

An Interpretation Of Matthew Arnold’s “The Scholar Gipsy” And T.S. Eliot’s “The love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock” AsAnti-Pastoral

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Abstract

As a literary genre, "pastoral" goes back to ancient times and the earliest example of pastoral was written by the Greek poet Theocritus in the 3rd century B.C. Historically, pastoral has always been composed by poets in every age for different purposes. Although pastoral is very often regarded as a simple form of poetry about the life of shepherds and nature, its context and the meanings attributed to pastoral have enlarged throughout centuries. In the middle ages, few pastoral were composed, yet it flourished as a literary genre in the Renaissance. During this period, poets and dramatists tended to make use of the pastoral mode in order to underline the gradual separation between man and nature, a tendency which can also be observed in the 19th and 20th century literature. No longer a simple celebration of rural life, pastoral was started to be used to draw attention to man's exploitation of nature and his alienation from himself and other people. In this context, pastoral became a tool of criticizing the ill conditions of life and the society which prevent man from uniting with nature and living like a shepherd of traditional pastoral poems.

In his poem "The Scholar Gipsy" Victorian poet Matthew Arnold reflects man's need for imagination and innocence for leading a happy life, contrasting the life of a scholar gipsy with the life in his own age. Similarly, modern poet T. S. Eliot portrays the life of man and his helplessness in the modern age in "The Love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock." Both poems portray an anti-pastoral world, where pastoral functions to show the ideal life, which has already been lost. These two poems were selected to bring a new perspective both to pastoral and anti-pastoral as literary genres as well as the poems themselves which have been studied deeply from various point of views.

Keywords: Pastoral, anti-pastoral, pastoral poetry, Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot.

Matthew Arnold'un "Bilge Çingene" ve T. S. Eliot'ın " J. Alfred Prufrock'un Aşk Şarkısı" Şiirlerinin Anti-Pastoral Yorumu

Öz

Edebi bir tür olarak "pastoral"ın geçmişi antik çağlara kadar uzanır ve en eski pastoral örneği M.Ö. 3. yüzyılda Yunanlı şair Theokritos tarafından oluşturulmuştur. Tarihsel olarak, pastoral her çağda şairler tarafından değişik

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amaçlarla oluşturulmuştur. Pastoral çoğu zaman çoban hayatı ve doğa hakkında yazılmış basit bir şiir türü olarak değerlendirilse de yüzyıllar içerisinde pastoralin bağlamı ve pasturale atfedilen anlamlar genişlemiştir. Ortaçağ'da çok az sayıda pastoral örneği verilmesine karşın, Rönesans döneminde pastoral edebi bir tür olarak yeniden canlanmıştır. Bu dönemde şairler ve oyun yazarları insan ve doğa arasında baş gösteren ayrılığı vurgulamak için pastoral formundan faydalanma eğiliminde oldular, bu eğilim 19. ve 20 yüzyıl edebiyatında da gözlemlenebilir. Artık basit bir kırsal yaşam övgüsü olmayan pastoral türü insanın doğayı sömürüsüne ve hem kendinden hem de diğer insanlardan uzaklaşmasına dikkat çekmek amacıyla yazılmaya başlandı. Bu bağlamda pastoral, insanın doğayla bütünleşmesini ve geleneksel pastoral şiirlerdeki mutlu çobanlar gibi yaşamasını engelleyen, toplumun aksayan ve insanı huzursuz eden yönlerine dikkat çekmede bir eleştiri aracı haline geldi.

Viktorya Dönemi şairi Matthew Arnold "Bilge Çingene" adlı şiirinde bilge bir çingenenin yaşamıyla kendi çağındaki insan yaşamını karşılaştırarak insanın mutlu bir yaşam sürebilmek için hayalgücü ve masumiyete ihtiyaç duyduğunu yansıtır. Benzer biçimde, modern şair T. S. Eliot "J. Alfred Prufrock'un Aşk Şarkısı" şiirinde modern çağda insan yaşamını ve insanın çaresizliğini tasvir eder. Her iki şiirde de anti-pastoral bir dünya betimlenir, burada pastoralin işlevi ise insanların çoktan kaybettikleri ideal yaşamı göstermektir. Gerek edebi türler olarak pastoral ve anti-pastorale gerekse de çok değişik açılardan sıkça çalışılmış olan bu iki şiir yeni bir bakış açısı kazandırabilmek amacıyla çalışmanın konusu olarak seçilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Pastoral, anti-pastoral, pastoral şiir, Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot.

Introduction

In his essay "A Discourse on Pastoral Poetry" Alexander Pope asserts that: "The original of poetry is ascribed to that age which succeeded the creation of the world: And as the keeping of flocks seems to have been the first employment of mankind, the most ancient sort of poetry was probably pastoral" (spenserians.cath.vt.edu, 1). Pope's argument draws attention to the long history of "pastoral" as a poetic genre. Considering the fact that the earliest example of pastoral was Theocritus' "Idylls" written in the 3rd century B.C. , it can be implied that Pope's argument proves true.

In fact, pastoral has always been composed since the ancient times. Apart from Theocritus, the Roman poet Virgil also adapted the pastoral mode in his "Eclogues" written in the 1st century B.C. Although the number of pastorals were few in the Middle Ages, they were still popular with Italian Renaissance humanists such as Petrarch and Boccaccio. In the 16th century pastoral flourished as a poetic genre thanks to the works of English poets such as Alexander Barclay and Barnabe Googe, who wrote in the first decades of the century. It was also in this period that the first true pastoral

poem from the pen of an English writer was written. It was, of course, “The Shepherdes Calender” written by Edmund Spenser in 1579.

The Renaissance can be thought as a revolutionary period for the development of pastoral: During the period some primary examples of the genre were produced such as Sir Philip Sidney’s “Arcadia.” In addition, the lyric poets and dramatists writing pastoral were many in number including Walter Raleigh, Christopher Marlowe, William Browne, Richard Barnfield, George Wither, Michael Drayton etc... However, the major novelty that was added into pastoral in the Renaissance was a change in the context.

Until the Renaissance pastoral was simply regarded as “[...]a mode of poetry that sought to imitate and celebrate the virtues of rural life” (Strand and Boland, 2001: 207). It was basically a poem about the lives of shepherds and shepherdesses singing love songs to each other. If the shepherd is taken as the representative of humanity, there was reconciliation between man and nature and “[...]life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames” (Arnold, line 202). However, man and nature started to move away from each other and the Renaissance poets tended to use pastoral to underline this separation. They aimed to reflect in their poetry the changing condition of rural life. Therefore, pastoral was no longer a simple form of poetry portraying an idealistic, paradisaical view of the rural life in which innocent shepherds and shepherdesses were singing love songs to each other. Under those circumstances, it makes sense to think that pastoral was started to be used as a means of writing about nostalgia as well as a tool of criticism of the material realities of life in a certain age.

However, Renaissance was just a beginning. After the Renaissance period, especially in 19th and 20th centuries, the poets and authors made use of pastoral more and more to reflect their discontentment with the age in which they lived, enlarging the context of pastoral. Writing about different contexts of pastoral in his book *Pastoral* Terry Gifford elaborates on three meanings of pastoral: Firstly, “[...]the pastoral is a historical form with a long tradition which began in poetry, developed into drama and more recently could be recognised in novels” (2001:1). In this meaning, “pastoral” refers to any kind of literature which depicts the lives of shepherds in the countryside. The second one “[...]is a broader use of ‘pastoral’ to refer to an area of content. In this sense pastoral refers to any literature that describes the country with an implicit or explicit contrast to the urban” (2001:2). In this meaning, pastoral functions as a “[...]simple celebration of nature” (2001:2). The third meaning is a sceptical use of the term as it implies that “[...]the pastoral vision is too simplified and thus an idealisation of the reality of life in the country” (2001:2). In this sense, the term “pastoral”

bears a pejorative meaning. Another context that is closely associated with pastoral is “anti-pastoral” which is used by poets and authors to portray a world that seems to be the opposite of a pastoral world.

This study analyses two different poems from different ages and by different poets: “The Scholar Gipsy” by the Victorian poet Matthew Arnold and “The Love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock” by the modern poet T. S. Eliot. These two poems are selected to find out if they can be interpreted as anti-pastoral in order to get a fresh awareness both to pastoral as a genre and to these two poems which have been studied much from very different point of views. In both poemspastoral functions both to criticize the failing sides of life in their age and to show an alternative world which is the ideal one for people. For both poets this ideal world is the world of “shepherds” in which man has not yet offended nature and they also display their desire to go back to that alternative world in their poems.

To answer “if the two poems can be interpreted as anti-pastoral” it will be wise here to underline what kind of worlds pastoral and anti-pastoral describe. To be able to analyse anti-pastoral one should first remember what kind of a world pastoral implies. Pastoral describes a world in which the shepherds are always happy with their lovers, young and healthy. The essence of a pastoral world lies in “unity” and “harmony.” Pastoral connotes three “unities” that are essential for man to lead a “balanced” life. The first of these unities is the one between man and nature. If this unity is broken, man will automatically and unfortunately lead himself into a world in which he cannot live as a “happy shepherd.” The second unity is the one between man and himself while the third one is between man and other people, or between man and society. In fact, what makes the shepherds of traditional pastoral poems “the ideal man” is nothing but their leading a life in which they have these three unities. If man loses any of them he will condemn himself to live in a “lost paradise.” If any literary work is labelled as anti-pastoral, it is doubtless that the world that this particular work describes lacks at least one of these unities. As “The Scholar Gipsy” and “The Love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock” are studied as anti-pastoral, the rest of the analysis will focus on the outcomes of lack of these three unities. The poems will be compared through the method of close reading in order to reveal in what respects they can be interpreted as anti-pastoral.

“The Scholar Gipsy” and “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” as Anti-Pastoral

Matthew Arnold wrote his poem in 1853, in Victorian England which was the age of industrialization and machinery. During this era, England was

a great empire which colonized many countries. 19th century was a transition period between the traditional life of the 18th century and the modernity of the 20th century. It was also a period of rapid changes because there was the Industrial Revolution as well as other scientific revolutions, which people could not internalize yet. There were sudden scientific and technological developments like the introduction of steam power and railroads. During the Early Victorian period (1832-1848) England was moving from agriculture, becoming more industrial and urban. As a result of the Industrial Revolution and a decreasing need in human power at work problems appeared like poverty, unemployment and loss of product in agricultural areas which caused peasants to move to cities. During the Mid Victorian Period (1848-1870) the huge economic gap between the poor and the rich increased more and more. This period is also marked by the remarkable gap between science and religion. Works like Darwin's *On Origin Of Species* put forward the idea of man's accidental existence in the universe, which shattered people's faith in religion. Therefore, people started to question religion. The Late Victorian period (1870-1901) is marked by the collapse of Victorian values of progress, improvement and discovery. England was still a powerful country but its power was started to be challenged by the emergence of other world powers such as Germany and America.

Considering the conditions of Victorian era, it can be sensed that it was a totally anti-pastoral age in its own nature as it is possible to see the lack of three unities mentioned above. First of all, the industrial developments separated man from nature. This separation is not only metaphorical but also literal as the peasants had to move to the cities to work at the factories for earning money. Man's alienation from nature led to two other levels of alienation: First he became alienated from himself and then society.

In the poem Arnold describes his own age with harsh realism and the characteristics of his criticism are the same as the characteristics of anti-pastoral as Gifford defines in his essay entitled "Pastoral, Anti-Pastoral And Post-Pastoral as Reading Strategies" Gifford states that anti-pastoral is "[c]orrective of pastoral, often explicitly", it is "[u]nidealized, harsh, unattractive", it "[e]mphasizes realism", it "[...]shows tensions, disorder, inequalities", it "[c]hallenges literary constructs as false distortions" and "[d]emythologizes Arcadia, Eden[...]"(www.terrygifford.co.uk, 19).As the worlds that are described by pastoral and anti-pastoral have been illuminated the poems will be analyzed to reveal in what respects they can be interpreted as anti-pastoral.

Mathew Arnold's poem is based on a 17th century Oxford story found in Joseph Glanvill's *The Vanity of Dogmatizing*. In Glanvill's story a poor Oxford student leaves his studies and joins a group of gypsies. He becomes friends with the gypsies who teach him many of the secrets of their life. The Oxford student has a traditional education among them and he also learns to do wonders using his power of imagination.

In his poem, Arnold makes use of the Oxford student in two ways: Firstly, he uses him as a means to demonstrate the contrast between past and the present. Secondly, he makes use of him to draw attention to the differences between the lives of the gypsies and the life of modern man. In both cases his purpose is to reveal what kind of a life he has and what kind of a life he is yearning to have. In the poem, Arnold refers to the Oxford student as "shepherd." The poem opens with an apostrophe in which the poet addresses the Oxford student, or the shepherd:

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill;
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropp'd herbage shoot another head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanch'd green.
Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest!
(<http://www.poetryfoundation.org>, lines 1-10)

Right at the beginning of the poem Arnold tells the Oxford student to "go." Certainly, the poet wants him to go back to the world of his gypsy friends who are united with "nature". The poet suggests that the student should come back to Arnold's time only "[...]when the fields are still" (line 6) and "[...]the white sheep are sometimes seen" (line 8). Arnold's sense of longing for the days when man and nature were united is felt clearly from the beginning of the poem. Arnold is yearning for a reconciliation between man and nature as it was in the past. Therefore, it can be stated that the first issue that Matthew Arnold complains of is "man's separation from nature." Another particular issue that Arnold draws attention in the poem is man's need for imagination and trust in supernatural and magical powers as the education of the gypsies is based on these teachings rather than the theoretical knowledge taught at "Oxford."

In lines 57-58 the poet states that the Oxford student has been seen by "shepherds."

Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,

In lines 101-106 the poet also implies that the student was seen by “housewives” and “children.”

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes and late
For cresses from the rills,

It is interesting that the Oxford student has been seen by “shepherds, housewives and children.” If these three groups of people are regarded together, it is clear that shepherds, housewives and children are people who have not yet lost their innocence in the modern age. They are people who are much more “united” with nature than the rest of people. In the poem the Oxford student is already a shepherd himself. A housewife is usually a mother who is the symbol of sincere love and care, and a child is the most innocent person. In almost all pastoral poems shepherds are either children or young boys who are innocent as they are closer to nature. In “Pastoral Ideals and The Life Cycle” it is stated that “[...]pastoral is generated by a rejection of adulthood and middle age” (cola.calpoly.edu, 2) because man loses his innocence as he grows older.

In lines 141-150 the poet talks about modern man and tells us what kind of a life he and his contemporaries pursue:

--No, no thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
‘Tis that from change to change their being rolls;
‘Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having used our nerves with bliss and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we have been.

In these lines Arnold complains of other aspects of urban life. First of all, he is referring to the “[...]lapse of hours” (line 141) stating that time goes so fast in his age. He refers to “[...]repeated shocks” (line 144) which

are probably modern man's disappointments and underlines that they "[e]xhaust the energy of strongest souls" (line 145). The poet implies that even a strong-willed person cannot live in the modern age without being disappointed. Arnold also states that modern man uses all his brain capacity on "[...]schemes" (line 148) instead of producing something useful. As a result of all this tiring struggle modern man is "[...]worn-out" (line 150).

In lines 171-175 Arnold refers to modern man's relationship with religion and lack of unity between man and religion is another issue that makes him unhappy.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd;

In these lines Arnold clearly verbalizes his longing for the days when religion was not questioned. Arnold also underlines that modern man does not feel his faith in his heart. That is why they are half-believers.

The poet refers to modern man's disappointments and indecisiveness. The modern man greets each new day with new hopes and wishes yet he does not do anything to achieve them but wait. Therefore, each day starts with new hopes but ends with disenchantment. This seems to be the destiny of modern man and displays his helpless situation in the universe.

[...]each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day—
Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too?

Yes, we await it!—but it still delays, (lines 176-181)

Modern man has many things in his mind to think of and has to work hard to survive. Therefore his ideas are not united; he experiences the heavy burden of thinking and Arnold wants to belike the Oxford student who has united aims, business, and desires.

Through the end of the poem, the poet warns the Oxford student not to come to his age. The poet underlines the contrast between the pastoral world

of shepherds' and his own anti-pastoral world one more time when he refers to Oxford student's time as "[...]days when wits were fresh and clear,/ And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames" (lines 201-202). The poet wants the shepherd not to come to his age lest he becomes like them, "[...]palsied hearts" (line 205). Therefore he tells him: "Fly hence, our contact fear![...]/and keep thy solitude" (lines 206-210). The poet says that his age is diseased and if the shepherd comes to his age he will have to experience the same "[...]mental strife" (line 222) which "[...]gives no bliss" (line 223). If the shepherd comes to live in the modern age his youth and cheer will fade, he will grow old and he will no longer be a "shepherd."

T.S. Eliot wrote his poem in 1910-11 and the poem is regarded to be the earliest of his major works. To analyze his poem as anti-pastoral it is wise to have a look at modern age to see in what aspects the modern age is anti-pastoral. In the modern age people experienced disenchantment with material truth and tended to search for abstract truth. Yet, turning to abstract truth served nothing but increase their loneliness. Even language lost its function of providing communication. Certainties like religion started to be even more questioned. Human relationships lost its meaning as people could not feel secure in any kind of relationship. Man started to question his own place in the universe.

In his article "T.S. Eliot: An Interpretation of The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" Lafuente underlines that trying to understand the meaning of 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' is not an easy task and that T. S. Eliot's poems are difficult and obscure. Lafuente also focuses on the "you" and "I" introduced in the poem and asserts that they are the parts of the same person and that the whole poem is a dramatic monologue that takes place within the mind of the poet. It is clear that the poem is not a love poem and that the "you" is not the poet's beloved. What the poet is talking of in the poem is not his frustrated love but his own boring life that he has to pursue in a modern age. In his article Lafuente puts forward that:

J. Alfred Prufrock is an unhappy frustrated man. He is involved in a routine of social life and he does not feel comfortable in the society in which he is condemned to live. He sees boredom and monotony. Though he is conditioned by that fashionable society, he seems to be tired of the superficial and miserable existence he is leading. Besides, he is isolated in that alien world.[...] He then talks to himself and he suffers. (dspace.uah.es, 6)

In his article Mandal who writes about this dilemma of "you and I" within the context of Prufrock's own self-consciousness focuses on the

motive of self-division present in the poem and relates it both to “[...]the splitting of the self into subject and object” (2013:4) and to “[...]the splitting of the self into thinking and observing[...]” (2013:4). Mandal asserts that this split leads to “[...]intense self-consciousness[...]” (2013:4) of Prufrock which “[...]will collapse his will and power to think, feel and act” (2013:4). Mandal also claims that “[t]his split consciousness of Prufrock paralyses his actions and creates a great discomfort to him” (2013:4).” He explains Prufrock’s inability to tell the truth and his extreme self-consciousness which discomforts him through the allusions in the poem:

Eliot has incorporated the story of John the Baptist in the poem:[...]John the Baptist was beheaded on Herod’s orders and his head was brought upon a platter before the assembled mass as a reward for Salome’s dance. He was decapitated as he declared that Herod’s marriage to Herodias, Salome’s mother was unlawful. Prufrock draws a mock-heroic parallel between himself and John, the Baptist; he thinks that he lacks the courage to disclose the truth, unlike John the Baptist; and so he says ‘I am no prophet...’(83). The image of beheading suggests Prufrock’s terrified self-consciousness and split personality. Eliot alludes to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* in the poem to express Prufrock’s desire to be free from his self-consciousness... This split consciousness of Prufrock paralyses his actions and creates a great discomfort to him. (2013:4)

Through the allusions used by Eliot in the poem Mandal reveals both Prufrock’s indecisiveness, his inability to disclose the truth and his desire to free himself from his excessive self-consciousness which distresses him deeply. Just like Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot demonstrates his desire to be a shepherd who has “[...]one aim, one business, one desire” (Arnold, line 152).

Whether Prufrock is talking to himself or another person, he is a typical modern man suffering deeply in his own loneliness. Lafuente says that: “Prufrock is a mask, a person through whom the tribulations of the modern city life are spoken” (<http://dspace.uah.es>, 6). In these respects, it will not be wrong to claim that Prufrock is a representative of modern man and that Eliot displays both his and his contemporaries’ suffering from loneliness through him. If the two poems are analysed together it is clearly observed that both Arnold and Eliot are suffering from similar issues in spite of the fact that Arnold wrote his poem more than half a century before Eliot. It is because of this reason that Arnold’s age has been referred to as “modern age” and his contemporaries as “modern men” so far in the analyses.

The use of metaphor/simile and imagery seems to have an important role in the poem as the poet uses them to create the impression of the age in which he is living. In the first two lines of the poem, for instance, the poet verbalizes his desire to “go” by addressing a mysterious “you.” “Let us go then, you and I,/ When the evening is spread out against the sky.” In line 3, he resembles “evening” to a “[...]patient etherized upon a table.” The imagery brings the readers’ minds a person who cannot move, think or verbalize his opinions. In lines 15 and 16 the poet is talking about “[...]the yellow fog[...]” and “[...]the yellow smoke[...]” that he sees when he looks at the window-panes and this creates a contrast with the “green” nature of the pastoral world. In lines 31-34 Eliot is referring to man’s tendency to think and think like Hamlet. He says that:

Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions.
And for a hundred visions and revisions.
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

He suggests that people need to think deeply even before they take trivial things like toast and tea, which demonstrates modern man’s lack of “unified”, clear purposes.

One of the issues that makes Eliot unhappy in the modern age is the pressure of the society on the individuals. He states that the society formulates him suggesting that the society does not allow individuals to act freely. This creates a contrast with the happy shepherds who are free to do whatever their hearts desire as they live among people who not only think of themselves but also the happiness and well-being of others. In lines 56-58 he refers to the society’s pressure on individuals:

The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin?

Another point that the poet complains of is lack of communication between people which stems from people’s lack of unified ideas in their minds. In lines 97-98 he says that “[...]That is not what I meant at all;/ That is not it, at all.” He suggests that he cannot explain his thoughts clearly. It is possible to observe that lack of communication also leads to misunderstanding among people.

Another point that differs Prufrock from the shepherds of a pastoral world is the presence of many questions that remain unanswered throughout the poem. He asks many questions like “Do I dare disturb the universe?” (lines 45-46), “[...]how should I presume?” (lines 54-61), “[...]how should I begin?” (line 69), “Would it have been worth while?” (line 90) His questions show that Prufrock is lost in the confusion of the modern world and this prevents him from being reconciled with other people around him.

At the end of the poem Prufrock states that he has seen the mermaids but he also displays his hopeless situation as he thinks that the mermaids will not sing to him:

I have heard the mermaids singing each to each.

I do not think they will sing to me (lines 124-125).

These lines also portray Prufrock’s loss of imagination in a modern age. He believes that the mermaids will not answer him and on the last two lines he refers to the mermaids as sea-girls, a shift from a romantic description to a realist one.

By sea-girls wreathed with sea seaweed red and brown
Till human voices make us, and we drown (lines 130-131).

Conclusion

In conclusion, both poems include in themselves a deep sense of discontentment and desire to “go.” Both Arnold and Eliot felt this discontentment with their own age and that was what led them to search for a “better” world. Both poets lived in ages which were characterized by machinery and industrialization. In fact, both the 19th and 20th centuries were ages of separations, disunities, discontinuities, disharmonies, breaks, gaps, contrasts and contradictions. Yet, the primary split was the one between man and nature. As man offended nature, he offended himself. As a result of the huge gap between man and nature there came other gaps: First of all, man became alienated from himself, then from other people and society. Prufrock’s own alination can be a proof to this alienation. Eliot not only reflects Prufrock’s alination on a microcosmic level but also draws attention to the macrocosmic level of isolation suggesting that alienation is a universal human condition. Like Prufrock, man became disappointed, worn-out, half-believer, disenchanting, helpless, indecisive, unable to tell the truth and discomforted. Later, he became alienated from God and any kind of certainties, fixities, rigidities. He started to lose his ties with everything and everybody and finally

destined himself to suffer in his anti-pastoral world. What Arnold and Eliot portray as the happy man is a shepherd who is on good terms both with himself and nature. This ideal man is sure of himself, he is decisive and he has a clear mind. He knows what he wants and needs and he does not have any unanswered questions. In fact, what Arnold and Eliot want to find in a pastoral world is “peace”, which each man searches for.

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