shirts sleeves and blue blouses, decency, order, unpretending self-respect and freedom – they meant a great deal to Clough, and their fleeting existence cast a glow over his memory of the whole---

> France' s prospectus are dubious and dismal enough, and one is almost inclined to think that the outbreak was premature; with their ideas so far from ripe the French had better, if possible, have endured a little longer the immorality of L. Philip's government. But on the whole one accepts the whole thing with gratitude. It will I think, on the whole accelerate change in England, and perhaps, my dear Tom, may yet live to see some kind of malignancy effected for your repudiated country.[11]

Clough's trip to Italy, although longer than his stay in France, was less significant to his thought, for he had learned enough already about the failed revolution. The experience was highly relevant to him as a poet, and *Amours de Voyage* transmutes what he saw, both in himself and in the world around him, during those hot summer months of the seize of Rome. His letters from this period are remarkable for they show growing languor and cynicism of tone which was inspired by the better events he saw around him. He began hoping to see heroic deeds in the Italian struggle, but on the whole, the disillusionment about reform which Clough had begun to experience the year before confirmed.

Clough went to Italy primarily because he was in sympathy with the aims of Mazzini and Garibaldi. The Italian liberals wanted Unity and Independence'; national unity, freedom from Pope, and the civil liberties that England and even France took for granted. The Papal States around the northeast of Rome had remained until 1846 in nearly feudal darkness. Until his death in 1846 Pope Gregory XVI had prohibited both the railroad and telegraph from entering the vital area containing Bologna and Rome.

There was no political party and no opposition of any sort tolerated. Education was frowned upon, study of Dante as well of Cooperman system was suspected, and political economy was a forbidden subject.

Clough met Mazzini several times in Rome. He brought with him a letter of introduction from Carlyle. He found him in excellent spirit; confident, shifty, and practical enough, Clough was moved by the man and his aims. Clough responded to Mazzini's idealism. But it had been clear almost from the beginning that the newly proclaimed Republic of Rome could not stand long. The Pope Pio Moro had fled to Naples and from there he had issued appeals for help. Both Austria and France responded, and France, of course, crushed the rebellions. Mazzini was a lost cause, and he knew it but he chose to fight in Rome for glory.

Clough had thoroughly identified himself with the republican cause: "you will have heard of our driving back the French" he wrote. It was 'our little republic', And these 'black guarded French'."[12]

The experience was used for *Amours de Voyage,* which he was composing all this time. He walked about the streets and sat in cafes, reading, writing, and absorbing the ambience. He saw as much as the treasure of Roman art as he could, using a special permit given by Mazzini, of Roman art, and he worked his own visits to the pantheon. He stayed in the hottest part of an unsanitary Roman summer. He wrote to Anne about the Roman experiencement to him as a whole , "Perhaps it will amuse you hereafter to have a letter commenced while guns are firing, and I suppose, men falling, dead and wounded. Such is the case on the other side the Tiber while I peacefully write in my distant chamber with only the sound in my ear".[13]

It probably did not amused Anne, with her unmoving, devaut earnestness, but it may have done Clough what he was experiencing a sense of dissociation:

> I wish it were out for one can do nothing mean times. I went up to Pincian Hill and saw the smoke and heard the occasional big cannon and the sharp succession of skirmisher's volleys bong, bong, … A special house has been appointed for the English to retire to … but it is rather a waste of time.[14]

What interested Clough was no longer the formal issues from which so little could be expected, but life, the actual life of a city under seize and its relation to his own dissociated state of feeling. What he

kept coming back to in his letters was really one thing; the divorce between feeling and fact, between official attitudes and real ones, between postures and practice.

Where was the truth? What was his real feeling? He adored Mazzini and hoped the Romans would win – but Mazzini was shifty and practical enough and, of course, the republic would fall. Eternal Rome was in state of saize, and he was anxious that its art not be destroyed:

> It is funny to see how much like any other city a besieged city looks………Rome in general might be called a rubbishy place; the Roman antiquities in general seem to me only interesting as antiquities – not for any beauty ……… I wish England could intervene if it were but the moments………which I fear are but too likely to receive irreparable damage.[15]

Again and again, one can sense in his worship that he is watching himself watching, at times unwilling or unable to make moral judgments, at other times quickly roused to passionate feelings, out of touch with the reason for feeling. Again he wrote, with the same very personal mixture of tones--- "It is hopeless – I am doomed to see the burning of Rome, I suppose: - the world perhaps in the same day will loose the Vatican and me:- However these backgrounds won't get in yet, I guess – My love to all good Xtin's".[16]

A few years later in February, 1952, he tried to explain himself to his fiancé, who was puzzled by his sudden shift of moral conviction. He wrote:

> To a certain extent it seems to me that the whole world is apt to wear a pictorial aspect, that it must be by an effort that I accept anything as fact… There has never been in my whole life I may say any act of mine, sealing either friendship or love, up to this time. It has seemed to me a great thing to think that at times I doubt the truth of myself, to have done this at all.[17]

This letter is one of the truest in the sense of being the true voice of feeling. It is Clough's greatest achievement as a poet that he was the first of our poets to recognize, and as a matter for modern poetry, the state of mind that is symptomatic of our time and informs the greatest art of the twentieth century, from Joyce to Eliot and Pinter. In expressing this conscious hopelessness, in becoming aware of his loss of a sense of his own reality and of the significance of the world about him, in expressing in short, his alienation, he was making himself one of the first English poets to discover and seriously explore a theme that has become basic to the art and philosophy of our age.

It was this depression and alienation which Clough was able to transcend and make use of in his poetry and prose too. The tone of irritation and frustration that makes itself reflected in Clough's religious writings between his leaving Oxford, and writing 'Notes on Religious writing' around 1852 or 1853 is audible also in other works from the period 1849-1851. They were bad years for him, and he knew it writing in 1851 to Tom Arnold--- "Nothing is very good, I am, afraid anywhere, I would have gone cracked at times last years with one thing or another, I think, but the wheel comes round".[18]

There were justified reasons for this kind of alienation. The first of these was his employment as principal of University Hall, a new dissenting establishment affiliated with the University. The Hall had hired him largely because they felt they needed someone from the establishment, and thought as Henry Carbb Robinson put it, Clough would be a, "feather in our cap……..bring us…….eclat"[19] and help keep them from feeling so excommunicate. But his work as principal of eleven students kept him busy only some two hours a day, and the trustees were capable of questioning the servants behind his back, and objecting to his leniency with a student who played cards and drunk with him. He was very much alone. *The Bothie* was clearly written by a young man who wanted to get married but for the next year or two he could not do so. His income had suddenly shrunk from around £800 to something like £150.

He had enjoyed prominent positions among the most intelligent and best educated men at Oxford, but now in place of numerous easy friendships he had enjoyed in Oxford, where he had lived all his adult life, he lived in two rooms in Garden Square, isolated by day and required to await the few initiatives that initially came his way for company in the evening. He wrote in January, 1850: "A loneliness relieved by evening parties is not delightful but I get well enough in general looking forward always to the long vocations".[20]

But Clough could not get any other work. He could become a tutor in some private family if the people were radical enough. In the university Hall he was ill paid, and in unpleasant position, in which his talents were hardly used. During this period he was to write his most ambitious and successful poems, *Amours de Voyage* and *Dipsychus*. In fact, now he realized that he was simply walking up to the realities of life, which life at Oxford had denied him.

> Actual life is unknown to Oxford students, even though he is not a mere Puseyite and goes on Jolly reading parties. Enter the arena of your bretheren and go not to your grave without knowing what common merchants and solicitors, much more sailors and coal heavers, are well acquainted with.[21]

At the end of 1851, Clough lost his job at University Hall, and he was faced with the prospect of having to find work where there was none. His application for the principalship of the new University in Sidney was rejected. He applied for various other positions connected with education, but, again and again, these proved to require one kind of religious orthodoxy or another. His relations with Blanche Smith had severed.

He wrote to Emerson to inquire if there were any prospects for him as a teacher of Latin, Greek, or English in America, though he was reluctant to leave London's society, and said; " I am half loath now after nearly three years' apprenticeship to quit this great town; it almost like beginning to go down from a high mountain to which it has taken long hours to get to".[22]

Emerson wrote him most encouragingly and helped him to edit his journals of 1848. By the middle of November 1852, Clough was in Boston. He stayed in America seven and eight months, which was highly productive period in his life. The day of June 1853 when he sailed back to England was a turning point in his life.

The question why he left America has been much discussed. One of the reason is that he disliked American architecture and Unitarians' orthodoxy. He felt alienated by such orthodoxy. But he found their prayer book very funny describing how a fashionable episcopal Church in Boston had turned Unitarian en-masse, "cut off the tails of the prayers and pruned things have and there – and do they have a very handsome common prayer Book, quite as good as any genuine one, and nothing disagreeable in it".[23]

Soon Clough realized that he was needed in America. He gained confidence in America. The copious material he wrote in America saw print almost immediately. The opinion he expressed in his writings, during his stay in America do not fit him under any party label. The vital issues in America were Abolition and American expansionism, the 'Manifest Destiny' that was embroiling her frequently with smaller Latin American Countries. These issues came to the fore in Clough's consciousness. But the basic and most obvious challenge to foreigner and in some way the hardest to accept, was America's primary assumptions about political and social equalitarianism.

From the second, still unpublished letter of his collection of six letters *Letters of Parepidences*, he wrote in America one can find out that he started liking equalitarian ways. "Twenty-five years age………..though but a child (I believe) I carried away with me a good deal of ineradicable republican sentiments."[24]

Now Clough seemed to go on to defend American notion of equality for he despised the European notion of superiority or inferiority. It was a libel when a---

> …countryman of mine asserted in my hearing that (the) great American syllogism was all men are equal; therefore I am your superior. It's false, my dear sir. The prevailing and, I persuade myself, almost universal feeling which comforts and rejoiced the souls of your countrymen, is on the contrary All men are equal' I am no man's inferior.[25]

In the heart of hearts Clough admitted in *The Bothie*_ of man's inequality but he held the view that one must act as if they were equal for equality, by all means, is for the most agreeable and comfortable hypothesis. Let us suppose at any rate that we are not politically or socially other people's

superiors. Clough liked simplicity in the life of America which made life less showy and wasteful, and more natural than the one he had left behind.

In the decade before the Civil War new England resisted slavery and the policies of expansion of presidents Polk and Pierce. The question was whether New England should join the union as a free or slave-holding state. Clough at this stage began to mould his opinions essentially liberal in aims, he now opposed methods that were revolutionary, and solutions that were quick and easy.

The Fugitive Slave Act had recently been lightened, and the enraged Abolitionists had responded by increasing the activities of the underground Railway. Dr. Samuel Howe, with his wife edited the abolitionist paper *The Commonwealth*.

Clough opposed the Fugitive Slavery Act. The significance of property was much more evident in Clough's eyes now than it had been in the mind – during 40's when he had attacked great land-holders and their unqualified defense of the rights of property. In the intervening years he had seen much of the distractive reaction that could follow on such attack. United States had gained new territories in the Mexican War, and they were calling for the liberation of Cuba from the crumbling Spanish empire. 'Manifest Destiny' was the aggressive slogan of the Democratic Party. Clough in his *Letter of Parepidemis* expressed his disgust towards the American ideal of equality for he had heard Americans say that might was right. In Clough's view they were adopting the worst of Europe's caste off doctrines and were reverting to barbarism. He felt disappointed, for the most respectable and worthy citizens were doing that kind of inhuman act.

Clough was perhaps, the first English literary figure who attacked imperialism. Clough suggested that man who can for the common good make the best and most serviceable use of God's gift to man is entitled to do so. In life the strongest has a right to do the hardest service. He could approve of the English possession, for the protection of trade of the world. But England had not the right to lordship over the East Indias, India and China, and America's had not the right to take another nation by force. 'Might is Right' would kill her democratic notion of equality 'Manifest Destiny' is cannibalism.

Now Clough was a dispassionate figure. Americans disappointed him and when the offer of a £300 a year job came to him though the offices of Carlyle, he returned to England at once. He found America, while he was there, as culturally barren and intellectually a desert in which only Emerson was life-giving.

In his essays Clough expressed his views on liberty. His concept of liberty was limited in the sense that he equates it with services and rejects spontaneity. The concept brought him on the border of democracy. He expressed his fear of the tyranny of the majority and look for the control of a somewhat frightening national liberty through religious teaching.

He wanted to see the masses educated and he thought that the inequalities of property which arise from the injustice of human institutions, should be remedied. Now Clough was wiser man, saddened by the lessons of the French and Italian revolutions. Earlier, he had championed the labour's right but now his experience had taught him not to expect too much steadiness or precision of thought from the uneducated masses. He had lost faith in pure democracy and in the leadership of Mazzini. In his fragmentary *Review of a Book on Progress* he rejected men like Mazzini and Chateaubriand who put more faith in glorious acts than in ordinary honesty and hard work. Now he departed from the Rousseauistic position of *The Bothie*. Now, service and not the love was all for him. Being frustrated he formed a utopian society in his imagination. But such a world never had existed, nor would exist.

> In place of competition, now service was man's reason for being. Material happiness was not all: the object of society is not…………one of securing equal apportionments of meat and drink to all its members. Men combine for some higher objects; and to that higher object it is, in their social capacity the privilege and real happiness of individuals so sacrifice themselves. The highest political watchward is not liberty, equality, fraternity nor yet solidarity, but service.[26]

It was Clough's clear defeat. His sad experiences made him realize that his hope and ideas, he earlier believed in, proved to be failures. Clough came to the point from where he had started. What could be the greater reason for his frustation than this one.

After quitting Oxford Clough wrote *The Bothie* in Nov. 1848. But as Humbert Wolf described the poem was "school boy shout on escaping from school into air".[27] The poem was held to be indecent, profane, immoral and communistic, for the reticent man, who had been wrestling with religious doubts, had produced a comedy of Oxford undergraduates.

Philip Hewson, the hero, is a Chartist with social ideal of equality. His distaste and irritation for Oxford parties and fine ladies, is Clough's suppressed voice and in a sense of social alienation; alienation from Oxford society. The transplantation of Oxford is a legitimate intellectualization of the lived experience of social difference. In these lovely High lands one encounters a diverse, stratified human society. It introduces a spread of political and social ideas concentrating on problems of equality and feminism, integrally related to the human encounters; social and personal in the poem.

Hewson has the temperament of a reformer. He hates and satirizes the artificialities of evening parties and courtships:

Shooting with bows, going shopping together, and hearing them singing, Dangling beside them, and turning the leaves on the dreary piano, Offering unneeded arm, performing dull farce of escort.

(*The Bothie II*, 55-59)

In this way he scorns the conventional middle-class notions of female's charm. Hewson's theories are beautifully connected with his passions, and both are interwoven in his prediction of what household work and homespun clothes can accomplish:

So, feel woman, not dolls; so feet the sap of existence Circulate up through their roots from the faraway centre of all thing Yes, we should see them delighted, delighted ourselves in the seeing.

(*The Bothie II*, 74- 80)

The beauty of labour is wonderfully fused with the beauty of feminine posture. After an outburst of Lindsay's and Hobbes' amusing description of Hewson as "a puring of women" (having the same acorn of the purely ornamental and the same belief in the union of the "use and grace"). Adam the tutor, who sees the truth in Philip's view, disliking luxurious living himself and believing on moral grounds in duty of work, also sees its excess which he calls 'distortions'. He warns against mere attractive, he urges Hewson to search out the good. Attacking the false view of equality on which much of the Youngman's argument rests, he points out that:

Nowhere equality reigns in all the world of creation, star is not equal to star, nor blossom the same as blossom.

(*The Bothie II*, 183-4).

He says that one should seek good not attractive and since inequality is a fact of creation, one should remain in his station. To which Hewson replies acidly:

Alas: the noted phrase of the prayer-book,
(Doing our duty in that state life to which God has call us,)
Seems to me always to mean, when the little rich boys says it,
Standing in velvet frock by man's brocaded fluoresces, Eying her gold fastened book and the watch and chain at her bosom,
Seems to me always to mean, eat, drink, and never mind others.

(*The Bothie II*, 202-207)

If Philip chooses the good in Canto IV, he is far from ignoring the attractive, indeed, he is the more exposed, after this frustration, to the attraction of some one of his own class. Furthermore, to the extent that his radical ideas are exaggerated, they are the more easily abandoned under contrary pressure. It is only momentarily, therefore, we are surprised by the sight about face in Canto V. Philip is still dancing but 'dancing in Balloch…in the castle with Lady Maria'. And being Philip, he proceeds at once to evolve a new theory or is it a rationalization? Because his distaste of idle luxury and his sympathy for the poor are entirely genuine, he reveals his skepticism in the very act of profession:

What of the poor and the weary? Their labour and pain is needed.
Parish the poor and the weary: what can they better than perish,
Parish in labour for her, who is worth the destruction of empires?
Dig in thy deep dark prison, o miner: and finding be Thankful;
Though unpolished by thee, unto thee unseen in perfection,
While thou art eating black bread in the prisonous air of thy caven
Far away glitter the gem on the peerless neck of a princess,
Dig, and starve, and be thankful.

(*The Bothie, V*, 51-53, 64-68)

In the section VII, Elspie is troubled by new terror, a social not personal one that of deserting her station. The discussion repeats and expands the main social ideas of the poem's equality (now between husband and wife), distaste for the artificialities of 'gentility, the importance of work, especially for the woman. He admits inequality based not on accident of birth, but on the differentiated fulfillment of individual potentiality in appropriate work.

Arnold disliked in *The Bothie* what he must have perceived as a central self-delusion about the world and the possibilities for effective rebellion in it. Fundamental to poem is the faith that a gesture of rebellion against, and alienation from society and high culture can if sincere be successful. When Philip Hewson leaves England for the other side of world with a peasant bride, an iron bedstead, and a box of tools, Clough is asserting not merely the material but the moral possibilities of the nonconformist who seeks in a "world elsewhere" if not a new Eden, at least, a new dispensation for life.

In *Amours de Voyage* we find alienation from the society. It was written in 1849-1950. And is the best reflection of his inner voice. It may be well Clough's masterpiece on account of the perfect harmony that subsists between what might be called objective correlative, the complicated civil and foreign war being waged in the streets of Rome, and the war equally futile, doomed, and piecemeal like the man whom Clough saw incongruously carrying a cannon ball through placid streets going on inside Cloude.

Clough's trip in 1849 to Italy although longer than his stay in France, was less significant to his thought, for he had learned enough about the failed revolution. *Amours de Voyage* represents his experience and transmits what he saw both in himself and in the world around him. During the hot summer days when he saw in Rome, he saw bitter events there which gave him inspiration. He began hoping to see 'heroic deeds' in Italian struggle, but on the whole, the disillusion about reform which Clough had begun to experience the year before was confirmed. He walked about the streets and sat in a café, reading, writing, and absorbing the ambience. He wrote to Anne; "perhaps it will amuse you hereafter to have a later commenced while gun are firing and I suppose, men falling, dead and wounded. Such is the case on otherside the Tiber while I peacefully write in my distant chamber with only the sound in my ears." [28]

In Canto II of the poem *Amours de voyage,* the background of the Roman republic fighting for survival against the reactionary forces of France serves a double function. By turning Rome into a besieged city, Clough is able to play off art against way in a series of picturesque contrasts; the aesthete and soldier, sightseeing and cannoning, love making and death. But his main purpose is to explore the same ambivalent psychology, with a significant difference. In this case the critical spirit is not amusing, or rather, it was shocking. After all individual culture is also something, and in any event to protect oneself is 'fulfilling the purpose Nature intended'. Now supposing, he continues referring apparently to the British Embassy.

The French or the Napoleon soldier,
Should by some evil change come exploring the Maizon Serny,
(where the family English are all to assemble for safety),
Am I prepared to lay down my life for the British Female?

(*Amours de Voyage*, II, 65-68)

To question the validity of dying for the women of England is bad enough. To refer to them as "females" is to betray the whole code of the chivalric hero. This was shocking. His critical mind and his skeptical temper made him suspicious of heroism.

Historically, these radical sympathies and the rejection of patriotism went together. But, as the epithets imply, Cloude is no more ready to die for plebeians than ladies. And he has little faith in military triumph, even republican ones:

Victory; victory; victory; oh but it is, believe me
Easier, easier for, to intone the chant of the martyr
Than to indite any ala of any victory. Death may
Sometimes be Nobel; but life, at the best,
will appear an illusion
While the great pain is upon us, it is great;
when it is over,
While the great pain is upon us, it is great;
when it is over,
Why, it is over. The smoke of the sacrifices
raises to Heaven,
of a sweet savour, no doubt, to somebody; but on
the alter,
Lo, there is nothing remaining but ashes and dirt
And ill odor".

(*Amours de Voyage II*, 150-57)

All this, however, is only on the outskirts of the poem's existence. The centre is the poetry itself and in this the Roman background is inseparably involved. At an obvious level the heroic defence of the Mazzinian Republic provides an ironic commentary on Cloude's fastidious hesitancy, but the setting penetrates much further into the poem's life and creates much more profoundly significant ironic patterns. For underlying this undermined Rome of present political violence, there is another Rome felt as an organic presence-Rome as the eternal city, the seat of civilization, the embodiment of achievements and culture, where the ideas of history have been stilled into the poised and mythic tranquility of art. The evidences of Rome are everywhere and they bring memories of wholeness and of meaningful continuities which mock the perspiring, inchoate, distracted, and dislocated present. Once he has shed his initial languid clever superiority, Cloude responds positively to the community of meanings and values which this Rome represents: only, he is a fragment in a fragmented world and history separates him from the community. 'Once' as Heine wrote: the world was whole, in antiquity and the Middle Ages; despite external conflict there was an all embracing unity. And the poet were also whom, we are ready to honour these poets and take delight in them; but all imitation of their wholeness is a lie, which the healthy eye detects and which cannot escape decision. The poetry which recreats Cloude's often ludicrous, often tragic attempt to achieve meaning displays a precise awareness of the crisis in culture that gives to her attempt a relevance extending beyond the purely personal. Without an explicit historical insistence *Amours De Voyage* achieves through the integrated movement of structure and language a scope, destiny, and precision which shows up the politeness of *Empedocles on Etna.*[29]

Mainly because of his interminable speculativeness, his incessant 'fiddle-fiddling' (viii, 39), partly because he is genuinely, as Clough called him, an 'unfortunate fool' and the victim of circumstances, two lives loose an opportunity for what might have been mutual enrichment. But something valuable is not merely rescued but born out of loss and futility, and misunderstanding and personal failure, something deeper, less spectatorial than his once threatened allegiance to the life of the intellect, and quite distinct from his 'willful unmeaning acceptance of necessity. We see it forming in the fifty letter of the last Canto, when rescued to an almost complete degradation by his recognition of loss and failure. Cloude yet refuses the strangely moving consolation offered by a homely symbol of all

that, that is simple and familiar, conventional and reassuring a barrel- organ grinding out an English psalm-tune.

What with trusting myself and seeking support from with in me,
Almost I could believe I had gained a religious assurance
Found in my own poor soul a great moral basisto rest on,
Ah, but indeed I see, I feel it factitious entirely
I refuse, reject, and put it utterly from me.
Fact shall be fact for me, and the truth the truth as ever,
Flexible, changeable, vague, and multiform, and doubtful
Off, and depart to the void, thou subtle, fanatical temper:

(*Amours De Voyage, VV*, 95-103)

Cloude's alienation from society, on the other hand, had been rewarded not by love but only by frustrating fiasco and loneliness. His deracination was both internal and external: he was isolated from war – about which he could not even speak to his acquaintances:

Passing away from the place with Murray under my arm and
Stopping I see through the legs of the people the legs of a body.

(*Amours De Voyage, VV,* 105-106)

In *Dipsychus* there is a conflict between the tender conscience and the world, and here is Clough's most comprehensive and detailed attempt to deal with precisely the same dilemma. The main emphasis is on the question of purity and the problem of action, but the poem ranges widely and yet single – minded fashion, the relationship and antagonism between virtue and wisdom, ideal and real, vision and appetite, soul and body. Sex, love, religion, the individual's relation to society, question of social justice and social conscience, even the claims of antithetical poetics and aesthetics as interpretations of human reality – are some of the areas touched on.

The problem, Dipsychus attempts to face most squarely – is that both kinds of knowledge are legitimized by the self, the only touch- stone for truth he was willing to recognize. His distinction as a thinker and as a man lies in the singular honesty and search with which he looked into himself. His dilemma, as a thinker and as a man, lies in his inability to deny what he saw or to reject either of the contrary logics which grew out of his self – scrutiny. This is why the usual Evangelical formula of being in the world and not of it, or the notion of necessary evil which is ultimately productive of good, are inadequate accounts of Clough's case; he questioned both the wickedness of the world and the evilness of evil. His predicament is more deeply rooted. It is that of a man who asserts the goodness of man, of nature, of the flesh and the world, and in the same tortured breath confesses as their contaminating corruptness: both assertions begin in and are validated by the self.

Dipsychus is the modern, highly educated intellectual, with the same deep desire to preserve a kind of high integrity from contamination, weather by society or the exigencies of human existence. Dipsychus is an older and more introspective Cloude, concerned with the problem of independence of submission, only in wider and more crucial area than love, and with Cloude's double awareness intensified and made central to the character. Dipsychus speaks more strictly, is double minded personality, pulled in opposite direction or seeing opposite side to every question, whether it be love, religion, or the problem of action.

In the second part (Scene VIII-XIII) he sets up a life of 'Nobel deeds' and with reservation one of contemplation in opposition to the usual goals of man. But being a Dipsychus, he is able to feel the attractions, and to recognize the wisdom, of the world he condemns.

Clough defines 'the moral and spiritual element' in phrases that suggest the idealism of his hero's "simplicity, freedom from display, a quite homely life, we, indeed, believe to be the healthiest for all men – 'plain living and high thinking"[30]. Four years later when Dipsychus was written and Clough himself was personally involved, the tension between the elements had increased, and the ambivalent

nature of the companion was more sharply convinced. Spirit is entirely free of moral principle, taking things as he finds them and not bothering his head about the reality of God or nature of truth. Spirit persuades Dipsychus for the worldly pleasures and asks him not to waste his time in questions about moral, truth need not to be found, rather he should enjoy. He says:

Enjoy the minute
And the substantial blessing in it;
Company, and this handsome square;
Some pretty faces here and there.

(*Dipsychus,* I, 50-55)

Spirit is the tempter, bent on persuading Dipsychus to take pleasure where he will, irrespective of religious sanctions or social justice, and abandon the life of lonely contemplation for smart marriage and a successful career – in a word, to seek his youthful idealism for a mess of worldly pottage.

Although the conflict represented by Dipsychus and the spirit has a long history, it was aggravated in the later eighteenth century, and still more so in the nineteenth, by a noticeable increase of worldliness, which in turn provoked an increase of asceticism. The growth of naturalism in the age of reason and the emergence of bourgeois society as the dominant culture (upon the arrival of the industrial and democratic revolution) created an environment that was conspicuously secular. The importance of wealth and special position became more pronounced and more within the reach of men who had the energy and ambition to pursue them. Idleness and luxury on the one hand, and on the other, intense and sometimes unscrupulous competition could not help but breed standards of value and samples of human nature that were ugly.

In the first scene, the question raised by the tension between the protagonists is whether or not Dipsychus is to adopt the standards of the world and the conduct they require. His moral dilemma is centered in turn on sensuality, 'good society', the aesthetic dream, religious skepticism, the fighting of duels, and religious conformity. In the second part, scene VIII-XIII, the question is whether Dipsychus is to adopt a worldly vocation and devote his life, not to noble deeds or to study the art, but to a professional career. The second question is simply a special case of the first, since by worldly standards, noble deeds and intellectual pursuits are dubious.

Scene IV is a masterpiece of organization. The central subject, admirably symbolized by action (an excursion in a gondola), is the Utopian dream's idealist life. But the idealist in Dipsychus, who is not the dreamer, is quick to expose the fact that fantasy would conceal; to remind himself, so to speak, of the harsh realities. The spirit, of course, has no use for such disturbing thought, and opposes them with his own version of life at its best.

Dipsychus's uneasy dream is shattered. The social conscience, with its particular 'aims, and cares, and moral duties', makes it impossible to forget certain facts. But spirit laughs at such a ridiculous scruple (we pay him don't we?) and Dipsychus is provoked into a contrasting song,
In scene IV the spirit celebrates the pleasure of good living:

A gondola here, and a gondola there,
Tis the pleasantness fashion of taking the air.
How pleasant it is to have money, heights
How pleasant it is to have money."

(*Dipsychus, IV*, 198-203)

In a tone of infinite weariness, Dipsychus confirms the unspoken conclusion and ends the play with…

Peace, peace: I Come

(*Amours De Voyage,* XIIII, 86)

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