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## Ancient Greek and ancient Hebrew agrarianism: an ecocritical study of Hesiod's Works and Days and the Book of Proverbs

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ANCIENT GREEK AND ANCIENT HEBREW  
AGRARIANISM: AN ECOCRITICAL STUDY OF  
HESIOD'S *WORKS AND DAYS* AND THE  
BOOK OF PROVERBS

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
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in

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Comparative Literature

by  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The subject of this thesis revolves around the “Western” view of nature and its social origins. The author advances the subject through a comparison of two ancient texts: Hesiod’s *Works and Days* and the Old Testament book of Proverbs. He concludes that the Western view of nature gestated in agricultural societies of small-farmers who saw themselves as being both part of and separate from the natural world. Their ability to control nature being limited, they saw civilization as fulfilling a limited agricultural role in the cosmos, as being different but part of and not controlling the whole.

In the last chapter, the author moves to discussing the forces at play within the Western view of nature that have resulted in the environmental situation of the twenty-first century. The author advances that a view of the physical realm as secondary, or degraded vis-à-vis the realm of the intellect entered Christianity through Platonic philosophy, and therefore is not original to the Western view of nature. Furthermore, he contends that the original interaction of Western man with nature was through physical work, and that both Platonic philosophy and modern science have influenced this original relationship.

## 1) INTRODUCTION

This thesis puts forward an argument in the hope of contributing to twenty-first century environmental dialogue, and while it is a research document it also hopes to add positively to discussion on causes of and solutions to environmental issues.

A majority of people in Western countries now consider the health of the environment to be a priority. But judging by the symptoms there appears to be a disease at work. Science is adept at identifying and relieving symptoms—whether it be through water purification systems, solar panels, hybrid vehicles etc... but the situation now demands treating causes as well as symptoms, and a discussion of causes in turn requires a broad historical scope and goes beyond science or any single academic discipline.

This thesis argues that the environmental crisis is essentially an illness in the Western mind having to do with its philosophy of work. It is through work that Western man has always interacted with his environment.<sup>1</sup> At times he has strayed from his genius into gloating over the wealth accrued from the sweat of others, whether serf or slave, or from the humming (and spewing) of his intricate machines. But he has never been able not to work—neither to lounge as the lordly Polynesian next to shaded lagoons and eat breadfruit, nor to be content as the wild and free African or American Indian in and on the grandeur of his respective forests and grasslands. But this is not his fault. His nature cannot be ineluctably harmful to his environment or himself—if this were so it would doom him, and the earth, to hellish predestination. No, he too is human. He has a role as do all peoples and creatures. He is sick—that is now affirmative, and the earth with him—but his illness requires a solution native to his soil and mind.

However, “Western man”, and Western civilization, are complex phenomena.<sup>2</sup> Western civilization is like an intricate and complex tapestry, in which the continuous threads that do exist are interwoven with many of local variation. Those strands that do show continuity trace to

Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian origin. But the fabric is complex. There is obviously a vast amount of material both coming from and written about these cultural traditions.<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this comparative thesis, two primary texts were selected to act as a basis from which to discuss larger issues and trends.

The texts are Hesiod's *Works and Days*, and the Old Testament book of Proverbs. This thesis puts forward that these two texts evidence an "ecological archetype" within both Hebrew and Greek civilizations at formative stages in their developments. These selections are saying that these texts are representative of these archetypes in each civilization.<sup>4</sup> This is also saying that there were similarities between the two civilizations in the existence and nature of these archetypes, and that together they form a Western type. It is not saying that these are the only archetypes to have existed in them—to do so would be to ignore the complexity and often conflicting elements within anything called a society, let alone a cultural tradition or civilization. The fact is that in these societies and periods as now there were always competing groups and different philosophies; this was particularly the case in the Greek example. But this does not mean that scholarship cannot distinguish the different camps and trends.

The argument of this thesis is therefore threefold: 1) that these archetypes existed, and evidence similarities between the Greece and Israel of the periods in question, 2) that this had and has far-reaching implications for Western Civilization, and 3) that issues surrounding this are at the root of the environmental crisis.

The first two sections B) and C) attempt to put forward the first argument 1), and the final section D) strive to advocate arguments 2) and 3).

The type in his English manifestation has gone by the name "yeoman". This thesis interchanges this title with "small-farmer", "small freeholding farmers" et al...But though his



diverse local cultures have disguised him—as did Athena Odysseus upon his return to Ithaca—his philosophy has always been remarkably the same.

This philosophy is Agrarianism. To keep the introduction to this thesis short, an explanation of the use of the term “agrarianism” in this thesis has been assigned to Appendix A, and a discussion of the English etymology of the term to Appendix B.

## **2) HESIOD'S WORKS AND DAYS**

The first articulation of Agrarianism in the Greco-Roman literary record begins with Hesiod and his poem *Works and Days* (c.700 BC). A background sketch of the history of the Greek world during this formative period of Western civilization is in order.

See Appendix C for a summary of agrarian terms in Greek history.

### **A) History**

In the period before and during Hesiod's time, the Greek world was emerging from what some scholars refer to as the Greek "Dark Ages", a period sandwiched between the Mycenaean Period (c.1600-1200 BC) and the Archaic Period (c.700-480 BC).

The Mycenaean period provides an example of a civilization that rose and fell very markedly. It achieved numerous developments—but it did not rise to a notable point of political consolidation. It was a politically fractured civilization, in which numerous, large centrally planned palaces dominated the political and economic landscape, with peasants or serfs working the land for palace rulers. Linear B texts do not make the palace system clear, but the palaces demonstrated highly specialized economies based on the cultivation of a few crops; the system of land-ownership consisted of palace control either directly or through some form of lease.<sup>5</sup> But around 1200-1150 BC Mycenaean civilization experienced a systems collapse. The causes of this are still debated, but one prominent modern scholar has characterized the period that followed the collapse as "a slate wiped clean".<sup>6</sup> Other scholars have argued for relatively more continuity, while still characterizing it as a "trough".<sup>7</sup> But in any case a large disturbance and disintegration of political organization and land-ownership occurred.

Following the collapse of Mycenaean civilization around 1200-1150 BC, Greece plunged into the Greek Dark Ages from c.1100-800 BC. During this time mainland Greece shows

evidence of having been drastically de-populated.<sup>8</sup> The Dark Ages in Greece were dominated by chieftains who were indifferent to agriculture and more given to herding and raiding.<sup>9</sup>

However, in the eighth century the Greeks began to settle down again—and for some reason did not do so along the lines of the large estates of the Mycenaen period. One scholar feels confident enough to paint this picture, “The end of the Greek Dark Ages was a rare time in History. A period of fluidity in, and opportunity for, land ownership, it was an era where competence and work, not mere inherited wealth and birth, might now become criteria for economic success.”<sup>10</sup> Population growth was concomitant with more intensive agriculture, in turn stimulating greater and greater land use, and the formation of towns and cities.<sup>11</sup> Charles Freeman calls it a “...dramatic transformation. Mainland Greece suddenly goes through a period of rapid social, economic, and cultural change.”<sup>12</sup>

This leads us into a discussion of the Archaic period, also referred to as the “polis” period, which is the period of the rise of the Greek city-states (c.700-480 BC), and the period from which the texts of Homer and Hesiod come to us.

Our sources of information for the pre-Archaic period are primarily archeological, however there is ongoing argumentation among scholars as to whether or not the poetry of Homer describes more the culture of Mycenaen Greece, the following Dark Ages, or the later Archaic Period. In recent scholarship Homer, who in traditional scholarship was for the most part thought to be more the guide to either Mycenaen or Dark Age Greece, has been shown to shed light on the Archaic period.<sup>13</sup>

It is lamentable that a thorough analysis of Homer is simply too great a subject to enter into fully here. Employing criteria appropriate to this thesis, Homer would have to be grouped as a poet who includes references to agriculture, but whose sweep is too broad to be classified as an agricultural or agrarian poet. And as compared to Hesiod, there are fewer similarities in Homer

to the Agrarian elements in the Hebrew corpus than in *Works and Days*. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are not primarily about agriculture or economic life, and in general are preoccupied with the relatively more sensationalistic subjects of war, and the journey and struggles of a hero. If anywhere in Homer does provide particular fodder for agrarian analysis, it would be the end of the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus returns home to his agricultural estate in Ithaca (Bk. XIV-XXIV), particularly BK. XXIII. Book twenty-three contains the one instance in Homer that this discussion will look at here.

This instance is Homer's use in the *Odyssey* of the olive tree metaphor (Bk. XXIII.202-230) as the cornerstone (or corner-tree) of Odysseus's house and bed. The *Odyssey* is a story of a hero's return from war, and the reestablishment of social, political, and economic order (civilization) after a time of chaos. The two-pronged role of the olive tree is significant: it formed the cornerpost of the bed, which has sexual and social connotations, and it upheld the physical structure of the house, which has economic and political connotations. It is apparently to be understood from his use of the tree, that Homer was conscious of and believed in the importance of a fundamental connection between civilization and the natural world, and that in a settled culture this connection was through cultivated nature.

It is also significant—if Homer is the voice of the early Greek city-state as some scholars have suggested—that Greek *urban* society was conscious of this fact (see nt.13). This metaphor suggests that though the Greek world in the Archaic period boasted an increasingly urbane culture, that this culture was still very close to and conscious of the centrality of nature to civilization. And this is understandable given the close physical proximity of the countryside to the centers of even the largest Greek cities. Estimates of the rural-urban population split in Greece during the city-state period still put the population at between 65-95 % rural.<sup>14</sup> This is an important statistic to recall throughout the course of this thesis. Not until modern times has it

been possible for the majority of the urban population to be beyond walking distance of fields and farms. So the presence of this knowledge in Homer is perhaps not surprising.

It will be objected that the olive tree metaphor is using a tree, and not the fields or agriculture per se, as the cornerstone around which civilization is built. This has some weight, but is balanced by the prominence of arboriculture and viticulture in Greek culture and farm operations. The Greeks were great cultivators of vines, and olive and fruit trees, and their role was even enshrined in religious mythology and observance. In Athens, for instance, the olive tree was sacred to the city's primary goddess Athena, one of which she supposedly planted in Attica, and certain olive groves were shrines to the goddess and protected by the Athenian state. In actual practice, a small Greek farm consisted of fields as well as orchards and vineyards, all contributing in season to the family's diet and survival. Hesiod himself shows us an example of this when besides the practice of cereal agriculture he gives advice on when to harvest grapes (611).<sup>15</sup>

In summary of this foray into Homer, eco-critical analysis of the *Odyssey*, and less so the *Iliad*, contribute to a fuller understanding of the Greek view of civilization's relationship with nature by serving as a source of comparison for other more explicit and factual primary sources for the Archaic period (c.700-480 BC).

It is indicative of its importance to Greek civilization that of the two colossi of early Greek literature—Homer and Hesiod—one, Hesiod, exhibits such a rural identity.

Hesiod relates to us in the poem that his father was something of a pioneer. The poet tells us (637) that his father left Asia Minor to try and escape poverty and after spending time as a sailor (634) settled on land near the town of Ascra in Boeotia, in mainland Greece (see Maps). Cheap land must have been available for settlement otherwise a man of little means like Hesiod's father could not have obtained property there. It is for this reason that the family farm probably

occupied marginal land. The climate there is Mediterranean and dry, with the mountainous terrain permitting only dry-land farming (no large-scale irrigation) where farmers are dependent on seasonal rains for survival. Tandy and Neal cite an estimate of average farm size in Boeotia around that time at twenty arable acres, with five to ten of it being in vegetables,<sup>16</sup> as well as some fruit and olive trees. But this estimate of overall farm size comes in high compared to other estimates of farm size in the countryside of other Greek city-states. The Russian scholar V.N. Andreyev reviewed inscribed public land sale records in Attica in the fifth century BC (for which we have more information) and put the standard plot size at between a mere 1.8-13.3 acres.<sup>17</sup> Hanson advances that a “normative” Attic farm covered between ten and twenty acres.<sup>18</sup> And M.I. Finley concluded that 45- and 70- acre holdings, though not unusual, were above average.<sup>19</sup> In almost no case until Hellenistic and Roman times do we hear of anyone’s land surpassing 100 acres.<sup>20</sup> In terms of population, estimates for Boeotia put it at around 165,000 for the late fifth century, or a density of 70 people/km square.<sup>21</sup> Estimates regarding the large proportion of the rural population vis-à-vis the urban have already been mentioned.

So life was for a large part survival to Hesiod, and evidence from the poem reinforces that he has no romantic notions of farming and rural life, or poverty going together with human happiness. He calls Ascra, “a miserable hamlet” (639), a place “bad in winter, sultry in summer, and good at no time” (640).<sup>22</sup> As a reading of the poem shows, Hesiod portrays farming as a hard but honest and respectable occupation.

## **B) Text**

This section will pass through the text noting passages of importance to the subject of this thesis, as well as noting the views of scholars on these passages. A compendium of Hesiodic scholarship in general will occur in the next section.

*Works and Days* divides into three sections: the first section (1-201) is a brief narrative of the history of the relations of humans with the gods; the second section however (202-765), which takes up the majority of the poem's 828 lines, consists of explicit practical advice on work in an agricultural context; the third section (765-828) is a random compendium of rural lore (there is scholarly contention as to whether Hesiod authored the third section of the poem; the end of this section provides a short discussion of this).

The poem begins with an invocation of the Muses of Pieria (a sacred spring on the slopes on Mount Olympus) to come hither and help the poet sing the praise of Zeus (1-4). Such an overt act of consecration (1-4), and the subject of the first section as a whole, would seem out of place in a practical twenty-first century handbook on agriculture. But while practical advice dominates the main section of the poem, Hesiod sees no incongruence in starting the poem with an overt statement on his consciousness of the divine. This implies that Hesiod saw no separation between religion and work.

Other passages expressly confirm this. Near the outset, Hesiod claims that there are two kinds of Strife: one bad, but one good. The bad kind fosters evil war and battle (13-14), but the good kind Zeus himself has put "in the roots of the earth" (19). This "strife" is good for man for two reasons: firstly because it appeases the gods, and secondly, because it makes man work and vie with his neighbor for wealth and prosperity (21). Line 43 then reads, "For the gods keep hidden from men the means of life (42)"...or else (paraphrase) men would become lazy and slovenly (43-44). And in a central passage Hesiod reiterates his philosophy of work by saying point blank: *καὶ ἐργαζόμενοι πολὺ φίλτεροι ἀθανάτοι* (308-309). Tandy and Neale translate this "the man who works is much dearer to the deathless ones (309)." Clearly these passages demonstrate a connection in the poet's mind between work and religion, that the way a man works is an important expression of his religious beliefs.

But is Hesiod speaking in line 309 of those in any kind of work, or specifically agriculture? The answer lies in the context of line 309 in the passage (293-320). The context is one in which the poet is enjoining his brother Perses to work, and he is clearly speaking about agriculture. Lines 299-300 contrast hunger with a barn filled with the blessings of Demeter, and the line immediately preceding line 309 refers to flocks (308). So clearly the context of lines 308-309 indicates that Hesiod is referring to those working the land. Such references become recurrent and form the agricultural theme of the poem.

But in the passage in which the previously noted line 41 occurs, Hesiod goes on to say, “This strife is wholesome for men. And potter is angry with potter, and craftsman with craftsman, and beggar is jealous of beggar, and minstrel of minstrel.” There Hesiod is speaking about the gods’ intentions with respect to hard work in general, and that this applies to all occupations—but in 308-309, Hesiod is speaking specifically about farming. So Hesiod’s overall view of the scheme of things includes other kinds of work, but retains a unique status for agriculture.

Another point regarding one of these passages is important for its environmental implications. In the passage on the good kind of strife, Hesiod’s expression for the way of the farmer is “hastening towards wealth” (21).<sup>23</sup> Evelyn-White translates it “craving wealth”. At first glance this casts Hesiod in the role of the greedy industrial magnate or unscrupulous CEO, and would have sent Thoreau away amuttering.<sup>24</sup> However, such characterizations are not the case here, because in context, the phrase communicates not greediness but a genuine *need* of “wealth”, and shows that in his day and age, what Hesiod calls “wealth” we today would probably label as poverty, that is, just above subsistence. We should recall that the poet’s father settled in Ascrea to flee poverty, (πενίη) (637, also 717), and that Hesiod early on ironically praises a meal of mallow and asphodel (41), the Greek equivalent of a bowl of porridge.<sup>25</sup>



Eminent Classical scholar Hermann Fränkel concurs, writing “‘Wealth’ probably signifies no more than having enough to eat once a day the year through...”<sup>26</sup> So clearly this is not an avaricious worldview, but a situation where wealth means firstly just keeping above subsistence. For Hesiod wealth means survival. This distinction is important in establishing a definition of the type of Western man that Hesiod represents, and whether he meets contemporary environmental criteria.<sup>27</sup>

Moving on in the first section, Hesiod lists the ages of men, starting with the golden age, the silver age, and thirdly the iron age. This third group was “a brazen race, sprung from ash-trees; it was in no way equal to the silver age, but was terrible and strong; they loved the lamentable works of Ares and deeds of violence; they ate no bread...” (146-147).<sup>28</sup> This passage is noteworthy here for giving insight into the Greek view of non-agricultural peoples. Hesiod, for his part focuses on the connection between these people and war; and also the flip side, that those who do eat bread are apparently relatively more peaceful. Men in Hesiod are elsewhere called, “men who eat bread” (82).<sup>29</sup> Clearly lines 82 and 147 are in juxtaposition. This argues that Hesiod’s cultural identity in relation to other people groups was related to farming.<sup>30</sup>

Hesiod puts the emphasis more on a connection between agricultural people and war, but in the *Odyssey*, Homer asserts this connection between cultivated nature and civilization in a clearer light. Homer portrays this view more clearly in the well-known story of the Cyclops. Odysseus says of them:

We came to the land of the Cyclops race, arrogant lawless beings who leave their livelihoods to the deathless gods and never use their own hands to sow or plough... They have no assemblies to debate in, they have no ancestral ordinances; they live in arching caves on the tops of hills, and the head of each family heeds no other, but makes his own ordinances for wife and children. (*Odyssey* IX.113-124).

Clearly this is associating non-agricultural peoples with barbarism. Robin Osborne agrees that the Cyclops in Homer is “the inversion of the Greek life of farming and political activity.”<sup>31</sup> The story in Bk. IX also highlights the lack of civility of the encounter. So according to Homer lack of cultivated nature absents social cultivation. The mention of the Cyclopes not working with their own hands also stands out.<sup>32</sup> This is a subject that this thesis will look at now in detail in Hesiod and later on in Proverbs.

A pivotal question is whether or not Hesiod considered physical work to be honorable, and actually did physical work himself. In a recent study, Stephanie A. Nelson asserts (in the first respect) that he did not, stating: “The Greeks were remarkably free from the idea that the sweat of one’s brow is ennobling. Hesiod himself, despite the more romantic view of some commentators, sees work as simply a necessary evil.”<sup>33</sup> This thesis disagrees with Nelson’s interpretation and will adduce several passages to advance an alternative argument.

To begin with, Hesiod’s belief that the gods have a say in the occupations of man must apply here. If the gods intended man to work primarily in agriculture then it must be no disgrace for him to actually do the work. Besides the passage on Strife (11-26) that has already been discussed, the first reference in the text that confirms this is Hesiod’s use of the word ἀρετή in a passage (286-294) in which he is speaking about work and the gods. Liddell and Scott translate ἀρετή in an active sense as, “goodness, excellence, especially of manly qualities, manhood, valor, prowess”, and in a moral sense as, “goodness, virtue, merit etc...” This is obviously a word with noble connotations. And Hesiod uses it in the context of an explicit reference to “sweat” on line 289. Hesiod says, “Badness can be got easily and in shoals: the road to her is smooth, and she lives very near us. But between us and Goodness (ἀρετή) the gods have placed the sweat of our brows (ἰδρῶτα)....(287-290)” Tandy and Neale translate this passage, “It is easy to seize failure, and in quantities; the road is smooth: she resides very near. But

before success (ἀρετή) the deathless gods put sweat: long and straight up is the path to her and tough at first (287-291).” The use of ἀρετή and expressly of ἰδρῶτα in respect to the gods’ demanding design communicates that this includes physical work.

However, although she does not mention this explicitly, it is safe to assume that Nelson would probably take Hesiod’s use of “sweat” to be metaphorical. In response to this, although the word is almost certainly also intended to be a metaphor for hard work broadly defined, to assert that ἰδρῶτα is wholly metaphorical, that Hesiod intends absolutely no evocation of physical work, is almost certainly taking a secondary interpretation. The first reason for this is his choice of the word. He could have used ἔργον, or any other word to represent “work.” But he chose “sweat”. Secondly, the context of the passage within the poem confirms a literal reading. In line 304, Hesiod goes on to pontificate on indigents, in his words “the stingless drones who wear away the labor of the bees by eating, idlers that they are (304).” If he intends to sit around himself, it is incongruous and hypocritical for Hesiod forthrightly to condemn indigence.

Nevertheless, the metaphorical interpretation demands more explanation and in turn throws the discussion onto clarifying the practice of Hesiod’s belief, in other words onto determining whether the man that the Archaic Greeks held as exemplary not only believed “work” to be ennobling but actually worked physically himself—or whether he simply administered and supervised the work of others, either servants or slaves.

Considering the evidence, although Hesiod undoubtedly exemplifies elements of a “supervisory role”, the text shows that he does also exemplify that he worked himself physically, and practiced what he preached. That he evidences the first is proven by his many references to planning and directing the work of slaves (406, 459, 470, 502, 597, 766).<sup>34</sup> Now the purpose of this analysis is not to disparage the enslaved—clearly this is an aspect of Hesiod that has

absolutely no application to the modern context—but in one of these passages (458-461), Hesiod portrays the farmer working alongside, *in the same way as*, his slaves.<sup>35</sup> Evelyn-White translates this, “So soon as the time for ploughing is proclaimed to men, then make haste, you and your slaves alike, in wet and in dry, to plough in the season for ploughing, and bestir yourself early in the morning so that your fields may be full.” West renders it, “As soon as the ploughing-time reveals itself to mortals, then go at it, yourself and your labourers...”.<sup>36</sup> The line that tells us one way or the other is δὴ τότε ἐφορμηθῆναι ὁμῶς δμῶές τε καὶ αὐτὸς (459). The verb is ἐφορμηθῆναι (“to rush at it”, or “to go at it with vigour”), ὁμῶς is an adverb “equally, likewise, alike”, δμῶές τε καὶ αὐτὸς, “the slaves and you.” Hesiod’s use of the adverb here does not leave any question that the Greek small-farmer worked physically in the same way as his slaves.

So this thesis has argued—insofar as Hesiod is representative—that the text of *Works and Days* is clear on both the theory and practice of work in the Archaic Greek context.

And yet, an overview of Classical scholarship from diverse periods shows that there has always been a noticeable lack of discussion and conclusion on these questions among scholars, as to whether or not the man that the Archaic Greeks held as exemplary held physical work to be ennobling and actually practiced it. There are probably several reasons for this.

One of the main reasons for this in modern scholarship has probably been because the people who read, interpret, and teach Hesiod are scholars and intellectuals, who as a section do not generally hold physical work to be something exemplary. This has probably been the case since the Renaissance and the decline of Western monasticism.<sup>37</sup> The reasons why scholars and intellectuals think this way, and the history behind it is a complicated process that will be looked at in section D) Implications. Another reason, in certain historical periods, is probably that the implications of the one interpretation were not favourable to the ruling class, as in feudalism,

aristocratic agrarianism, or industrialism. For example, the plantation owners of the antebellum South were fonder of the managerial Cato the Elder than the industrious Hesiod,<sup>38</sup> although the Southern yeoman class, if they would have been able to procure a copy of Hesiod, probably would have identified more with the other.<sup>39</sup>

In respect to this pivotal question of physical labor, if there has been a unceremonious shuffling of this discussion to dusty corners, or a discrediting of the one side through reference to aristocratic agrarianism in other Classical literature (Xenophon, Cato the Elder etc...) then Hesiod has been done a great disservice and Western civilization denied a socially acceptable archetype whose true role in the history of the West may be difficult to overestimate. In a civilized society, the establishment of a socially acceptable archetype, or hero, requires, arguably, the genius of a writer or poet, but almost certainly, and particularly for the educated classes, the validation of those entrusted with and knowledgeable of the written lore of a culture. All scholars as an ensemble have to do is cast something as boorish, and the upper classes will not touch it with a ten-foot pole. And such is the case for the most part in this instance. Thomas Hardy went a long way in finally giving rural people in England their due, but the implications of his central contention—that they were the true representatives of English culture and merited respect as such—were not, nor have they as yet been, able to conquer the hallowed towers of academia, where reside those all-important cultural knight-makers. Some scholars may have bucked the trend, but this mostly has been the case.<sup>40</sup> In the instance of Hesiod, it is long overdue that scholars for their part note the presence of this attribute in him, and give more credence to the yeoman as a socially acceptable occupation with a long and respectable historical and intellectual lineage.

Moving on once again in the text, Hesiod exhibits the trait of being very cautious to the point of shrewd skepticism about others, especially urban elites wielding political or economic

power. He addresses an entire passage to local rulers (201-285). In it Hesiod inserts an example of the fable genre, an early example of it in Greek literature. Aesop's fables mostly deal with character traits, but Hesiod is more concerned with political and economic justice. We get the sense throughout this passage that Hesiod holds a kind of charming disdain for his social superiors. Although they wield more political power than him, he is not intimidated by them, and in fact holds them in contempt. He thinks for himself and shows that he has pride and self-confidence. These traits—a distrust of the concentration of power and a critical mind—are essential to a politically conscious and active citizenry, and therefore the functioning of a democratic government. This passage illustrates some political implications of Hesiod's thought.<sup>41</sup>

Hesiod also shows a cardinal Greek characteristic of revering order in all things. This is found in the line, “to guard good measure is good, and even the best of all things” (694),<sup>42</sup> and in the phrase κατὰ μέτρον (720) “according to measure.” This also comes out in his contrast of righteousness (δίκη) with hubris (ὑβρις) (313-314). Tandy and Neal define “hubris” as “a disregard for process”,<sup>43</sup> an important insight that section D) will be develop to a greater extent.

To knock off several other points that should not be missed— Hesiod shows a conservative attitude toward investment by arguing essentially, “Don't put all of your eggs in one basket,” or in his words “Do not put all your goods in hollow ships” (691). This shows Hesiod's thrift. Hesiod also sets the precedent for Xenophon's more enlightened discussion on the subject of marriage in stating that a man can find nothing better than a good wife, and nothing worse than a bad one (702-704)—although unfortunately his misogyny definitely outweighs his other side overall.

In reference to this subject, this thesis limits itself to looking at Hesiod's relationship to the natural world and its implications, and so issues related to gender for the most part fall

outside its cadre. However, the essential role of women in Agrarianism forms an exclusive, needed subject of study, and is necessary to determine if it is an acceptable body of thought for use in modern environmental discourse.<sup>44</sup>

In the final section of the poem (706-828) Hesiod appears to be superstitious. He shows here a belief in divine forces and their connection to the forces of nature. However, the weighty view of Fränkel is that Hesiod did not author this final section of the text. He says:

Such gross superstition as appears here is not consonant with the picture of Hesiod's mode of thought which we receive elsewhere, and there is an additional consideration which makes us doubt whether Hesiod wrote these maxims. Often the author appends to his prohibitions such remarks as "For this entails punishment." If Hesiod had indeed written these prescriptions he would have known how to justify them better than by meaningless or mystifying tags. There follows (765ff.) further superstitious teachings concerning the various days of the month, which set forth the kind of work for which each is favorable or unfavorable. The accepted text concludes by promising to deal with the flight of birds and its use for predictions. Hesiod did not write any of this. Expanders and continuators completed his epic according to their lights.<sup>45</sup>

Fränkel's has good reason here. Although the small Archaic Greek farmer demonstrates a consciousness of the divine (i.e.1-4), and must be attuned to the cycles of nature to survive and keep his farm productive—Hesiod's view of the world is that there is an order to all things, of which man is a part, and that man can understand his role in this order. This is not a world controlled by divine whim.

In conclusion, this section has looked at examples from the text that are important for understanding how Hesiod thought and acted in respect to work and nature. Please see the attached note for a short review of the general merits of the translations.<sup>46</sup>

### C) Criticism

Scholarship on Hesiod got underway late compared to interest in Homer, who has seen many translations and commentaries since the Renaissance. And *Works and Days* in particular did not see concerted scholarly interest until the twentieth-century.<sup>47</sup>

Most of the scholarship on *Works and Days* in the first half of the twentieth century was German. The German classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff published his edition and commentary in 1928.<sup>48</sup> Tandy and Neal characterize Wilamowitz's treatment of Hesiod as "condescending,"<sup>49</sup> and relate that the nature of early German scholarship was predominantly philological. Werner Jaeger's *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, a non-philological work, was first published in German in 1933. Towards the middle of the century we see Solmsen's *Hesiod and Aeschylus* (1949), and the third chapter of Hermann Frankel's *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy* (1951). There is no translation of Wilamowitz, although there are English editions of Jaeger.<sup>50</sup>

Jaeger's three volume work is a *chef d'oeuvre* of scholarship on Greek literature and culture, and a chapter in it is devoted to Hesiod. Jaeger is nuanced in his overall characterization of the period from which the poem originated. He grants that early Greece was predominantly rural,<sup>51</sup> but overall is strong on the parallel nature of Greek culture throughout its history. In his view the currents in the early period (presumably the Archaic) were those of aristocratic and "peasant" culture, with both existing side by side. He sees Homer as communicating the aristocratic ideals and Hesiod those of the rural folk.<sup>52</sup> Assumedly Jaeger's choice of the broad term *παίδεια* to title his work retains this nuance. This is an important point. It reminds us that we cannot treat early Greek culture as a homogenous body of thought or set of practices.

Jaeger knew that Greek culture stood out for being very contentious. He lays out evenhandedly, and in an authoritative fashion somehow innate to German scholarship, the



Homeric strand, the Hesiodic strand, and the Socratic strand. The contentious nature of Greek culture was in full swing in fifth century Athens, which was the apex of a very high level of philosophical and cultural debate, the polemical dynamics of which are encapsulated for us in the comedies of Aristophanes. The issues to which Aristophanes applied his poetic wit were not those on relations between the yeomanry and the aristocracy, but between traditional Greece and the rising star of Socratic philosophy. Although detailed treatment of Aristophanes falls outside the cadre of this thesis, sufficed to say that due to the later influence of Socratic philosophy on the Western view of nature, any discussion of the causes and solutions to current environmental issues needs to be familiar with his plays.

Chronologically Jaeger insinuates that Hesiod lived slightly before the polis period. This places *Works and Days* slightly earlier than the more major consensus, which dates it to sometime in the eighth century.<sup>53</sup> Jaeger concludes that a pan-Hellenic Greek identity and culture did not emerge until this period, and that when it did Hesiod and the rural strand lost out.<sup>54</sup> This would seem to be proven correct by the dominance of urban Greek culture during the Hellenistic period i.e. it was not Hesiodic culture that Alexander spread across the East but more the artistic and intellectual culture of the polis. But Jaeger reserves respect for both Hesiod and Aristophanes, the two most potent representatives of rural Greece. Apparently unlike Wilamowitz, he treats Hesiod seriously and respectfully, as an equal to Homer. The reason he did this is probably because he knew that Hesiod, as did Homer, stood for what had been a genuine and respectable segment of ancient Greek society. However, his treatment is very broad and does not touch on economic or environmental elements.

In the instance of Solmsen's *Hesiod and Aeschylus*, for which there is also an English translation, the discussion is more along the lines of literary criticism, with the majority of it focusing on the *Theogony*. This study therefore highlights Hesiod the poet and not Hesiod the

voice of rural Greece or Hesiod the farmer. When it does treat *Works and Days*, it is to look at Hesiod's theology and philosophy of man. There is also no place given for how the views of the poet might either have had or have economic or ecological implications.

Hermann Fränkel's work gives us more in this respect. Fränkel's book is also not primarily philological, and more like Jaeger's consists of a broad, relatively readable study of Greek literature from Homer to Pindar. Fränkel is concerned with attempting to get at the "underlying ideas" of a work or literary period,<sup>55</sup> in his words, "To ascertain in its essential features the frame of mind peculiar to the epoch, and to follow up the changes it underwent in the course of time..."<sup>56</sup>

So Fränkel proposes to give us the essence of Hesiod, and in so doing gives more on which the twenty first century eco-critical analyst can chew. He brings out several important points, the first having to do with the poet's philosophy of work. In his words, "Hesiod is convinced that the order of labor also, like the order of nature, is established by the gods."<sup>57</sup> Fränkel here adduces a line in Hesiod central to this thesis, line 398, which says, "Foolish Perses! *Work the work which the gods ordained for men* (398), lest in bitter anguish of spirit you with your wife and children seek your livelihood amongst your neighbours, and they do not heed you (397-400)."<sup>58</sup> So Fränkel had already postulated the conclusion of the previous section, that Hesiod's religious consciousness applies to how he views work. He goes on to note that Hesiod councils praying to consecrate a task only once, that being the harvest (465)—although adding that "in the Greek fashion it is natural and matter-of-fact."<sup>59</sup> Secondly, Fränkel points out Hesiod's close relationship with nature, citing his use of the stars and the migratory periods of birds to tell time (448, 486), as opposed to using the names of months.<sup>60</sup>

So Hesiod is definitely a type of Western man relatively close to nature—but Fränkel does not induce that Hesiod is a type of Western man less harmful to nature, or one more

inclined to an ecological relationship with the environment. However, this is understandable as environmental issues were not prominent when he wrote his work.

Fränkel culminated generations of German dominance in the study of Hesiod. But in the second half of the twentieth-century English-language scholarship began to pay more attention to him. This is not to say that Agrarianism as an idea, or yeomanry as a class in the English speaking world had ever ceased to exist, or enjoy the championing of various political or literary figures i.e. Thomas Jefferson, William Cobbett, G.K. Chesterton etc... For a general history of such figures and their views on agrarianism see a study that is essential reading for the subject primarily because it is the only one of its kind, that being Montmarquet's.<sup>61</sup> Rather, this post-War trend demonstrates that Agrarianism is finally beginning to receive more consideration within the academy, a phenomenon, as was touched upon earlier, that has been more the exception than the rule. The Germans appear to have initiated this and English-language scholars have increased the trend. French scholarship, which shows an emphasis on material culture, must also not be neglected.<sup>62</sup> Numerous post-War English translations of Hesiod demonstrate this increased interest.<sup>63</sup> However, the championing of Agrarianism by various major figures does not completely explain the comparative lack of interest in Hesiod as compared to Homer until the second half of the twentieth century.

It seems that because all civilized societies were agricultural until the Industrial Revolution, that figures of all stripes—academic, literary, and otherwise—often took it for granted. To take a well-known example, Shakespeare hailed from a Stratford community that was thoroughly rural and agricultural, and the fields outside sixteenth century London were never more than a stroll away—yet his characters and plots rarely focus on this agricultural context explicitly. Wendell Berry posits that until the Romantic poets of the nineteenth century, when the effects of Industrialism upon the human psyche began to manifest themselves, that

Western scholars and poets alike had taken for granted that man was part nature, a part and not separate from it.<sup>64</sup> He therefore participated in a relatively innocent relationship with nature and did not much think of looking *at* it. This is a significant contention, and makes the Industrial Revolution the tipping point and the mindset behind it as what tipped it. But unfortunately the mindset behind Industrialism is a complex subject. Once again section D) will attempt to tackle this issue.

Here, to avoid a tedious compendium of the numerous studies, a summary of post-War English language scholarship on Hesiod will take a thematic approach.<sup>65</sup>

In post-War English language scholarship in general, there has been more attention given to Hesiod's actual living environment (social, political, environmental)—as opposed to the poem as literature or philological sample. This is a helpful trend that gives background and substance to what distinguishes small freeholding farmers.

On the one hand, a previous consensus founded on a 1957 article by Édouard Will, had been that Hesiod represented the voice of small independent farmers in Boeotia homologous to those in nearby Attica.<sup>66</sup> We have more information about the existence and nature of this group in Attica from the surviving legislation of Solon and the larger literary corpus that formed in Athens and has survived. More recently, Hanson has reasserted with Wills that Hesiod bears similarities to the Attica of the time of Solon. He emphasizes that the revised Athenian constitution and laws for which Solon was known, the “*patrios politeia*”, was recalled in later Athenian history as the great political achievement of yeomanry, which some contrasted with later Athenian “radical democracy” that had done away with tying citizenship to land ownership.<sup>67</sup>

On the other hand, other recent scholarship has departed from Will, jettisoned Solon, and argued that Hesiod lived more or less independent of the city-state. This is primarily the view of

Paul Millett, whom others have followed.<sup>68</sup> For example, Anthony T. Edwards in *Hesiod's Askra* (2004) is of the opinion that the poem speaks more about the dynamics between the countryside and Hesiod's village (Askra) than the countryside and the Boeotian city-state,<sup>69</sup> and that *Works and Days* looks back to the Dark Age and its modes of social organization more than it looks ahead to the Archaic period and the modes of the emerging polis system.<sup>70</sup> This would put him at odds with Fränkel and Hanson and align him more with the judgment of Jaeger on this point. He argues that the poem does not cohere with the social institutions so far offered to explain it.<sup>71</sup>

So the view of Will and Hanson in regard to Hesiod would see his situation as bearing similarities to the economic, political, and social system of a city-state paradigm, such as Athens, about which we know quite a bit from other sources. The Greek city-states obviously differed from city to city—politically some being more democratic and some more oligarchic or tyrannical—but this view would emphasize commonalities such as the concepts of citizenship, constitutional government, citizen armies, the rule of law, and the presence of yeomen between Boeotia and Attica. Hanson for his part goes further, seeing social similarities between Boeotia and other Greek city-states besides Athens, such as Megara during the time of the aristocratic poet Theognis (c.550 BC).<sup>72</sup> So Hanson argues that Hesiod is an example of a broader, Pan-Hellenic phenomenon. However, we again must keep in mind that even Hanson does not argue that Hesiod represents all of Greece, but rather that he represents one camp that existed throughout Greece. For a Marxist reading of *Works and Days* see the attached note.<sup>73</sup>

Hanson is a Classicist at California State University, Fresno, who has ruffled feathers in the Classics community for his work on early Greece. As a broad characterization he does not attempt to make his work objective historical writing, but argues his points strongly, at times vituperatively, appealing more to the philosophy that the Classics should be made more

accessible to the general population. However, he also consistently exhibits a litany of references to primary sources. He argues that Classicists and educators in general must teach youth the fundamentals of Western civilization, and that the lessons and values of the Greek and Roman history still inform current issues. This approach—as well as some blatant excesses in other areas—has caused many Classicists to discard his opinions.<sup>74</sup>

In his work Hanson consistently exalts the role of the Greek “yeoman”, with the following statement being indicative: “...the historical background of Greece, especially its democratic background, is best understood as the result of widespread Agrarianism among the rural folk who were the dynamos from which the juice of Hellenic civilization flowed.”<sup>75</sup> And there are many such statements in his work. Underlying this specific exaltation is a deep respect if not idealization of the Archaic Greeks (who he calls “polis Greeks”) as having been as close as the civilized world has ever got to the ideal of political and economic freedom.

So this thesis obviously runs parallel to Hanson in significant respects. However, he does not make enough of an attempt to make his work objective history, and so this thesis demurs in its overall assessment of him, while still retaining that there is worth in Hanson and that it lies in his popularizing agenda and his consistent references to primary sources. He goes too far in overlooking the deficiencies of Greek civilization (i.e. slavery, the marginalizing of women), and his style diverts attention from the validity of much of the content—but his research remains sound, and these other aspects should not overshadow the need for his type of insertion of classical history and ideas into debate surrounding current issues.

One point of contention in post-War scholarship is what label to give Hesiod. On the one end of the scale, Alfonso Mele (1979) sees Hesiod as an aristocrat,<sup>76</sup> although this is certainly a peripheral view. Chester Starr (1977, 125-127) calls him a “semi-aristocrat”.<sup>77</sup> Getting progressively more towards the middle, Ian Morris expresses probably the most dominant view

in Hesiod scholarship and calls Hesiod, “the middling man incarnate... *Works and Days* is the oldest example of a peculiarly central Greek conception of the good society as a community of middling farmers.”<sup>78</sup> Morris is a prominent twenty-first century scholar, and that he too sees the middling farmer as a peculiarly Greek conception lends further credence to the assertions of this thesis, although here the parallel is also drawn with the early Hebrew conception. Edwards, while not agreeing totally with such a view, concedes: “*Works and Days*, in fact, provides perhaps the clearest articulation in ancient Greek literature of what I elsewhere term the voice of the *agros*, the expression of the values and experiences of the rural population.”<sup>79</sup> Victor Davis Hanson uses the English term yeoman interchangeably with the Greek term “georgos” (see also Appendix C).<sup>80</sup> Tandy and Neal for their part represent the usage within the social sciences of the term “peasantry”;<sup>81</sup> they cite Robert Redfield (1953, p.31) and Paul Millett (1984, p.107) as having preceded them in the choice of this label. Thus we have “semi-aristocrat”, “middling man”, “yeoman”, “georgos”, and “peasant”—all used in post-War English language scholarship.

Although Tandy and Neal’s term is accepted within the social sciences, their choice of the term “peasant” is still hard to swallow. The term “peasant” has connections to the Middle Ages and Feudalism, which differ from the Archaic Greek social, economic, and political structure in significant ways. Although peasants were the ones working the land in the Middle Ages, they very rarely owned land themselves.<sup>82</sup> Hesiod on the other hand owned his own plot. Secondly, class distinction in the Feudal system was a pyramid with God at the top, the king, the Feudal lords, and all the way down to the peasant. The class structure in Attica (on which we are forced to rely because of the information we have on it) differed from the Medieval in that the class distinctions were tied to wealth, and not a divinely instituted hierarchy.<sup>83</sup> Attica from the time of the Cleisthenian reforms was divided into four classes;<sup>84</sup> and these distinctions were based on the amount of agricultural produce the individual citizen in question could produce off

of his privately owned land (except the  $\theta\eta\tau\epsilon\sigma$  who did not own land).<sup>85</sup> The Attic classification allows exact placement in one class or the other, and shows how closely associated the Attic legal and political system originally was to owning and farming land. So in academic discourse, if a scholar is going to apply an English title to Hesiod, this thesis suggests “yeoman” in preference to “peasant” because the former in English carries the attribute of a farmer who owns his own land; if not “yeoman”, then this thesis suggest going directly (as does Hanson) to γεωργός.<sup>86</sup> In non-academic forums, the best term is probably “small-farmer”, or possibly “yeoman” in certain situations. However, it is a sign of the times that the *American Heritage Dictionary* (2001) defines “yeoman” as “a member of a *former* class of small freeholding farmers in England.” This shows that if scholars do not revive this word or popularize another then the idea will cease to circulate or at least go into hibernation in the cultural contexts of English-speaking countries.

In conclusion, Hanson is only one voice amongst many, albeit a loud one. The scholarship on Hesiod, although not as voluminous as on Homer, is still a formidable body of material to cover. This thesis has tried to pick out some that applies here.



### **3) THE BOOK OF PROVERBS**

There is more scholarship on Greek Agrarianism than the Hebrew. The main reason for this is most likely because religion seems easily to become separated from the economic side of life. Among others the next section will delve into this subject.

See Appendix D for a study of the Septuagint translation of the agricultural verses in Proverbs.<sup>87</sup>

#### **A) History**

An overview of the geography and history of the ancient Levant from the period of the settling of the Israelites in the land to the time of King Solomon, is necessary to provide the context of Hebrew Agrarianism and the book of Proverbs in particular.

The geography of the Levant is dry Mediterranean uplands, hills and a few peaks of higher mountains in Lebanon. Ancient Israel itself was mostly the hill regions, an interspersed of grassland and forested areas at higher elevations (see Maps). Such hills hold a wide range of climates and plant species in an accordion-like fashion. This encourages diversity in the domestication of plants and “transhumance” in the domestication of animals (the practice of moving livestock to different summer and winter pasture).<sup>88</sup> This made possible by “Humbolt’s law”, which states that climbing a one-hundred metre hill yields roughly the same drop in temperature as trekking one-hundred and ten miles (or one degree latitude) from the equator.<sup>89</sup> One scholar calls the original native plant mix in this geography as a “smorgasbord”.<sup>90</sup> All in all the conditions of the Levant uplands made it the ideal setting for domestication of plants and animals, and small-scale subsistence farming.<sup>91</sup>

The early periods of Hebrew history are as follows: the Tribal Period (c.1300-1200 BC), which is the period of the conquest of Canaan (although some scholars place this as much as a

century later); the Period of the Judges (c.1200-1030 BC); and the United Kingdom of Israel (c.1020-930 BC), which begins with the rule of King Saul, extends through the reign of King David, and ends after that of King Solomon.<sup>92</sup>

Scholarship is not conclusive in regard to these dates, but the first archaeological evidence of the people of Israel in the Levant is found on the Egyptian “Merneptah Stele”, which is a record of a military campaign in the region by Pharaoh Merneptah (1224–1204).<sup>93</sup> One scholar says that around 1100 BC the Israelites were still playing the role of “pioneers” in the hills of Judea and Samaria.<sup>94</sup> The presence of this pioneering stage forms one similarity of the period that formed Proverbs to that which preceded Hesiod.

Evan Eisenberg has written an important essay for this subject entitled, “The Ecology of Eden”, in the Harvard collection *Judaism and Ecology*.<sup>95</sup>

The essay firstly discusses the Hebrew and Near Eastern conception of the Garden of Eden. Eisenberg remarks that Eden from Ezekiel to Milton was considered an elevated region.<sup>96</sup> He notes that Genesis refers to it as the *source* of four rivers (Gen. 2.10). He then lays out the view of the early Hebrews regarding wilderness, noting that the Hebrew *gan* translates as “vegetable garden” or “fruit orchard”, and that a cognate is *gan’elohim* “the garden of God”, which was the Hebrew word to refer to the wooded mountains.<sup>97</sup>

So this view sees places of wilderness as God’s garden, and indicates that the Hebrews had a conception of realms: of a realm primarily for God, and one primarily for humans. That this was connected to agriculture comes out in the term “garden.” This moves one to the conclusion that the Hebrews saw God’s realm as being the wilderness, where cultivation was not possible, and humanity’s realm as being in those places where it was. This constitutes a fundamental aspect of the early Hebrew view of nature.

Eisenberg also brings to light the role and influence of the Canaanites in Israel's history and relation to their environment. Eisenberg holds that the Canaanites were the first farmers of the Mediterranean basin, and developed many of the agricultural methods that farmers there still use today.<sup>98</sup> He states that wheat and barley were originally domesticated in the Near Eastern highlands and only later transplanted to Mesopotamia.<sup>99</sup> He goes on to say that the Israelites were in fact resettling a Canaan that had experienced depopulation during four centuries of previous Egyptian "rule".<sup>100</sup>

Taking his assertions in hand, this thesis agrees with Eisenberg in that the Canaanites were not a negligible influence on the nation of Israel. That the Israelites were apparently able to conquer pre-established towns and cities indicates that the Canaanites were in at least military decline. But as the book of Joshua relates in notably specific geographic detail, the Israelites took over the infrastructure of the Canaanite towns and cities.<sup>101</sup> So it is logical to suggest that they adopted certain of the Canaanite agricultural practices. Also, the influence of Canaanite religion on the Hebrews is one of the recurrent themes of the Old Testament—however, in the religious and social spheres at least the textual evidence argues that the Israelites also arrived there with strong beliefs of their own.

Most scholars agree that the compilation of the book of Proverbs at least began during the reign of Solomon (c.965-931), as the book states (Prov. 1.1)—but the book's values and ethic did not pop up all of a sudden. They came primarily from the period in between the original conquest of the Canaanites and the United Kingdom Period.

This is the Period of the Judges, the period that stands out as that of Hebrew Agrarianism in its purist form. This was the nation of Israel's formative period that led up to the apex of its political consolidation and power in the region during the United Kingdom Period. The information on it comes to us primarily in the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, the sections of

the historical books (I & II Samuel, I & II Kings, and I & II Chronicles) and also from archaeology.

During the Judges period, the nation of Israel functioned for approximately two hundred years without centralized religious or political authority. It was a decentralized Agrarian society. This system appears to have been the result of the implementation of prescriptions laid out in the Torah. Looking at it, it is clear that the Law lays out not only a religious and political system, but also a prescription for an economic system.

The main chapter for this economic information is Leviticus 25. According to the prescriptions that this chapter lays out, every Israelite family was to own agricultural property (25.13). The land was to be divided up among the individual families of the twelve tribes, and although it could be sold, it had to revert to the ancestral owner every fifty years, during the Jubilee year (25.14). So no one could sell land permanently, let alone speculate on it, meaning that this system of property ownership amounts essentially to one of long-term lease (fifty years). The central ideas are repeated throughout the chapter as if to leave no doubt about what is being prescribed: “When the years are many, you are to increase the price, and when the years are few, you are to decrease the price, because what he is really selling you is the number of crops” (25.16). Even property within a city is subject to a variation of this extremely rooted theory of property ownership (25.29-31). This chapter also lays out contingencies relating to an Israelite who falls into poverty, lending money, and slavery (25.35-54).

But one of the most important verses in the chapter and arguably in the entire Bible with regards to property-ownership and human economic activity—and therefore the relationship of man to the natural world—is the following:

The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants. Throughout the country that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land. (Leviticus 25.23-24) <sup>102</sup>

The implications of this verse for Jews and Christians in the areas of environmental and economic theory, particularly with respect to property-ownership and land use are staggering. Given what became the norm in the settling of the New World, and in post-War commercial, industrial, and suburban development, it fairly defies description. This verse deserves more commentary from clerics, and biblical and eco-critical scholars.

The second sentence refers to the concept of “redemption”. This concept sounds strange to modern ears, and a detailed study of the other references provided here (see note) would clarify its true meaning, but apparently it means reverting something to an original state (25.29-30).<sup>103</sup> Further explanation of it here defers to biblical commentaries.

The system of the division of the land indicates that the unit of ownership having held title was the “household” and not the individual. In the Jubilee year, each individual Hebrew was to physically return to the “family property” of his own clan (25.10). The word for “household” is *bet av*; which consisted of a group of around ten to thirty people led by a patriarch living in a cluster of stone or mud-brick dwelling.<sup>104</sup> The word *mishpahak* referred to a more extended family, or clan, that might take the form of a village.<sup>105</sup>

Eisenberg says, “In contrast to the plantations that sprawled across the great river valleys of the Near East, the hills nurtured a world of small holdings, painstakingly husbanded.”<sup>106</sup>

Elsewhere he writes,

The more we know about the Israelites, the clearer it is that they were Canaanite hill farmers who practiced a sophisticated and fairly sustainable mixed husbandry of grains, vines, livestock, and trees yielding fruit, nuts, and oil. They were neither desert nomads mistrustful of nature, nor proud hydraulic despots lording it over nature. They were good farmers living frugally on the margins and using the best stewardship they knew...They were not so different from present-day farmers of the Andes or of Szechwan...<sup>107</sup>

This comparison to South America and China might only be justified if Eisenberg were to first mention the more forthcoming comparison that he refers to next. But he does continue, and alludes to the central comparison that this thesis argues outright, and which will be developed fully in the final section entitled D) Implications—that there were similarities between the ancient Israelites and the other farmers in the Mediterranean climate-zone. Eisenberg goes on: “They were not so different, perhaps, from other peasants of the Mediterranean basin, past and present.”<sup>108</sup> This thesis argues that they shared most with the Archaic Greeks in particular.

Eisenberg in his essay takes property ownership one step further, and makes it the defining characteristic of two types of worldviews and two types of civilizations: those composed of small-scale, relatively self-sufficient units practicing mixed husbandry, and those of large-scale, irrigated operations and large government bureaucracies.<sup>109</sup>

As the length of the discussion here shows, this thesis agrees with this. The system of property ownership a society institutes has widespread social ramifications, and is a fundamental and determining element of political and economic organization. And it has significant environmental implications as well because it sets out the way a society divides up and uses its land. How theories and systems of property ownership affect environmental stewardship is an important issue in modern environmental dialogue.

When it comes to their system of property ownership and economic organization it is important to note that the Hebrews in other respects, i.e. religion, historical consciousness, were very conscious that they were different. Specifically they consistently maintained that their latter, independent situation was different from their former Egyptian one. Keeping this in mind, it would not be out of character for the Israelites to have been conscious of the economic elements of this, and to have strongly associated their own decentralized political and economic system of

small-scale, independent agriculture with their overall identity. The Old Testament elsewhere gives us evidence to confirm this.

For example, after several hundred years of this decentralized society, when the Hebrew people first came to the prophet Samuel, the last of the Judges, for an alteration of the original structure, and asked him for a king, it was apparently a very grave matter:

...this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord told him: 'Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are now doing to you. Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do. (I Samuel 8.9).

So God actually calls Himself the “king” of this libertarian society. The “gods” here must be symbolic for the political structure of the surrounding nations, or political centralization in general. His answer is: let them have it and see where it gets them. Freedom—that is, the political and economic autonomy possible within the household-based structure of their Agrarian society—will be seriously diminished. Thus in his response Samuel projects a weakening of their independent, free, Agrarian society:

This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with this chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plough his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give to his attendants. He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. Your menservants and maidservants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you in that day. (I Samuel 8.11-18).

Several points deserve noting in this passage. First of all it stands out that Samuel associates this change with slavery. He says, “and you yourselves will become his slaves.” This sounds strong to twenty-first century ears when we consider the incursions he has just described. And yet Samuel was a member of an ancient society that was much more familiar with slavery than our own. So he would have known what he was evoking, and as a Jew in particular would have been hyper-sensitive to the subject of slavery. This verse shows that the Hebrews of the Judges period considered slavery to be not solely a legal distinction, and in general shows a sensitivity to issues of slavery.

Secondly, we should note the close association of economic and political elements in this structure. In an agricultural economy, if you have land ownership split up to a great extent and do not allow accumulation of property it discourages the concentration of economic power; in an industrial economy, the same applies for property (including capital) of any type. And with the ownership of property and businesses decentralized in as many hands as possible, it is more likely that individuals will be relatively more self-sufficient and in less need of outside entities. But when economic power becomes concentrated in either large estates or corporations, the self-sufficiency of individuals is diminished, tying them to someone or something that will look after them when times get tough, usually the state, which means the centralization of political power.<sup>110</sup>

This passage therefore confirms that the Hebrews originally believed that economic decentralization mitigates despotism and totalitarianism.

This leads us into the historical period in which the compilation of the book of Proverbs began, which is generally agreed upon to have been around the time of Solomon (c.970-930 BC).<sup>111</sup>



A brief discussion on the social roles of those who influenced the composition of Proverbs puts these characters in relief to the historical background of this period and brings out some needed detail. By the time of Solomon, only a generation removed from Samuel, there were three classes of teachers that had developed in Hebrew society: the priests, the prophets, and the counsel of the elders (Ezekiel 7.26).<sup>112</sup> The priest were to adhere and make the people adhere to the Law, which regulated many social, religious, and economic aspects of Hebrew society; the prophets spoke (unlike either of the two other groups) with the phrase “thus saith the Lord”; and the council of the elders or wise imparted council on secular affairs.<sup>113</sup> Whatever educated influence was exercised over the compilation and re-working of Proverbs that we have bears the mark of this last group. However, the validity of the elders’ wisdom derived from harmonization with the Torah and the word of the prophets.<sup>114</sup> These elders filled the important role of translating the Law and the prophets into more everyday situations—and vice versa of translating down to earth wisdom into a more literary form. For this reason they were an essential link to youth,<sup>115</sup> and the book of Proverbs evidences a thematic emphasis on instructing especially young men on how to pass through the trials of young adulthood and learn to live a wise and prudent life.<sup>116</sup>

The nation of Israel split soon after the reign of Solomon into northern and southern segments, Israel and Judah, the northern part being dispersed by the Assyrians around 730 BC, and the southern not until around 586 BC by the Babylonians. The literature having come to us from their periods of dispersal points to a melancholic longing for Jerusalem, and shows that by that time the Jews held a special affection for that city, and that their religion was very much associated with it by this time (i.e. Psalm 137). But they were apparently still conscious of the original decentralized Agrarian structure their old society as well (i.e. see the agricultural language applied to Israel in Psalm 80). An eco-critical reading of the books of Ezra and

Nehemiah would give more clues in this respect, and to what extent the exile diminished the original Agrarian identity.<sup>117</sup>

When the Romans dispersed the Jews were for the last time in the first century AD, their religion was by necessity removed for the last time (until the twentieth-century) from the context that gave much of it expression and meaning. It would be like having transported tribes of North American plains Indians, like the Comanche or Blackfoot, to the lush fields of France or England—much of their religion would not have been able to express itself, it would have lost its context and therefore much of its literal meaning.

The thesis will now move to the text of Proverbs, which holds much on these subjects.<sup>118</sup>

### **B) Text**

The Hebrew word for proverb is *mishlë*, found in several contexts outside of Proverbs. In Job 13.12, and Ecclesiastes 12.9. it means something along the lines of our “maxim” or “proverb”, but in Job 27.1 and 29.1 it means something like “discourse.”

The sections of Proverbs divide up as follows: section I “Prologue” (1.1-7), II “The Superiority of the Way of Wisdom” (1.8-9.18), III “The Proverbs of Solomon” (10.1-22.16), “Sayings of the Wise” IV (22.17-24-34), V “More Proverbs of Solomon” (25.1-29.27), VI “The Words of Agur and Lemuel” (30.1-31.9), and VII being an epilogue on a wife of noble character (31.10-31). But these section titles come from the editors of the NIV and do not do justice to the complexity within each section.<sup>119</sup>

There are several impressions that are likely to strike the modern reader of Proverbs: the practical, applicable nature of the advice, the direct and simplistic nature of the form, the poetic rendering of many of the ideas—as well as the prominence of agricultural terms and situations. Besides the frequency of proverbs relating actual agricultural situations we also find agricultural

language even in proverbs dealing with royalty or the wealthy. A king “winnows out all evil with his eyes” (20.8), and he again “winnows out the wicked; he drives the threshing wheel over them” (20.26). This is not saying that the king was out threshing on a personal threshing floor, but it is saying that the agricultural language of the people penetrated even to the urban circles of the educated. The question that this kind of Agrarian analysis will attempt to raise is to what extent not only rural language but rural values permeated the entire culture.

The Hebrew proverb bears a distinct parallel structure. The question here is less whether this represents a mnemonic device (it almost certainly does), but rather to what extent it reveals the way the ancient Hebrew mind saw reality. It is tempting to say that this demonstrates a mind that always saw things as either/or, right and wrong, good and bad. But a deeper analysis reveals otherwise, and shows that while certain proverbs demonstrate this, many others demonstrate more nuance and pragmatism than simple moral dualism.

First of all, the parallelism can take several forms: it can take the form of a) the same idea expressed in two slightly different ways, as in, “An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins (29.22)”;<sup>120</sup> it can take the form of b) comparison, as in, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another (27.17)”;<sup>121</sup> or it can take the form of c) contrast, as in “Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully (28.5)”. Only this last evidences moral dualism, and so the overall way of looking at life is more saying that while certain situations are more clear-cut, many are more complex.<sup>122</sup>

The language of Proverbs shows a mixture of agricultural and demotic influences on the one hand, and the poetic touch of urban and educated hands on the other—but the book is also composed of different collections, and is divided into distinct sections, with the Agrarian nature of Hebrew society represented more repetitively in some sections than others.<sup>123</sup> Whybray asserts that the differences between the sections are related to the different social states of the

speakers;<sup>124</sup> but he also says that although it is undisputable that sections IV and V for example originated as two different collections, there is still a remarkable consistency of viewpoint.<sup>125</sup> By way of suggestion, because agricultural situations and language do run throughout the book, it seems plausible that the values and ethic of the proverbs came from the people, and the form of expression from educated urban editors—although this thesis should be reticent to disregard Whybray.<sup>126</sup>

The language also bears the marks of the Hebrew conception of the relationship between man and the Divine. So for example, wisdom or morality is expressed as “the fear of the Lord” (1.7, 9.10, 31.30), and conversely the vicious person characterized as “an abomination to the Lord” (3.32, 6.16, 11.1). This is the language of Judaism.<sup>127</sup> Whybray says “the fear of the Lord” means, “obedience to the will of God made known through the religion of Israel.”<sup>128</sup> But while this may be a strict definition of the phrase, he passes over a verse that clarifies it in more broad terms: “To fear the Lord is to hate evil;...” (8.13).

In any case, the modes of expression in Proverbs are Hebrew, but they are addressed to a more universal audience than the Law.<sup>129</sup> The word “Israel” for example does not occur once in the book of Proverbs, whereas the word for “man”, *adam*, occurs thirty-three times.<sup>130</sup> Even today Proverbs would probably resonate more with non-Jews than other books in the Old Testament. However, the universality could be a characteristic that most or all proverbs share. Also one must also not rule out that this could be evidence of how the Hebrews editors gave a nod to a larger, pre-existing Near Eastern tradition of proverbs and wisdom literature..<sup>131</sup>

A thematic reference system across the sections shows the prominence of certain themes, and gives us a better idea of the most frequent topics. In the count of this thesis, there are twelve passages that refer directly to agricultural situations.<sup>132</sup> There are five passages specifically referring to hunger.<sup>133</sup> There are seven passages that refer directly to work.<sup>134</sup> There are fifteen

passages that deal explicitly with neighbors.<sup>135</sup> And there are twenty passages referring directly to wealth and poverty, the most of any single theme.<sup>136</sup> But it is difficult to decide which proverbs deserve inclusion in a particular list, because verses not referring explicitly to the presence of these social and economic situations may be using related language, or indirectly referring to other situations.<sup>137</sup>

Whybray gives the following more inclusive counts: 120 of 513 verses refer to wealth, a comfortable existence, or positions of power and influence;<sup>138</sup> 103 out of 513 refer to a person being brought low by total disaster.<sup>139</sup> Just from these numbers we can see the social and economic reality of Hebrew society coming into focus. Life was a precarious agricultural struggle for subsistence, where wealth came slowly and was valued, and where hard work and good neighbors held real-life consequences. This evokes the environmental and social context of *Works and Days*.

Cohen calls the book's first major section, section II (1.8-9.18), a "preface", characterizing it as "a discourse on fundamentals".<sup>140</sup> The thrust of the message given here (from a father to his son) is more on the danger of moral folly and benefits of wisdom, and compared to the other sections agriculture does not hold a prominent place in it. However, there is the important point that the young man the father is addressing is apparently a farmer. Proverbs 3. 9-10 reads, "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."<sup>141</sup> However, some scholars assert that this passage is wholly metaphorical, and that what we are dealing with here is an elderly Hebrew sage who is addressing a young aristocrat destined for a career in some official office.<sup>142</sup> In any case, the possibility at least exists for a literal interpretation. What is more certain, is that although work is not as conspicuous here as in other sections, 6.6-11 is perhaps the most representative and lengthy reference to the subject:

Go to the ant, you sluggard, consider her ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man. (Prov. 6.6-11)

If this does not sound like Hesiod then what does? The valuing of a hard work ethic, the independence, the fear of poverty—all of these were alive and well in Greek culture during the Archaic period. In any case, of particular note in this passage is the reference to the ant having no overseer or ruler, which is commending the practices of an independent farmer over a situation where there are overseers and the overseen. So while agriculture and work are not as proportionately dominant in this section, these passages show us the broader context to which the advice speaks.

Section III (10.1-22.16), which Cohen refers to the “main section of the book” contains proverbs strictly defined. The proverbs up to 15.20 evidence only examples of the third form, which contrast something positive with something negative; this shows that someone edited the collection. For the rest of the section each verse deals with one topic, paralleling in the various ways, although some verses do intermingle topics.

Sections IV (22.17-24.34) and V (25.1-29.27) give a prominent place to royal subjects, but agricultural language and particularly the subject of neighbors are still much in evidence.

Section VI (30.1-31.9) is a short section that has experienced much textual corruption.<sup>143</sup> This is not surprising in a book that has undergone much editing. 30.1 states that these words are the provenance of one Agur, who Whybray says may have been of north Arabian tribal origin.<sup>144</sup> In any case, the section is noteworthy for this study primarily for a passage articulating an eloquent espousal of middle class virtues:

Two things I ask of you, O Lord; do not refuse me before I die: keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you, and say, “Who is the Lord?” Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God. (Prov. 30.7-9)

In relation to this thesis this passage speaks for itself.

Social justice also plays a conspicuous role in the book of Proverbs. The primary area that this comes out in is the repeated references to the rich taking advantage of the poor. We also saw this in Hesiod’s fable. Specifically, widows, orphans, and aliens did not possess full civil rights in Israelite society, and therefore were open to exploitation.<sup>145</sup> Proverbs 15.25 however refers to a widow owning land.

The Hebrew word for “work ethic” is *harûs*, which personified Whybray translates as “a hardworking person”. The word occurs in no other book in the Old Testament, but five times in the book of Proverbs.<sup>146</sup> According to Whybray, other verses that express this sentiment refer explicitly to agricultural labourers (15.19, 20.13), and he gives two examples of proverbs that when read in translation do not communicate the agricultural context, but do in the Hebrew: “The way of the sluggard is blocked with thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway” (15.19); and “Do not love sleep or you will grow poor; stay awake and you will have bread to spare” (20.13).

Once again, despite the fact that the different sections show themselves to have originally been different collections, they share commonalities. This can be seen in instances where a similar take on a concept is found in different sections: i.e. the mocker (9.7-9 & 23.9); the quarrelsome wife (21.9 & 25.24); adultery (7.1-27 & 23.26-28). And this is the case with agriculture as well (6-6-11, 24.30-34, 31.16). These instances would again argue that the rural and urban elements of ancient Hebrew society were in close contact and shared a common practical and sensible ethic, and that given the preponderance of the rural population, that this

ethic was Agrarian and rural. We also saw this urban knowledge of rural situations and values in Homer.

Proverbs evidences a preoccupation with adultery and other moral red herrings quite divorced from practical agricultural or other quotidian advice (see 5.1-14, & 6.20-7.27). This is evidence of a particularly Hebrew emphasis, perhaps due to the presence of the Law and its stiff penalties (death) for such offences (Leviticus 20.10). But it must be said that the book's view of women does not tend in the direction of misogyny, as does *Works and Days*. For example, wisdom in Proverbs is personified as a woman.<sup>147</sup> Also, the final section (VII) of the book, which is a sort of epilogue, states in a structural way what its first verse says outright: "A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies..." (31.10).<sup>148</sup> This sums up the attainment of wisdom, the injunction with which the book opened, with enjoining attention to women.

But what stands out most about this concluding passage is that the ideal woman is a full-fledged owner and manager of a farm: "She considers a field and buys it; out of her earning she plants a vineyard" (31.16). The mention of fields and vineyards portrays this as a diversified farm.<sup>149</sup> The only servants of which the passage speaks are the servant girls that the mistress of the household must take care of (31.15). This scenario, which puts the emphasis on the role of women in this situation, reinforces what the entire book of Proverbs communicates so clearly: that the society from which these proverbs originated was a predominantly rural society of small freeholders, or an Agrarian society.

### **C) Criticism**

For scholarship on Proverbs, Eisenberg paints a broad background by giving information on important Old Testament scholars and relating works of historiography and eco-criticism. To begin this section it is simplest to quote directly his essay:



In the first half of the twentieth century the German school of Alt and Noth predominated: this school denied the historicity of the Bible and spoke of gradual infiltration of Canaan by seminomadic tribes, which in time formed a loose confederation. About mid-century, a counterattack was led by William Foxwell Albright and the more radical Yehezkel Kaufmann, who propped up the patriarchal stories, and those of the conquest of Canaan, with shards and other evidence newly unearthed. In the last couple of decades the winds have shifted yet again, with William G. Dever, John van Seters, Norman K. Gottwalk, and George E. Mendenhall, among others, placing the Israelites more firmly in the a Canaanite context. (Mendenhall goes farthest, making the Israelites out to be downtrodden peasants of wholly native origin).<sup>150</sup>

See the following note for a list of other eco-critical studies and further information.<sup>151</sup>

The two main questions of interest to this thesis on which scholars of Proverbs weigh in to varying degrees are: 1) which social group the proverbs in Proverbs came from, and 2) whether they express an Agrarian philosophy and practice of daily life.

In respect to question 1), there apparently had been virtual consensus that Proverbs was the work solely of the upper classes. Again, as with Hesiod, the early scholarship was mostly German.<sup>152</sup> The main reasons for this assertion were due to the similarities of Proverbs to foreign (especially Egyptian) wisdom books whose backgrounds were royal courts,<sup>153</sup> and the attribution of the proverbs to Solomon (1.1, 10.1, 25.1; I Kings 4.32) and the “men of Hezekiah” (25.1).<sup>154</sup>

However, a few scholars had long questioned this. In 1927, a German scholar already argued for the existence of a “middling class” of landowners (the *gibbôrê hayil*) who formed the basis of economic as well as military life in the pre-exilic period, but who were distinct from the governing class and no less subject to their oppressive policies than certain small peasants.<sup>155</sup> And a pre-eminent German scholar, Gerhard von Rad—whose *Theologie des Alten Testament I* (1957) Whybray calls “magisterial”—argued that section III was the product of a rural middle class.<sup>156</sup>

A. Cohen, a Jewish scholar, in a 1946 commentary, noted that Proverbs appears to be beyond the purview of religion, and relates the experiences of everyday life.<sup>157</sup> But he clarifies this statement by saying that, “no sharp dividing line exists in Judaism between the secular and the religious.”<sup>158</sup> The same lack of division existed in Hesiod. He also clarifies the way in which the popular and educated influences combined to give us the proverbs as they are, saying that some of the proverbs were indeed folk sayings, but that they were not left in their original form and were elaborated into a poetical couplet for the purpose of heightening the force of the moral.<sup>159</sup> Cohen’s is a good commentary, and lays out important issues with relation to Proverbs in a clear and concise manner.

Taking into consideration all the criticism on the question of authorship, this (Cohen’s) is the conclusion most in line with the evidence. He does not deny the influence of educated persons in putting the sayings into the poetical form we now have, while acknowledging that the beliefs and ethic behind them came from the people.

Recent scholars are still split on question 1), although there seems to be more of a trend towards the conclusion of von Rad and Cohen. Obviously, if the proverbs show Egyptian or Mesopotamian influence, it is a blow to the contention of this thesis—that they bear the fingerprints of local small-scale agriculturalists. But that is apparently not the conclusion at which the majority of scholarship has eventually arrived.

R.N. Whybray is a scholar who has published several books on the book of Proverbs. He for his part seems to have changed his mind throughout the course of his academic career on this question (1). In his 1972 study he wrote, “It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that most of the sayings in Proverbs were literary creations whose authors had a high degree of education.”<sup>160</sup> As evidence, he cited 1) the number of proverbs (i.e. that they were too numerous to be all popular sayings), and 2) that they are written poetically and strive for effect.<sup>161</sup> He said this assessment

applies particularly to section II (ch.1-9), but also other sections.<sup>162</sup> At this point he was very strong on Proverbs being a product of educated circles heavily influenced by Egyptian precedents; he even said that the Hebrew practice of writing proverbs was transplanted from Egypt through Egyptian civil servants who helped Israel set up their national organization.<sup>163</sup> He ascribed its teachings “of more general interest” to the progressive enlargement of the educated class in Israel during the course of its history,<sup>164</sup> and concluded that Proverbs had been written in scribal circles similar to those of Egypt and Mesopotamia.<sup>165</sup> In his 1972 study Whybray did not give much attention a rural, Agrarian influence on the proverbs.

Taking this subject in hand, we know that the Hebrews were aware of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian wisdom traditions, and must have had some knowledge of their written works. I Kings 4:30-31 reads, “Solomon’s wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite—wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol...” But to say that the Hebrew practice of writing proverbs was transplanted from Egypt by Egyptian civil servants ignores the historical tension that existed between the Hebrews and Egyptians. References to the Hebrews in Egyptian records of any kind are noticeably sparse, and on the Hebrew side, the book of Judges does not mention the Egyptians once (except in reference to the Israelites having left there). Even after the change had been made toward centralization with the rise of the monarchical system at the outset of the United Kingdom period, there is no mention of Egypt in the historical books covering the period of the reigns of Saul and David (again except in reference to the past). In fact there is no contemporary reference to Egypt at all until the information on the reign of Solomon (I Kings 3.1). This is noteworthy. It argues that Egypt had a negligible influence on the philosophy behind, and the actual organization of the Hebrew’s political and economic system up to that later point.

But by 1990 Whybray apparently altered his opinion. In this study on wealth and poverty in Proverbs, he makes more of the distinctions between the sections, and opines that there is a different attitude between sections I, IV, and VII—and sections III and V; here he says sections III and V are more representative of the people's traditional attitudes, and the others a different (assumedly urban and educated) one.<sup>166</sup> Let us recall that section III (10.1-22.16) is the “main” section of Proverbs, that it is the largest section in which the typical parallel proverb is found, and that throughout the sections wealth and poverty were the most frequent subjects to which the proverbs refer. By this time Whybray apparently either changed his mind from his previous position or was simply putting more emphasis on the social and economic background instead of the composition or editing. In this study he concludes that,

Such evidence as is to be found here suggests that their settings are predominantly those of small farmers farming their own land (and perhaps, to some extent, of an urban proletariat). It is strongly implied that only constant hard work allied with common sense and a resistance to the temptation to fritter away one's substance on inessentials and self-indulgence can stave off the threat of poverty...<sup>167</sup>

Once again this sounds exactly like the setting and ethic in Hesiod. Whybray goes on:

While some of the warnings would no doubt constitute sound advice if offered to members of any social class, they would undoubtedly be far more relevant to the circumstances of the manual worker than of the relatively secure upper class.<sup>168</sup>

It is significant here—as it was emphasized with Hesiod—that Whybray sees manual labor as having been present. Here he is speaking specifically about section III. Whybray notes that Leviticus is addressed to a rural farming community.<sup>169</sup> This confirms the importance given the book in this thesis. He goes on to note the expression of middle-class attitudes in the passage 30.7-9,<sup>170</sup> and concludes, in contrast to his previous emphasis, that Proverbs is indeed the expression of a class of middling farmers.<sup>171</sup>

Whybray's reason for focusing here on this middling rural class is more because of his interest in class issues. His study touches on Agrarianism, but does not go all the way in focusing on how the effects of this rural mindset branched out into other areas.

So besides those few studies mentioned in Eisenberg's quote at the beginning of this section, there is not much eco-critical analysis that touches on Judges or Proverbs, and not enough on the Old Testament in general, especially Leviticus. More eco-critical analysis needs to be combined with what archaeological evidence there is for the pre-monarchic period to arrive at a consensus on the original environmental and economic philosophy of Judaism, and on what this thesis argues is the presence of Hebrew Agrarianism in the books covering the Judges period in particular.<sup>172</sup>

However, the teachings of the Judaic texts in regard to man's interaction with nature are primarily important to contemporary environmental debate because of their influence upon Christianity. This is not to disparage Judaism today, but to acknowledge that Christianity and the West are most implicated in the development of the modern world and the modern environmental crisis. Modern environmentalists are correct to smell something in Christianity that has soured the relationship between man and nature—but for the most part their attempts at getting to the bottom of it have been way off.

The reasons they have been way off will be looked at in the next section.

#### **4) IMPLICATIONS**

##### **A) Implications**

In the introduction to Harvard University Press's 2002 collection of essays on Judaism and ecology, editor Hava Tirosh-Samuelson implies that there has always been an acknowledgement among Jews of "the ancient agrarian past" and "the land-based rituals of Judaism".<sup>173</sup> This is quite the statement, and its implications are profound for both Judaism and Christianity—and thus twenty-first century environmental dialogue.

To say that the rituals of Judaism were originally "land-based" is to say, while not diminishing the role of ideas, or the written word in preserving and promulgating these ideas, that there was to be a practical expression of them carried out in an agricultural context. The Hebrew religion was not abstract, but practical and Agrarian.

Most of the attention, in mainstream Protestantism at least, has tended to exalt the role of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple as central to Old Testament Judaism.<sup>174</sup> But this may have obscured the primarily rural, Agrarian nature of Hebrew society and religion. The evidence in the Torah argues that the rituals of Judaism were originally proscribed with apparently little thought of a central urban focal-point. There is no injunction in the Law for such an organization, and the evidence from the other applicable Old Testament books indicates that for Israel's formative period Judaism originally functioned without such a centre. The city of Jerusalem did not rise to prominence in Israel's religious or political life until the reign of King David (c.1010-970 BC), circa three centuries after the Law and the entrance of the Israelites into the Levant during the Tribal Period (c.1300-1200)—and in fact Jerusalem was not even primarily occupied by Jews before this later period.<sup>175</sup> The Temple for its part was not built until the reign of David's son Solomon (c.970-930). Therefore Christianity has perhaps always ascribed too

much importance to the city and not enough to the decentralized, rural nature of the Jewish religion in its original and formative stage. For approximately two hundred years, Hebrew religious, political, and economic organization was amazingly rural and decentralized—representing a remarkably Agrarian society.

The textual evidence for this lies in the prescriptions for the Hebrew religious, political, and economic system in the Torah, in the accounts and stories of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and parts of the historical books, and in the broad social evidence in the book of Proverbs. These, with an emphasis on the last instance, have been detailed in this thesis.

But there is one other textual reference that this thesis must draw attention to. It must because it reinforces the Agrarian philosophy of Leviticus and casts the book of Proverbs in its true light: that the proverbs are later historical proof that the Agrarian philosophy of the Torah was actually practiced. This is perhaps the central verse (besides those of Leviticus 25) on the Hebrew view of man's interaction with nature. Many laypeople know the words, spoken to Adam and Eve:

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Genesis 1.28)

The most common interpretation of the pivotal verb "to subdue"—which critics of Judaism and Christianity's view of nature have drawn attention to—implies a view of nature something to be controlled for human ends. And clearly the verse implies something along these lines. However, Wendell Berry has pointed out that scholars in the past have translated this verb in different ways. He notes that the Oxford Dictionary gives one of the definitions of "to subdue" as "to bring (land) under cultivation." And that in illustration of this meaning, the Oxford Dictionary

cites the Coverdale translation of this very verse in Genesis!<sup>176</sup> Berry also notes that this is how Pope understood this verse, which indicates that Coverdale was not an anomaly.<sup>177</sup>

But if this was at one time a camp in England or elsewhere it has long since faded in mainstream Christian academic and lay discourse. Modern Catholic exegesis of this verse has probably been more conscious of the Coverdale injunction than Protestant circles, although it would be interesting to see what Luther thought of it.<sup>178</sup> In the second half of the twentieth-century, there is apparently some scholarship on the verse,<sup>179</sup> although Berry's treatment of it is a rare example even within environmental or Christian circles. Nevertheless, this is a pivotal verse and merits scholarship as such.

To put land under cultivation is a significantly different injunction than subduing all of the elements and forces of nature to serve human ends. Agriculture can only be practiced on a small part of the earth's surface, it has limits, and it demands sustainability and nurture if it is to continue. And farmers of the tough Mediterranean highlands would have understood all the more clearly that these were the connotations that this commission implied. Furthermore, there are several other verses in Genesis that reiterate this agricultural injunction, and cement this as the correct translation. One is the verse two chapters later in which God sets up the new order after the Fall, and in which we see the same injunction to cultivate the earth (Gen. 3.17-19). But the more forthright is the verse that immediately follows the pivotal verse:

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. (Genesis 1.29)

These passages are astonishing in light of the evidence from Proverbs that proves the Hebrew view of nature was Agrarian, and not rapacious. There is no way that anyone can use faithfully



these agricultural injunctions to justify exploitation of nature. They constitute an at least textual argument against a characterization of the Judeo-Christian cultural tradition as inherently and irremediably inimical to the natural world.

However, this point has been hotly contested, and the thesis will now look at environmental criticism of Christianity and attempt to bring up certain points that may be helpful to environmental debate.

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Different modern writers and academics have come to the conclusion that elements within Christianity are the thorn that has caused the modern ecological infection. The most well-known is found in the essay by historian Lynn White Jr. entitled, “Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis”.<sup>180</sup> In this essay White Jr. censures Christianity for being what he sees as anthropocentric,<sup>181</sup> and its view of nature as having produced—and the order is important—the modern science and technology that have caused the crisis.<sup>182</sup>

This thesis thinks that White Jr. in his first assertion does not show the nuances that make up anthropocentrism, and therefore focuses on the wrong points, but in the second assertion has a better argument in need of only some qualification.

The first problem with White Jr.’s first point (not getting to Christianity yet) is that how is it possible for us not to be anthropocentric? Thinking takes place within our heads, and action through our bodies, and so it is impossible to conceive of a human worldview that is literally ex-anthropocentric. Even figuratively, to consider other life forms to be as central to life as human beings does not correspond to reality or logic. For example, if one *had* to make a choice between shooting a bear or a human, which would one choose? The point is proven even more so if the choice was between a gopher and a human etc... However, the American Heritage Dictionary defines “anthropocentric” as, “Interpreting reality in terms of human values and experience.” So

if what White Jr. is advocating is for man to attempt to be empathetic to other matter and life—to put himself in his context and act on the basis that nature is not there *just* to serve man—then his argument is reasonable and valid. But such a scenario is still anthropocentric. It is essentially a more balanced anthropocentrism—because we cannot escape anthropocentrism any more than we can our own souls and bodies. If the problem in environmental discourse is how to define the term “anthropocentrism”, then we should skip employing this word and keep focusing on more basic ones like greed, arrogance, and/or selfishness—because anthropocentrism is necessary for civil society.

The first concern of human beings living in settled community is to subsist and co-exist, and this calls for social, political, and economic organization. Furthermore, if a religion were not anthropocentric it would be irrelevant to much of human life such as personal relationships and one’s role in a community. It is therefore not a bad thing that a society or religion be anthropocentric as long as it maintains a proper view and place for other creatures and parts of nature. And these arguments apply to all civilized societies and their religions. So the issue with respect to anthropocentrism has more to do with civilization’s relations to nature than religion’s view of it.

And so if the “anthropocentric” argument against Christianity is the one under discussion, it gets into the subject of civilization being tied to agriculture as opposed to the impossibility of its existence in a state of wild nature. Old Testament Israel, as all settled societies, necessarily practiced agriculture and the domestication of animals, so it is understandable that there should be more focus on agriculture and shepherding in the Old and New Testaments. Old Testament Israel and New Testament Judea, like all mixed agricultural and bucolic economies, certainly did tend to see wild nature as the antagonist. And the same dynamic still exists today with ranchers in the Canadian and American West. But this only makes sense if a bear or lion is living around

the bend and remaining obstinate in the exercise of a predilection for eating members of your family or flock. It is only in an urbanized environment that a bear or lion can procure a more endearing reputation. This can stray, undoubtedly, into disrespecting and exterminating wild nature—but only if taken to the extreme. This thesis identifies the extreme as the incursion of habitat and the extinction of species; but this is not enjoined in the limited injunction of Genesis 1.28. What is urged there is to bring arable land under cultivation, and agriculture is only possible on a certain amount of an ecosystem's land. So unless a purposeful campaign of extermination is undertaken then there will always be a place in an agricultural society for wild nature. A germane ancient example of this is found in the presence of large carnivores—bears and lions— around Bethlehem in the time of David (I Samuel 17.36). And large carnivores are present in Israel throughout the Old Testament (I Kings 13.34; 20.36; II Kings 17.25).<sup>183</sup> That wild nature and agriculture can co-exist on those parts of an ecosystem's land to which each is suited was also the case in both Chinese and Indian civilizations until recent industrialization and commercialization. Otherwise the panda bear would have been extinct several millennia ago and English nobles would not have had any tigers to hunt. If humans will occupy themselves in their realm—then wild animals will survive just fine on their own.

But also, if anthropocentrism is necessary for civil society to function then ecology is absolutely necessary for civilization to continue. This is the realization that the Western world is coming to due to the present environmental situation and the hard-fought victories of the environmental movement. Clearly wild nature needs to be valued and protected—but the way to do that is to progress to an ecological economy.

So in summation of the argument here, the view of nature in the Old and New Testaments comes undoubtedly from the perspective of an agricultural society and is biased toward domesticated nature—but this thesis takes its cue from history and Wendell Berry and argues for

the compatibility of agriculture and ecology.<sup>184</sup> It also goes further and says that anthropocentrism and ecology are not mutually exclusive.

However, with modern technology thrust into agriculture and every sector of the economy, the doors of this paradigm are blown wide open, and an agricultural society is changed to the industrial so that these characterizations no longer apply.

But now let the discussion get to Christianity itself—which is the heart of the issue.

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And so, could it be that Christianity was heir to Judaism in more ways than the theological? That is, should the early Christian fathers have more consciously respected and perpetuated the practical, economic elements of the land-based religion of Judaism? The important thing to determine here is if Christianity does have an economic philosophy, and if it lies in the Agrarianism of original Judaism.

The dislocation of Judaism from its context was forced upon the Jews, but it seems that the new religion that claimed descent from the old did not pick up to a great extent on its Agrarian elements. And yet Jesus made the statement that he had come to fulfill the Law and the Prophets, and not to destroy them (Matthew 5.17). Does his statement apply to the prescriptions for economic organization in Leviticus chapter twenty-five? This is a very important question.

Christianity has always been weak in economic philosophy. The weakness may have been due to several reasons.

Firstly, Christianity has always had a shaky relationship with the Jews, whose religious leaders crucified Jesus and harried the early Jewish and Gentile converts to Christianity. But Christians more than returned the favor—and for pretty much the rest of the story the persecuting has been going the other way since the fourth century AD and the conversion of Constantine the Great. In any case, there has always been a parallel tension in Christian theology and teaching

as to what Christians were to do with the plethora of minutely specific laws in the Old Testament. It was the view of St. Paul, who had been a strict adherent to the Jewish code, that the Law had been there to point to the inability of human beings to be justified before God based on legalism (Romans 4) and that Jesus had ushered in a new era in which God lived within human beings through faith (Romans 9; Hebrews 10,11). Because of this, the Church has always held to not applying literally the instructions of the Torah—but, it has also always held that the God of the Old Testament is the God of the New, and that the essence, or philosophy of the Law is still in effect.

Jesus claimed that this essence was love, summed up in his “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7.12). However, many of the recorded statements of Jesus and St. Paul with respect to the Law have always caused particular perplexity among Christians. Jesus said, “Do not think I that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matthew 5.17-18). St. Paul reiterates this adamantly, “Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.” (Romans 3.31). He then goes on to advance how Abraham lived the essence of the Law, but he does not get into economics and does not mention Leviticus 25. So the Christian tension with regards to the Jews and uncertainty with respect to the Law may have caused the economic *essence* of the Law to have been forgotten or sidelined.

Secondly, Christianity may have been reluctant to exalt the economic elements of Judaism because of the early Church’s program to stamp out the vestiges of paganism, which was stronger in typically conservative, rural areas. Christianity was perforce more of an urban

religion in its early stages because the itinerant teachers that spread it, as in St. Paul, naturally went first to the synagogues and agorae of the urban centres; both the book of Acts and the Epistles (which are addressed to urban churches) are evidence of this. So it is not surprising that Christianity seems to have been reluctant to focus on the Agrarian elements of Judaism, and likewise not to have given a more prominent place to similar elements in the Greco-Roman tradition (i.e. Hesiod, Virgil's *Georgics* etc...).

Thirdly, the early Christians did not hold political power until the fourth century. Before that point, to have attempted to deal with the agricultural problems of the Roman Empire—which in Italy at least since the second century BC at the latest (i.e. the Gracchi) had seen an increasing dispossession of the original free yeomen land-holders in favor of larger estates and slave-labor—was probably seen as beyond their power, and they probably did not think of it as their purview. The early Church fathers were more focused on establishing the theological doctrine of the new religion, and perhaps did not think it possible to effect economic policy. When Constantine and later Christian Emperors rose to power, Judaism had been a religion divorced from its context for several hundred years, and the Judean context of the Gospels, let alone the Israel of the Judges Period, was long a thing of the distant past. It would have been all too easy to forget the importance of the decentralized Agrarian context to the original religion.

However—and this applies to all of these points—as was noted with regards to Shakespeare, there is also the explanation that because Jesus and St. Paul were members of an agricultural society, that they took for granted that the agricultural paradigm was the context in which all of their teachings were to be lived out. They obviously had no conception of the industrial/technological context, so we must put ourselves in their shoes and not assume a forthcoming emphasis on economic or technological issues.

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The previous section noted the knowledge and statements of Jesus and St. Paul with respect to the Law, and we have seen the outlook of the early Israelites—but what of their worldview and ethic's survival up to the life and times of Jesus and the Apostles?

In the background of everything that Jesus did as recorded in the gospels is the fact that Jesus lived and worked in a dominantly agricultural culture, and that the culture of Israel all throughout the Old Testament, from the time of Joshua on to the end of the minor prophets and all the way up to Jesus, was always a dominantly—and a consciously and purposefully—Agrarian culture. We see that the original economic infrastructure and philosophy was consciously continued throughout the centuries by evidence from numerous examples later on in the Old Testament. Agriculture is prominent in the book of Ruth, which relates a story from the Judges period. Around three hundred years later, the prophet Elisha is still portrayed plowing his own fields with his own oxen when Elijah comes to call him to be his successor (I Kings 19.20). And apparently the Jewish economic philosophy was still tied up with small independent farming even after the disturbances brought about by the Roman conquest of Judea. The continuance of the economic practice of the Jewish religion can be seen to have survived right up to the time of Jesus in the first century AD by his ubiquitous use of agricultural language and metaphors involving small scale privately owned land: the parable of the sower (Mark 4), the parable of the weeds (Matthew 13), the parable of the vineyard (Matthew 20) etc... We must recall that small-scale privately owned land has not been the norm in many civilizations and that even the Roman Empire (in Italy at least) by this time had seen major changes in agriculture and land ownership. This habit in the language of Jesus is most likely because he grew up in small-town Judea, but also because as a Jew he was familiar with the Old Testament. In any case, the Agrarian outlook is still in evidence.

The Jewish custom of having to have a trade also must be recalled here. It was customary that every respectable Jew had to teach his son a trade of some kind.<sup>185</sup> For example, even the erudite St. Paul saw no shame in working as a tent-maker (Acts 18.3). In a passage in which he writes about this explicitly he says, “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody (I Thessalonians 4:11).” This sounds like the work ethic of Proverbs, both in the way of working and self-sufficiency. Jesus worked as a carpenter, and most of the Apostles were fishermen. So with Jesus, the Apostles, and St. Paul all exhibiting this ethic there is enough evidence to identify this as the early Christian view with regards to physical work and the body. As we have seen, Hesiod too had no disdain for physical work, and was at the same time careful to act in a way that was in accordance with respect for the gods and nature.

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However, there is still no doubt that the current environmental malaise has come through the West, through something in Western European man’s view of nature, and his interaction with it. And the history of Western civilization since the fall of the Roman Empire has been inextricably intertwined with Christianity—so if the thing that smells here is not found in the Judaic pile of influences upon Christianity as this thesis has argued, then the only other heap from which to select is the Greco-Roman.

And so lastly, related to the urban nature of the early Church, this thesis wants to draw attention to the role that Platonic philosophy may have played in influencing early Christianity.

Threads certainly did eventually evidence themselves in Christianity that showed distinct types of aversion to the physical realm and the body—but what is important for environmentalism to locate and understand is when and how these were woven in.



Clearly what follows here is only a foray into a complex question in need of the knowledge of specialists—but several points would seem to argue that it entered Western thinking through Plato, and is therefore neither Christian nor truly Greek.

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Western civilization is woven of two major strands: the Judeo-Christian and the Greco-Roman. To understand the dynamics behind a Western view of nature requires attention to both. The outset of this thesis attempted to demonstrate the centrality of small-scale independent agriculture to Greek civilization through an analysis of Hesiod—but the presence of the Agrarian element in *both* ancient Greek and ancient Hebrew history argues strongly that this is in fact the root from which Western civilization sprang. Its presence in early Roman history only adds fuel to the fire. Again, yeomen were clearly very influential upon the formative stages of both the Judaic (and thus Christian) and Greco-Roman strands of Western civilization. This had impacts in the social, political, and economic realms, most directly in the periods when they were most preponderant, but because this occurred during the formative stages of both Hebrew and Greek civilizations, the impacts have reverberated through Western civilization long after those periods.

One of the most fundamental aspects of the Agrarian mind in both Hesiod and the Old Testament is that it exhibits a conception of the existence of an order in the divine realm, in human affairs—and in the natural world. The Greek word for the world is κόσμος, which translates as “order”.<sup>186</sup> We also saw this in Hesiod’s sense of hubris, which Tandy and Neal define as a “disregard for process”. This is an essential variable in arriving at an answer in respect to the Western view of nature. Call this conception the “cosmos” or “the Great Chain of Being”, or another applicable phrase or term, but in any case this view of the world, physical and otherwise, is present in both instances.

It is difficult to say which came first, this conception, or small-scale, independent agriculture. The interplay is lost in the mist of time. But what this thesis argues is that this sense of order, if it did not derive directly from, then was certainly fostered in a societal structure in which there was a close interaction with cultivated nature on small independent farms. It is a mind learned by rural rote that is the genius behind Western civilization—and this Agrarian mind is in direct contact, and relative symbiosis with, the natural world.

The similarities of the Old Testament agricultural conceptions and practices to those of early Greece are startling. Once again, we must remember that this small scale privately owned practice of farming and economic organization was by no means the dominant practice among ancient (or modern) civilizations. In fact there seems to be, unless there is purposeful consciousness and defense of it, a natural progression inherent to civilization towards centralization of political and economic power. This is a complex phenomenon, and it is difficult to determine if one comes before the other—but history shows that it is very difficult for political and economic centralization not to go hand in hand. If this is to be resisted, it requires an extremely conservative system of property ownership like that of early Israel or early Attica. In most ancient examples, it appears that political centralization encouraged larger scale economic organization (see next paragraph on Egypt). The modern example seems to have gone the other way around, in that the consolidation of economic power in the hands of large corporations has increased the purview of the state. De Tocqueville wrote a lot about this.<sup>187</sup> Fränkel, employing the sociological term for small-scale farmers, makes the connection between an agricultural economy and a decentralized political system when he notes, “Peasants have less need of the state than any other class.”<sup>188</sup> And so no matter how it arises, progressive concentration of economic power is purely the bane of Agrarianism and a decentralized political system, and the Hebrew example argues that they were aware of this.

As was noted previously, Egypt—a nation repeatedly contrasted with Israel in ancient Jewish literature as representing slavery as opposed to freedom—was an economy dominated by large-scale public works and large-scale land-ownership where slaves were worked to serve the purposes of the Pharaoh and those in his favor. And although there were differences as well, the same general description in this respect applies to Assyria and Babylonia. Given the lack of prominence of this in twenty-first century scholarly and clerical discourse, one would think that it was total coincidence that the Israelites set up a completely different political and economic system when they settled in their new land. But it is almost certain, given their repeatedly professed consciousness of having being delivered from slavery in Egypt, that it was not. The Israelites saw themselves as having been delivered from slavery to freedom—and this freedom to them was not abstract and legal but practical and economic. To a great extent freedom for them meant “self-sufficiency.” It was tied to their religion—but for them religion and work were inseparable. The same was true for Hesiod and the early Greeks.

For some reason Hesiod has markedly little affection for rulers, as numerous examples from the text of *Works and Days* indicate. Where did this come from? The most forthcoming answer would be social tensions in Hesiod’s own time. This thesis will suggest though that perhaps there were vague vestiges in the minds of the early polis Greeks of the previous system of serfdom and collective landownership under the Mycenaean economic order. Such cultural memory was certainly the case with the Jews of the Judges period. And the same was probably true of the cultural memory of early European immigrants to the New World with respect to Feudalism. In every case small-scale private property ownership has been the reaction. However, it seems that with time people forget and the system swings back into centralization and slavery. Nevertheless, the Greek Dark Ages obviously constitute a much larger break than in the Hebrew example, and we cannot forget that Greece after the Dark Ages has been labeled

“a slate wiped clean.” In any case it is clear from the examples in *Works and Days* that the early Greeks, or at least the preponderant rural Greeks, disliked centralized authority and were conscious of their civil rights, particularly as independent property owners, and that both the Greeks and Hebrews abhorred centralization and the holding of power in few hands.

As has been postulated in this thesis, civilization is concomitant with agriculture—but that much is usually granted. What this thesis wants to draw attention to instead is that the nature of the agriculture practiced determines the nature of the civilization.<sup>189</sup> The reason Hesiod and the book of Proverbs were chosen as the texts for this thesis is that they contain the most distilled and concentrated expression of Agrarianism during those formative stages in Western civilization; but they also provide the evidence for the original view of and interaction of, Western man with nature.

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The voice of Hesiod in *Works and Days* comes through loud and clear. It is a voice of crusty independence, practicality, and sensibility—and yet at the same time the voice of a type of man respectful of religion and nature. This is the voice of healthy and complete Western man, or an early example of genuine Western man, in which soul and body function in relative balance.

However, later Greek philosophy, specifically Plato, placed the true essence of things in the spiritual realm, the realm of true form.<sup>190</sup> It follows that the physical realm holds a more degraded side of reality, the realm of matter. It is clear from even a cursory glance at Western history, that the Greek world put its stamp to some extent on Judaism during the Hellenistic period, and to a greater extent on Christianity when Christianity, early in its history (with St. Paul) moved into the Greek world proper.

Hesiod and the early Greeks do not show any division whatsoever between the physical and spiritual realms, or disdain for the former and exaltation of the latter. But, the Agrarian

tradition was not the only force at work in Greek civilization. In actuality, the literary record shows that since the fifth century there have always been two views battling against each other for control of the Western mind and that the travesty of the modern world is that the one view has taken over mainstream Christianity, the forces within and without it that tried to resist it having been marginalized and mostly forgotten. As we have seen, disdain for the physical realm was not a part of pre-Platonic Christianity, which was more purely Judaic, and it also was not present in the early Greeks such as Hesiod. Hesiod, like the farmers of ancient Israel (and all subsistence farmers), was too busy trying to survive and thus inadvertently united religion with daily life, soul and body, which is the only real Western religion, or religion period. In other words Hesiod's religion, as was the ancient Jews including Jesus, was inseparable from his work, which is the acting out of his religion. And this work is *physical work within an overall agricultural economy*. This follows from Hesiod's assumption that there is no separation of man from nature. Hesiod accepts the role of man in the cosmos as being one where he must struggle to survive, but one in which there is relative peace and happiness, for the man who carries this out in the fashion that the gods have prescribed. Thus his practicality and sensibility do not corrode his religious faith. And his need to work his farm to subsist ensures that he does not degrade the body's role.

However, another type of Western man too has been around for a long time whose youth lies in Plato, and whose maturation occurred long after in Descartes and other modern scientists. The early characteristic that Plato personified was solely his penchant for pure abstraction separate from daily work-life. Hesiod had been mind reacting to nature—Plato was mind only secondarily, if at all, concerned with physical nature. This became more socially acceptable in the Greek world as time passed.

But how Plato became accepted within orthodox Christianity forms one of the most consequential and baffling developments in the annals of history. This thesis is not knowledgeable enough on this period to be sure of this;<sup>191</sup> but from what it does know, it appears that Plato got behind Christian ranks some time after the Apostolic period, and by late antiquity was accepted by some of the highest Christian thinkers. Although later in life he apparently had second thoughts, St. Augustine is an example of this.<sup>192</sup>

Aristotle for his part gave more attention to the physical than his teacher, and did not merge with Christian philosophy until Scholasticism. How during this later period his different view affected the Christian view of nature and the gestation of modern science comprises a subject on which this thesis defers to specialized studies.<sup>193</sup> Also, how the Neo-Platonists earlier on also differed from their progenitor and influenced the Christian view is another subject on which this thesis is not qualified to debate.<sup>194</sup>

Descartes, on the other hand, shared Plato's penchant for pure abstraction, and Aristotle's greater focus on physical nature—and yet did not share any of Aristotle's reservations regarding the former. *Je pense donc je suis*. From the modern Delphi Descartes viewed the world. In this way he objectified physical nature by attempting to understand it (which is simply oversimplifying it) through abstraction instead of experience and thus separated man from it by withdrawing him into his mind.

The type of Western man who has subscribed to this can no longer even see let alone experience nature because he looks *at* it through the mental constructions of his own creation. Although the experimental method of Pascal still dealt to a certain degree with physical reality and must be classified apart from the purely mathematical and abstract method of Descartes, neither of these were observations made in ecological context or theories and formulas developed through philosophical dialogue—rather they were spawned in the simplified

environment of the laboratory and interior monologue. And yet even the latter is still harmless to society as a whole—until such minds attempt to reapply this imperfect understanding of nature back into it, which results in a process consummating the separation of man from nature and his otherwise helpless involvement in its self-perpetuating cycles, and producing waste. This is the application of modern science that has come to act through certain arms of the industrial system. Applied science and mechanical industrialism developed apart from each other but now have become integrated to a great extent. For example, the method used to invent the windmill, the waterwheel, all the way up to such inventions as the steam-engine, did not necessitate applied abstraction. Mechanical science—like everything—can also be taken to the extreme, and indeed has been, but it is less prone to separate man from nature than applied abstraction. The effects of its excesses are more environmental and those of abstract science more social, although as stated they have become amalgamated to such an extent that it is now very difficult to draw distinctions. However, what is ascertainable is that the potential of each is most realized is when industrialism strays from mechanical science and into what here is being described, and combines its technical and mass-producing expertise with abstract science. The most representative example would be the atomic bomb. And in fact in every instance where an abstract conception of nature is reapplied back into nature one will find an instance of the separation of man from it.<sup>195</sup> The basic understanding is imperfect because nature is composed of more than that which is comprehensible by the mind. This is the great mistake of reapplying abstract science back into nature through technology. Heidegger saw that the reapplication was the encasing of nature in imperfect imitation, although he, like Aristophanes, did not live to see the advanced stages of the separation of man from nature that prove his fears to have been justified.<sup>196</sup>

But perhaps the more profound tragedy is that, through the reapplication of this and its dispersal through industrialism and commercialism, men and women who naturally are not endowed with the personality of this type have contracted his disease. Thus most of the post-modern specimens on which this unprecedented experiment has been tested are miserable because in this brave new world all that man can encounter is himself.<sup>197</sup>

Christianity, especially Protestantism since the Reformation, has made the fatal mistake of thinking this process of objectification and abstraction, and the acceptance of its reapplication in modern technology, was compliant if not in accordance with Christian doctrine—but as we have seen it is more in accordance with Platonic philosophy than original Christianity. The mistake has marginalized Christianity because the new technological paradigm's separation of man from nature, or in other words from the experience of the divine order, has caused him to lose his religious faith—thus the decline of Christianity in Western countries. This is only logical.

And yet not many scholars have found a comparison between Hesiod and Plato worthy of investigation, some arriving at very different conclusions. Nietzsche was one who declared in typical fashion that Plato was in fact “anti-Greek”. What generally he was referring to was Plato's preference for the ethereal purity of the intellect over the feasting, fighting, and farming of original Greek culture. Nietzsche sniffed this out in second half of the nineteenth century and from some original whiff developed a consistent nausea for Plato's thought, particularly in the *Republic*.<sup>198</sup> And there have probably been many others like him both before and since. Solmsen is one modern scholar who asserts that there are some continuities from Hesiod to Plato (although more with the *Theogony*), but that by and large “the specific form of human excellence to which Hesiod works up could only have a very limited appeal to Plato. Thrift, industry, shrewd economic planning, and diligent, careful husbandry are not among the excellences which



he would wish to incorporate in his scheme,...”<sup>199</sup> So Hesiod’s approach to the world is practical and physical, and Plato’s is abstract and schematic. It is also interesting that Solmsen uses the verb “to incorporate”, because that is exactly what Plato did not try to do, that is, to work out his spiritual concepts through practical use of the body. But it also worked to Plato’s credit, and must be granted, because he did not apply his view to the physical, or reapply this through technology. It was Descartes and his modern progeny who have taken it there. Solmsen concludes that, “By and large Plato is moving on a level of thought on which direct contact with the Hesiodic legacy could serve little purpose.”<sup>200</sup>

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The intention of this final section up to this point has been to reply to White Jr.’s first assertion of Christianity being anthropocentric and to enter into discussion of the real problem. The argument in response has been that civilization cannot help but be anthropocentric, that it is not necessarily antithetical to ecology, and that the best option for its relationship with the natural world is a decentralized agricultural economic system—which in theory, according to its own scriptures and inherited intellectual traditions, Christianity should incorporate. But theory is not practice, which brings us to his second point—that modern science and technology are the product of Christian natural theology.<sup>201</sup>

Here White Jr. has more of a point in need of only some qualification.

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After Galileo, modern Western science obviously developed with the sanction of the Church, and most scientists until the end of the eighteenth century were professing Christians. Up until this point science had been the sometimes embarrassing but always on the up minor who was content to stay in the cultural car that the Church was driving. Perhaps the Catholic and later Protestant church authorities were always hesitant to contradict or stand up to science after

the embarrassing precedent of Galileo, but in any case they rarely did until it was far into its maturation, notably with Darwin. But by then it was too late to go back on the method, role, and cultural niche of the scientist that they had sanctioned and fostered for so long; and the more scientific disciplines multiplied in greater and greater specialization, and the influence of science grew, the more the Church was eventually forced to take back-seat openly, finally reduced to the role it now occupies of merely commenting on and trying to suggest moral directions as to how and where the now grown up and secular person is driving the cultural car.

And here the Church sits. This casts it in the awkward role of having to adjust to the progressively more dangerous driving habits of the driver, even though it is likewise more apparent that the car is being driven off a cliff. Not only has the once creant youth awed many of the former faithful directly into agnosticism or atheism—but indirectly through its re-implementation into the physical realm through technology, or applied science, it has refashioned the entire world, physical and otherwise, from the way people speak to each other to the way they make children, thus obliterating all the assumptions and conditions of the previous paradigm, and most of the respect for the naïve and unsuspecting backseat sage. If the new physical and relational conditions are accepted, then the old paradigm must, according to logic, be thrown out the window because it no longer corresponds to the new physical and social environment. Modern youth no longer have any contact with nature, or the “order of creation”, to which Christian morality speaks, so it is understandable that they reject the teachings if they are unfamiliar with the context. The mistake of the Church occurred in stages, but in general it was in accepting the abstraction and the reapplication of abstraction that altered man’s relationship with the physical world. It was the *coup de grâce* to our civilization.

The strange thing is that the Church at present still seems content to drive off the cliff to its own and its former constituency’s ruin without ever acknowledging this, its fatal mistake.

One would think that looking out the window and surveying the smoking ruin of the landscape that once was Christendom, either literally after the First and Second World Wars, or figuratively during what for traditional Christians is the religious and moral holocaust of the twenty-first century, that European and North American Christian leaders would have figured out they had made a serious mistake. Of course there have always been Christians of acumen who have spoken up over this ongoing process of abstraction and objectification. Pascal bemoaned it in the seventeenth century, Blake in the eighteenth and nineteenth, and C.S. Lewis in the twentieth, among many others;<sup>202</sup> although one must distinguish between them in the nature and details of their opinions and arguments, because both Pascal and Lewis, for instance, saw different distinctions between salubrious and rheumatic versions.

A discussion of these versions requires a distinction between the trenchant incisions of these great thinkers and the more juvenile hackings of this thesis. Having made this distinction, this thesis will suggest that the ideal role would have been to have kept the Western Platonic or scientific mind turned into the *spiritual realm*, as tried and held for a time the Medieval Church. Allen Tate makes this point perspicaciously in his essay, "Remarks on the Southern Religion" in *I'll Take My Stand*. In it Tate puts forward that the Western mind is essentially one that is all one or all the other, at one particular time, religious or practical, and tempted to abstraction over the unity of abstraction and the physical; he advances that rationality is only safe when used to attempt to explain the irrational, and that Medieval man reached and attempted to maintain this height.<sup>203</sup> Tate's primary argument hits the nail on the head, with the one reservation here being that the point that it is all one or all the other at one particular time is more moot than that regarding its inclination to abstraction. Related to the distancing of rationality from the irrational, abstraction becomes progressively less safe to the physical world the further it pushes into formulating its workings and composition; although this is an ideal and can take some

movement along a line. Simple abstraction, the Platonic antecedent, although still a matter of extremes, traces closer to the point of departure and is therefore slightly less harmful in its basic form. Perhaps it is that something that is abstract by nature is not harmed by an abstract conception of it i.e. numbers, geometry. In any case, unlike the latter steps, some abstraction is necessary—but still not as a rule.

The next to ideal contingency would have been to have kept science primarily within the tradition of the musings of a select few, science as the “leisurely pursuit of gentlemen”, or science for fun. Science as fun remains a good version because it is not extensive enough to harm significantly the natural world. It advances only slightly along the line from Plato and its deleterious effects remain mostly dormant. Also, science as a tool for gathering certain facts appears to stand firm as a rightful and beneficial version; this seems to be because it does not necessitate reapplied abstraction.

But unfortunately these contingencies were not the practices that the Church allowed to become the norm. What the Church allowed to become acceptable was the universal application of the Cartesian method to all of nature, and then universal reapplication. The acceptance of the result of this is common currency in our culture today. It is said that the evolution of science and technology is “inevitable”. This is essentially acknowledging and acceding to the fact that with the leadership of the West, the world has embarked upon a linear course to the isles of extremism, whence the sirens call.

Call this “extreme science” or “scientism” or another term—but what the environmental dormancy of recreational science proves is that it is in fact extreme science that is the problem, and not every practice of science that is canvassed under the current usage of the term. This thesis defines “extreme science” as “abstract science applied, reapplied, and dispersed in every instance”. It defines “scientism” as “the ideology that claims to be able to explain all things

human and superhuman by formulae and equations”. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that, if it is a matter of extent and there is a point in each instance where its effects cross the line, the basic problem is still the original point of view. Its effects will remain dormant until reapplied, but the basic way of looking that produced the conception that produced the reapplication remains the original problem. This is why the debates regarding the development of nuclear technology and genetic engineering, for example, were and are so redundant—because the point where each instance crosses the line is most likely the point of departure. In any case, the Church should have held to its principles and allowed science so long as it did not disrupt the natural paradigm—or so long as it did not disrupt the relationship of man with nature, which in civilized Western Europe had always been primarily through agriculture. This would allow Industrialism to the point that it continues to service an economy in which agricultural occupies the majority of people.<sup>204</sup> The goal should be to guard against the extreme implementation of mechanical and abstract science so as to protect the natural paradigm.

If a consensus could have been reached in the first place, the only way to have ever perpetuated this successfully would have been to have appealed to the reason and humanity of the early scientists, and *never* resorted to official censure—that was the great and incomparable mistake of the late Medieval Church both in the instances of the Reformation and the birth of modern science. After the precedent of those original colossal failures—which may have been the most consequential mistakes in the history of humanity—to put Pandora back in the bag has become progressively more difficult.<sup>205</sup>

The solution now is far from clear. As a general direction, this thesis suggests advancing toward a more moderate use of mechanical Industrialism, and the readjustment of science to one of its previous stages, perhaps by teaching it primarily as a leisurely pleasure, and selecting its

application into daily life. This is a moderate position, neither Ludism nor scientism. And one wonders if this is not where real scientists have always wanted it anyways.

But let the situation be reiterated less severely. The mistakes of the Church were several-fold. The Christianity of the New Testament holds relationship as the most central and hallowed principle in existence. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” shows a relational motivation underlying the entire religion. This thesis argues that this emphasis on relationship is found in the economic side of the Judaic and Christian Scriptures as well, and that this relationship of man with nature is agricultural and Agrarian. The modern Church has always sanctioned science by seeing it as a search for truth, that this accorded with the Christian assertion that there was a Truth, and that to search this out revealed the complexity of creation to the glory of God. Many in the Church must have known though that science was not relational, that it required only one mind and was searching by looking *at* and understanding based on that position. Perhaps it was that the changes that it brought came slowly, and because of this that their consequences always seemed latent. But nevertheless, the acceptance of it forgets the centrality of relationship to original Christianity. Therefore there is reason to assert that this “search for truth” is by no means Christian, and that this central modern Christian justification of science once again has its origin more in the point of view and motivation of certain Greek philosophy, which at an early date infused itself into the depth of the Christian psyche, both East and West.

Plato also believed that a Truth existed. He cast his philosophy in dialogues whose purpose is to arrive at a conclusion, which presupposes that there is a conclusion to be reached, or Truth, for which the speakers and he are searching. It is easy to see how educated pagans of the first centuries of our era found that Christianity spoke the same philosophic language as they were used to, the language of Truth, and how it was the view of those who converted that the

Christian faith was the answer to that search and the culmination of Greek philosophy; it is also easy—conversely— to see how the early Christians would have found Plato to be compatible, and overall how Plato entered the Christian psyche and survived intact. There was nothing harmful in Plato's search as long as it remained within the spiritual or intellectual realm, as long as it was for fun, or as long as it stayed under the banner of relationship. And in the ancient world it did remain in these realms and that is perhaps why the early Christians accepted it. And as was alluded to earlier, Plato does not deserve too much blame because he never took it out of these realms and applied it to the physical, let alone reapply back into it.

In succeeding generations, as the effects of science became more pronounced, this thesis contends that it was the previous and profound infusion of Plato that predisposed Christianity to lay down for the final steps to which it otherwise would have bristled. It is ironic that Nietzsche did. He arrived at the diagnosis that would have saved the Church, Western civilization, and the earth, and yet his rejection of Christianity insured that his knowledge would do no good and that he would remain estranged from those who—in the twilight of the Church—may still have been able to hit the brakes. This is the tragedy of Nietzsche. Who knows what was going on inside his head, but perhaps he knew all of this and did it out of spite. Perhaps it was that he chose the dark path, either to allow the death of what fathered him, or to kill it outright. O for Nietzsche's father not to have died.

The response to White Jr's second point then is that Christianity is implicated in the development of modern science and technology, but that these developments did not arise out of its own natural theology, but its adoption of certain Greek thinking.

## **B) Conclusion**

In final conclusion, this section D) Implications has taken the conclusion that original Judaism and early Greece are Agrarian to the next logical step, and looked for the elements within Christianity that have given rise to the environmental crisis.

To reiterate this, this section has progressed in the argument that this crisis goes back to the fight in Classical Greece between those among the urban philosophical schools who rejected the Hesiodic legacy and those who did not. As in most things, the deep-thinking Greeks already went there. And this thesis suggests that if Plato and Aristophanes were to have attended the same symposium one night they would have aired all the central problems and solutions of the current environmental crisis. The key battle then is the key battle now. It is essentially one of mind, versus body and mind.

With respect to Christianity, this thesis has argued that the environmental crisis is essentially an illness within the Western mind having to do with its philosophy of work—which arose from this intellectual battle in Greece over the philosophical and social worthiness of the Hesiodic legacy, and that Christianity, not paying enough attention to this same element in the Judaic tradition, passed over it too much in the Greek (and Roman) as well, and instead became at an early stage closely interwoven with the other strand of Greek thinking on this matter. One of the central tenants of the Hesiodic legacy was that Hesiod saw no social disgrace in doing at least some of his own physical work. Everything hinges on this beyond question. Some scholars have said (as was detailed earlier) that he considered work simply a necessary evil—but let us say even that this was the case, this thesis has pointed out that the same figure exists in the Hebrew Scriptures, and that in Judaic tradition there is no doubt that physical work was valued, as is evidenced in the fact that even Jewish scribes and teachers were to have a trade. If this was the case in the first century, then certainly it was with the yeomen of the Judges period. So



Western civilization has this archetype in it in any case. Perhaps the Medieval Church indeed did, particularly the monastic orders, but if the Church in the modern era had made a bigger deal of this, it would not have allowed it to have been turned into a social disgrace. As this thesis has laid out, the original Christian view maintained a respected and prominent place for practical use of the body—the avoidance and rejection of which has been one of the major underlying factor in the development of modern science and industrialism. So the influences that gave rise to science and technology in the West must have come from another source. This thesis will suffice itself with arguing the impossibility of their origin lying in the Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity and attempting to contribute to the shifting of environmental dialogue onto the period in which the early Church melded with the Greek world.

It is understandable that the arguments of this thesis can be critiqued because they deal with basic theory and points of view but are short on practical agendas; also, both the critique of Plato and of modern science are clearly underdeveloped. In response to the first, this thesis has attempted to lay out the evidence from two primary sources and historical and literary scholarship on these texts and periods that proves the existence of an environmentally sound archetype in Western civilization. In respect to the critiques of Plato and of science, the goal of this thesis was only to raise these issues (which it argues is really one issue) so as to stimulate thinking on science's relationship to the modern dislocation from nature. It focuses on the historical roots of these issues and is intended to be a positive contribution to the many issues surrounding the environmental debate.

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In final summation—this thesis selected two texts to advance a threefold argument: 1) that a certain archetype existed in Greek and Hebrew history, and evidences similarities between

the two, 2) that this had far-reaching implications on Western Civilization, and 3) that issues surrounding him are at the root of the modern environmental crisis.

The first two sections B) and C) attempted to put forward the first argument 1), and the final section D) strove to lay out the argument for the validity of arguments 2) and 3).<sup>206</sup>

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## **APPENDIX A: USE OF TERM “AGRARIANISM” IN THESIS**

Whenever this thesis uses the capitalized Agrarianism, it is referring exclusively to the Agrarianism of yeomen like Hesiod and the Israelite farmers in the Judges period. Whenever it employs the lower case “agrarianism”, it may be referring to aristocratic agrarianism, to any other definition, or inclusively to a combination of definitions.

An essential distinction between periods and specific historical examples is the distinction between aristocratic agrarianism and Agrarianism amongst the yeomanry. The distinction between aristocratic agrarianism and the Agrarianism of yeomen is primarily one of size, and to varying degrees of ethic. Aristocratic agrarianism functions in more of an estate system, where the operation is big enough that the owner does not do his own work i.e. Xenophon, Cato the Elder. In the Agrarianism of the middle-class on the other hand the farm is small enough that the owner can work all of his own land. He may hire others as well but he is not solely the owner, or overseer or manager.

According to Jaeger, a Greek aristocracy existed in the Archaic period, but the consensus of scholarship is that yeomen were then preponderant. And in later Greek history, particularly the Classical Period, it appears that the former shared certain key concepts with the latter. Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* argues in favor of this.

But as such operations grow larger in size they perforce remove themselves from some of the defining characteristics of Agrarianism in its original and purest form. Some larger operations—whether Xenophon’s Peloponnesian estate in the fifth century BC or the modern North American industrial farm in the twenty-first century—try to keep up the ethic of earlier days, and in a few ways are able to. Specifically, the competitive side of Hesiod’s Agrarianism is kept up in a larger operation. In fact, some modern industrial farmers are Hesiods who have made the choice to do whatever it takes to stay on the land, and so have accepted modern

technology and are fighting tooth and nail to stay in business. But by making this choice these Hesiods necessarily distance themselves from his religious side and the social effects of his type. As evidence of this, we see the rise of agri-businessmen, which as the name makes clear are more businessmen than farmers.

This thesis argues that aristocratic agrarianism has more negative side-effects than small-property ownership, specifically employing migrant workers or slaves and having a less egalitarian distribution of wealth. Certainly in the labor structure, twenty-first century corporate ownership of land, whether it be vineyards in California, orchards in Florida, or potato farms in Ontario etc...is a modern form of aristocratic agriculture. De Tocqueville perceived this in an earlier stage of the development of the corporate economic structure.<sup>207</sup> For one, those who work the land do not own it, and the profits from what it produces go more to those higher up. In fact it is arguably more inhumane than certain aristocratic operations would have been because most if not all personal contact, which must have existed to at least a small extent in those still family-based operations, is now relegated to progressively less personal layers of the corporate ladder. Even if corporate ownership takes care of the land—such as on corporate organic farms—this social aspect cast a wretched pall over it.

The Agrarianism of yeomen on the other hand is more worthy of emulation for several reasons. The labor structure does not force them to distance themselves from those who work under them; such a labor system on the large scale mitigates social stratification and class conflict. This structure also distributes wealth more evenly. For example, if there are four thousand farm families instead of forty industrial farm families or four corporations who own the land then the income from what it produces is spread more evenly and mitigates class conflict.

Secondly, the yeoman is a better option for the environment for the reasons that Wendell Berry has advocated.<sup>208</sup> To list two of them: a) because the land is right under his nose and if he

doesn't treat it well he will starve, and b) because of the real possibility that his ownership of his land and close personal interaction with it will cause him to love that small piece of the earth and care for it. Besides the more essential characteristics of view of nature and philosophy of work that this thesis has detailed, these are some practical reasons why yeomanry is the best option for the environment.



## **APPENDIX B: ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD “AGRARIAN” IN ENGLISH**

The word “agrarian” entered English through reference to the *lex sempronia agraria* of Tiberius Gracchus, who held the Roman office of tribune in 133 BC. A tribune was the representative on the plebeian class who held important powers in the Roman system of legislative assemblies.<sup>209</sup> This law was an attempt to redistribute land to free Roman citizens that had been gobbled up by large landholders who worked their estates with slaves. The confiscatory element of it proved very provocative to those who benefited under the system as it had been allowed to develop. Tiberius (and later his brother Gaius) was killed in serious civil strife that ensued.<sup>210</sup>

Therefore the term “agrarian” in English originally held revolutionary connotations. This meaning is implied, for example, in James Harrington’s use of the word “agrarian” in *Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656). In the late eighteenth century, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison still continued to associate the word with economic and social leveling, specifically the equalization of ownership of cultivated land.<sup>211</sup> However, although the term was more controversial in English than other European languages, “agrarian” in English also has had other less controversial definitions. In Jefferson’s time a second use referred simply to the somewhat equal division of land (not imposed but simply describing a situation where this was the case); this is the definition given to it in Noah Webster’s first American dictionary in 1806.<sup>212</sup> A third meaning follows other European languages in referring most generally to “cultivated land”. Govan says that *agrarisches* in German and *agrarien* in French most frequently have meant simply “agricultural”. However, this thesis notes that the adjective *agraire* in French contains the redistributive connotations. John Adams and Jefferson also use it in certain instances in the most general sense.<sup>213</sup>

The number of and variation among the definitions betrays the nebulous use of the word in English. Govan says that the word has been used “almost existentially” in various historical periods.<sup>214</sup> In Jefferson’s time it held socialistic connotations, and later on to the Grangers in the post Civil-War United States it evoked communism.<sup>215</sup>

It was in the publication of *I’ll Take My Stand* in 1930 that the term underwent an almost complete reversal, there referring an agricultural philosophy of life in the tradition of Jefferson and the South as opposed to industrialism. The use of this word in the introduction of *I’ll Take My Stand* is an interesting choice that in historical perspective shows itself to have been a turning point in the English etymology of the term.

The Twelve Southerners were certainly aware of the history of the word, and although evidencing significant variation from one to the other, all assented to its use in the common statement of principle that is John Crow Ransom’s introduction. And so their use of it was probably a savvy bit of semantic manipulation. The Northern press of the time would have labeled outright the treatise as a hopelessly outdated bit of nostalgia if the Southern authors had simply chosen to use terms like “rural life” or “farm life” to describe what they were defending. Even with the overtly communistic term “agrarian” the book was thus labeled. So their choice of the word probably was a preemptive effort at thwarting such a characterization. The Vanderbilt Agrarians were Classical liberals with an agrarian frame of mind who were defending the rural culture of the South (varying amongst themselves in defending the manifestation of this in its aristocracy or yeomanry), and attempted to craft the presentation of their views to circumvent the calumny of influential segments of the academia and press of the time. In relation to present day realities, the book deserves attention in contemporary environmental dialogue for its insights into and prognostications regarding industrialism.

But since the advent of the environmental movement in the 1970s, the term “agrarian” in English has undergone yet another significant change. It is safe to say that compared to the attempt to induce a rebirth of it in *I’ll Take My Stand* it is now enjoying a marked renaissance. However, this represents the eventual success of the Twelve Southerners in the sense that it is now, as they attempted to do then, associated with a contemporary, forward looking philosophy.

Since the 1970’s the term in literary, academic, and (to what extent it comes up in popular discourse) has lost all of its originally negative revolutionary or communistic evocations, as well as any opprobrious connections with Southern racism, and has now come to be associated more with a defense of rural life in the face of industrial agriculture, and a forward looking environmental activism.

The new aura having been cast upon the term is thanks in a large part to the writings of Wendell Berry, and his paradoxical place amongst the pantheon of the environmental movement in North America and Britain. Besides his many books of fiction, poetry, and non-fiction (Berry is perhaps best known as an essayist) Berry writes for such environmental beacons as *Orion* magazine in the United States, and *Resurgence* in the UK. He admits having taken much from the authors of *I’ll Take My Stand*, but is quick to distance himself from the racist beliefs of the extreme members of the group.<sup>216</sup> Berry asserts that African Americans in the South learned the knowledge of the land better than most whites, but he is also sensitive to the effects of slavery on the psyches of both communities.<sup>217</sup> Berry’s use of “agrarian” retains social and political elements but puts the greatest emphasis, unlike them, on the environmental benefits of it as a practical economic system. He submits to the description of an “agrarian writer”, using “we agrarians” to describe this wing of the environmental movement.<sup>218</sup> Obviously, Berry is a respected forerunner to some of the central contentions of this thesis, although this thesis goes into ancient history to locate the origins of the yeoman type, and to see how Western civilization

became separated from his mindset. The association of Agrarianism and yeomanry with ecology is obviously trying to continue the trend that Berry has set as well as vice versa in giving ecology historical and philosophical depth.

Although all of these attempts to define “agrarianism” need to be time and place specific, there are certain continuous elements to the term that span historical examples. These elements may not have always been called “agrarian”, and as we have seen the word has indeed meant very different things—but the ideas have always been around.

This thesis contends that if an author uses the word “agrarianism” today it must necessarily contain a few of these connotations. This is not a subjective proclamation but an opinion based on how authors most often now use the word. Firstly, if an author uses the word “agrarianism” today it should contain the connotation that farming is a particularly valuable occupation to society. Montmarquet raises this point, that the essential aspect in which “agrarian” now differs from “agricultural” in that the former includes the assertion that agriculture is an especially important and valuable force in society.<sup>219</sup> It would be helpful to the environmental movement if the term also continued to increase in its association with the ecological agriculture that Berry advocates. There is no way of getting around that the term still represents a complex philosophy, and while not taking away from its intellectual heritage, this thesis grants that it is more a “way of life” than any narrowly defined part of life. But there is no reason why it cannot retain its broadness while still having prominent, specific aspects.

In conclusion here, this environmental use of the term, with a still prominent but secondary place for social and political aspects, is the direction in which the use of the term “agrarianism” is moving.

## **APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF AGRARIAN TERMS IN ANCIENT GREEK**

The word ἄγρός (Latin AGER) in the singular refers to “a farm, an estate” (Od. XXIV.205). Although it occurs most often in the plural meaning “fields, lands” (Il. 23.832; Od.4.757; Pindar P. 4.265). It can also mean “the country” in general as opposed to the city.<sup>220</sup> An adjectival derivative is ἄγροικος; this could indicate “of the country”,<sup>221</sup> or could produce a negative evocation along the lines of “clownish, boorish, rude, rough, course”; Plato uses repeatedly this and related words in the second sense.<sup>222</sup> Aristophanes uses these words ironically to mock urban pretension.<sup>223</sup> This word game informs us that there existed an urban/rural dynamic similar to the modern.

This thesis suggests that the noun closest in the Greek language to representing the idea or philosophy of agrarianism would probably have been οἰκονομία. That this is justified is indicated firstly in the multiple words Liddell and Scott ascribe to it; they translate it as all three: “the management of a household or family, husbandry, thrift”. If the only rendering given was “the management of a household” then it could not represent the term “agrarianism” in English because there is no sense of a connection with the natural world. However, we see in fact that in this translation the economic management aspect combines with something having to do with the natural world (husbandry). That is why this thesis argues οἰκονομία is the closest Greek word to what “agrarianism” has become in contemporary English.

But did οἰκονομία carry the intellectual connotations of “agrarianism”? Clearly, in the time of Hesiod in the eighth century BC, the ideas he entrusted to writing were still more a “way of life” than a systematic body of thought. However, by the time Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* in the fifth century, the ideas first found in Hesiod had coalesced into what can be identified as more of a philosophy. The author is not read enough in philosophy to be authoritative on this point, however he knows that for a body of thought to be classified as a philosophy it

traditionally had to be more of a system of thought. And Xenophon's choice of the word οἰκονομία to entitle his treatise argues along these lines. In light of this it is not strange that we see Xenophon reasserting this in the text, where he has his upper class Athenian "farmer" Ischomachus discussing agrarian subjects with Socrates while lounging on the steps of a temple as would philosophers of any school.<sup>224</sup> Aristotle furthermore also wrote a treatise entitled Τὰ Οἰκονομικά (although here it means more "those who are thrifty, frugal, economical"). It is important to recall that because the economy of ancient Greece in all periods was dominantly agricultural, these terms and related issues were not esoteric or marginal subjects.

See note for examples of the use of οἰκονομία and cognate words in other works.<sup>225</sup>

A general term something along the lines of our "worker" that was applied to those doing agricultural work was ἐργάτης.<sup>226</sup> And more generally οὐργάτης λεῶς "the country-folk" (Aristophanes *Pax* 632).

We then have γεωργός, literally "earth-worker"; Liddell and Scott translate it as "husbandman", "small land-owner".<sup>227</sup> They are referred to as a group as γεωργός ὄχλος (Dionysus Halicarnassus 10.53). They are opposed to οἱ μισθαρμοῦντες, "wage-earners" (Arist.Pol.4.12,3), and to ὁ δεσπότης τοῦ χωρίου, (Corpus Inscriptionem 355.21), which would be referring to the master or lord of a larger estate.

Also αὐτουργός (Eur. Or. 920; Plat. Rep. 505A), which Liddell and Scott define as "husbandman", "poor farmer". αὐτουργός is differentiated from γεωργός in that the former was the word for one who works his own land without slaves.<sup>228</sup>

## **APPENDIX D: SEPTUAGINT WORD STUDY**

The first distinction that must be drawn here is between categories of translation study that are comparative and those that are not. Starting with categories that help in a comparative sense, the first important point to clarify here is that the question is more one of degrees—that is, it is not “what Greek terms are used to translate these Hebrew concepts?” But rather “how accurate a representation is this Greek word or phrase of the original Hebrew concept?” If the Septuagint translators repeatedly chose words and phrases that accurately represent the Hebrew concepts, then there is an argument to say that they understood the concepts from their own cultural background, and that there are therefore similarities between the two cultures. For example, if the Hebrew word for “small farm” is translated in the Septuagint more along the lines of “estate”, then the translators apparently did not understand and accurately translate this word. If this is proven to be a trend, then it suggests that they were either incompetent, biased for some reason—or that they struggled to find a similar word in their lexicon, in which case we can conclude that there is little cultural similarity. However, if they repeatedly chose words that accurately represent the Hebrew concept then apparently they found such concepts readily understandable.<sup>229</sup>

Moving on to non-comparative categories—categories that can only tell us something about one of the cultures involved in the translation study—the first is simply whether agricultural terms are used to represent concepts that in the original have nothing to do with agriculture. For example if the English translators of an Inuit story use the verb, “to reap” for a word that in the Inuit language has nothing to do with agriculture, and this forms a trend, then we can conclude that English demonstrates a tendency toward agricultural language and that agriculture is a dominant force in the English cultural context. The second such category comes into focus by looking at what conclusions translators jumped to, what word’s they picked

inaccurately. For one familiar with the Greek cultural context for example, if Greek translators picked a word or phrase that does not accurately represent an original Hebrew concept, we can see that they apparently thought it meant this instead...and thus learn something about Greek culture. Hopefully this discussion clarifies and validates the following translation study.

Well, after having done the study, the thesis did indeed find things in relation to the subject at hand, but not what it expected. The main conclusion that came from a look at the words that the Septuagint translators used to translate the agricultural verses in Proverbs is that the translators were most certainly NOT agriculturalists, and that they were either Greeks who by this time in Greek history were far removed from the language and culture of Hesiod, or that they were—as the tradition ascribes—Jews, who knew Greek and translated without being familiar with or without showing an inclination toward agricultural terms.

The verses in Proverbs on agriculture (10.5, 11.26, 12.11, 13.23, 20.4, 23.10, 24.30-34, 27.18, 27.22, 27.23-27, 28.19, 31.16) show in the Septuagint a repeated choice of esoteric and non-agricultural terms, where in other translations (the King James Version, and the New International Version) agricultural terms are employed.

For example, in Proverbs 23.10, and 31.16, the Septuagint translates the Hebrew as κτήμα, “anything gotten, a piece of property, a possession”, whereas both English translations use agricultural terms. The Septuagint phrase in 23.10 translates as “you should not go into (possess) the property (κτήμα) of orphans”, whereas the KJV reads “and enter not into the *fields* of the fatherless”, and the NIV: “or encroach on the *fields* of the fatherless.”<sup>230</sup> In 31.16—which is a verse in the passage on the wife of noble character—the Septuagint uses κτήμα again, whereas the KJV has, “with the fruit of her hands she planteth a *vineyard*”, and the NIV, “out of her earnings she plants a *vineyard*.”<sup>231</sup>



And there are other instances of this—where the Septuagint shows no agricultural reference where the English translations do. For example, in three other instances out of the twelve total (including the two already mentioned making it five of the twelve) –Proverbs 10.5, 13.23, and 23.10—this shunning of agricultural terms is evident. 10.5 in the Septuagint translates as, “The wise son is shaken from sleep, but the wicked son is cursed with laziness.”<sup>232</sup> The KJV rendering of this goes, “He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.” And the NIV reads, “He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleep during harvest is a disgraceful son.” Proverbs 13.23 in the Septuagint says, “The righteous will make wealth and then some, but the unrighteous are quickly cut off.”<sup>233</sup> Whereas the KJV has, “Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgement.” And the NIV again along the same lines as the KJV: “A poor man’s fields may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away.”

So in a significant number of instances the verses that are replete with agricultural terminology in English translations show none whatsoever in the Septuagint. This indicates that the translators were either Greeks who were far distanced from the agricultural world of their ancestors, or were Jews who were either not familiar with the Greek terms or did not show an inclination towards agricultural terminology.

## **APPENDIX F: A BRIEF HISTORY OF AGRARIANISM**

The following is a very brief history of agrarianism as seen through the lens of this thesis, which will hopefully at least begin to fill in some of the gaps that have to exist in such a study that tries to bridge ancient history and modern issues.<sup>234</sup>

In terms of having gone farthest in Agrarian ideas in literary and intellectual avenues, Greece lays the greatest claim. This is proven in that Virgil used Hesiod as his blueprint for the *Georgics* and Theocritus for the *Eclogues* and not (if there were to have been such Greek writers after Virgil) the other way around. In the Greek context, Hesiod laid the foundation and Xenophon chiseled the capstone. But of course Virgil also had his own tradition behind him. It is beyond doubt that agrarianism was also prominent in Roman history (as it was in Greece and Israel), and there is profound depth that Roman history adds to the term and ideas behind it. In what way Roman agrarianism differed from the Greek and Hebrew and how it impacted subsequent interaction of Western civilization with the natural world is a subject worthy of an exclusive study.

That οἰκονομία in the Greek context contained reference to not only the household but larger societal spheres was well developed in the Greek world by Xenophon's time. There are many references in the *Oeconomicus* to the household and the running a farm as being the state in microcosm—a profound point. That a diversified farm is the larger economy in microcosm forms another large subject. In any case, no substantial innovations in this system of thought occurred after Xenophon in the Greek world, at least of which this thesis is aware.

It is difficult to say whether the Middle Ages deserve the classification of “agrarian” because direct reference to the classical texts that originally encapsulated the ideas was not strong. It was certainly agricultural, and the interesting thing to note here is that if it was

agrarian (particularly the monastic communities) to what extent did Medieval man pick this up to from the Judaic strand of Agrarianism that this thesis develops as opposed to the Classical?

The modern period saw varying instances of a revival of Classical agrarianism because of the renewed influence in classical models after the Renaissance. Once again, to get into these large subjects in even close to sufficient detail is not possible here, and the author pleads relief and reference to Montmarquet.

In answer to the previous question, one point to pick out of this is that up to now scholars have not given the influence of the Judaic strand of agrarian thought both before and after the Renaissance enough attention. The strand of Judaic Agrarianism was never dominant, or even prominent within Christianity, but certain Christians have always been aware of it. This thesis defers to Medievalists for comment on that period. As for the modern era, the dominant modern agrarians certainly took their ideas primarily from the Classical models. For example, the Physiocrats of eighteenth century France believed agriculture was the source of all true wealth, and that the laws of the state should restrain commerce and industry, which bears close resemblance to the Roman model, and does not show the influence of Christianity.<sup>235</sup> Thomas Jefferson likewise transmuted his agrarian ideas from the texts of the Classical era, and not Genesis 1.28, Leviticus, Joshua, Judges, or Proverbs. However, other modern authors and the movements in which they were involved show more Christian influence. G.K. Chesterton is a prominent example of this as well as Wendell Berry.

## **APPENDIX G: WHERE ECOCRITICISM AND AGRARIAN ANALYSIS ARE GOING**

The rise of eco-criticism is an encouraging trend. This thesis contends that looking at agrarianism in certain texts is a part of this development but differs as well. The difference between agrarian analysis and eco-criticism is that the former is looking to find how agriculture functions practically in relation to the environment in a work of literature. Eco-criticism is the prerequisite for agrarian analysis, because to understand the relationship of agriculture to the natural world in a given text we still need to have determined what the relationship to nature is in this instance (if it is agrarian). The Achilles' heel of eco-criticism though is that it does not necessarily translate into solving environmental problems, and yet most eco-critical scholars are genuinely concerned and involved for those reasons. This is where agrarian analysis holds practical potential.

Looking at agrarianism in certain texts still falls within the cadre of eco-criticism, but the increased attention scholars have given to Berry indicates more scholarly attention to the subject. Kimberly K. Smith's *Wendell Berry and the Agrarian Tradition* (University of Kansas Press, 2003) is an example of this increase in scholarly attention in agrarianism. Other recent publications show interest in the subject in general.<sup>236</sup> Smith highlights the most important legacy that Wendell Berry's writing will leave. She writes, "By importing an environmental sensibility into traditional agrarianism, Berry and his followers have revived and transformed a major branch of the American intellectual heritage."<sup>237</sup> This thesis agrees with this statement and is an offshoot of this trend.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> And this thesis holds that it is man and not woman who is the culprit and thus the focus here.

<sup>2</sup> The term “Western man” is referring to those peoples descendant to a major extant from Greek and/or Roman civilization either genetically or culturally.

<sup>3</sup> This thesis settles on the term “cultural tradition” to describe both the Judeo-Christian and the Greco-Roman, even though the former’s present vestiges are assumed to be more religious. The Greek and the Hebrew specifically (when not including anything Roman or Christian) are referred to as civilizations.

<sup>4</sup> “Archetype” will refer to a culture specific example, and “type” to the overall Western phenomenon. A type here would be more than one or a group of archetypes. Some examples of “types” in this sense are the “scholar”, or the “philosopher”, or the “adventurer”, or the “statesman”, or the “man of letters” etc... Any iconic figure who is representative of a group or class and yet transcends specific times and cultures.

<sup>5</sup> For more on the organization of Mycenaean land-ownership see: P Halstead, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 1992, 57ff.

<sup>6</sup> Robyn Osborne; in: Anthony T. Edwards, *Hesiod’s Ascræa*. (University of California Press, 2004) 26-27.

<sup>7</sup> Carol Thomas and Craig Conant (1999, xviii-xxi); in: Edwards, 26-27.

<sup>8</sup> Victor Davis Hanson, *The Other Greek: the Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization*. (The Free Press, 1995) 28.

<sup>9</sup> Hanson, 32. Writing was completely lost in the Greece of the Dark Ages.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Freeman, *Egypt, Greece, and Rome: Civilizations of the Ancient Mediterranean*. (Oxford, 1996) 85.

<sup>13</sup> For information on further scholarship regarding the context portrayed in Homer see: Morris, I. “The Use and Abuse of Homer”. *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986), 81-138; Whitley, J. *Style and Society in Dark-Age*

<sup>14</sup> Hanson, 7.

<sup>15</sup> Here is a list of other references to agriculture in Homer: (Il. 14.122-124); (Od. 7.113, 11.489-91, 18.24, 18.357-76). There is a noticeable dearth of eco-criticism on the Homeric epics. The following will hopefully provide an entry into the field: J. O’ Sullivan. “Nature and Culture in Odyssey 9.” *Symbolae Osloenses* 65.7-17 (1990); J. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad* (Chicago, 1975); S. Shein, “Odysseus and Polyphemus in the Odyssey”, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 11.73-83.

<sup>16</sup> David W. Tandy & Walter C. Neale, *Hesiod’s Works and Days*. (University of California Press, 1996) 30. They do not specify whether “vegetables” includes grains, but that much of a farmer’s land used to grow vegetables, as in a garden, sounds high.

<sup>17</sup> V.N. Andreyev, “Some Aspects of Agrarian Conditions in Attica in the Fifth to Third Century,” *Eirene* 12 (1974), 14-15. (In Hanson, 188).

<sup>18</sup> Hanson, 188.

<sup>19</sup> M.I. Finley, *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece* (London, 1981) 65. (In Hanson, 188).

<sup>20</sup> Hanson, 186. Although the figures referenced in notes 19-21 come from Attica during the better documented fifth century, Hanson argues for continuity and semblance between city-states in this respect (Hanson, 21), and so these can hopefully give us a ballpark estimate of conditions for Hesiod’s time.

<sup>21</sup> Bintliff and Snodgrass (1985, 140-143). In Edwards, 17.

<sup>22</sup> Hugh G. Evelyn-White. *Hesiod: Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homericæ*. (1914; Cambridge, Mass. & London: Loeb, 1998). All quotes in English and Greek are from this edition unless otherwise stated.

<sup>23</sup> εἰς ἄφενος σπεύδοντ’ (23). “hastening towards wealth” is Most’s new translation. Glenn W. Most. *Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*. (Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard University Press, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Thoreau was not a fan of the “MORE.. MORE.

<sup>25</sup> West calls this praise of a miserable meal “a conscious paradox”: essentially, “better something than nothing”. ML West. *Hesiod’s Works and Days*. (Greek text with notes) (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978) 153.

<sup>26</sup> Hermann Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy*. (New York & London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973) 124.

<sup>27</sup> W.J. Verdenius, in his commentary, holds that the original meaning of ἄφενος “seems to be ‘abundant supply’”, while raising the possibility that Hesiod perhaps used it here for euphonic reasons. W.J. Verdenius. *A Commentary on Hesiod: Works and Days, vv.1-382*. (Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1985) 26. He also relates, however, the

view of F.A. Paley, that “by ἄφενος. as distinct from πλοῦτος, the wealth of the farmer is meant” (Verdenius, 26). F.A. Paley. *The Epics of Hesiod* (London, 1883). This is the nuance that I note and characterize.

<sup>28</sup> The phrase is οὐδέ τι σῖτον ἥσθιον (146-147). A footnote in the Evelyn-White Loeb edition communicates that the reference to ash trees on 145 may refer to ashen spear shanks, thus the connection with war, and that one translator (Goettling) translated it “A race terrible because of their ashen spears.”

<sup>29</sup> ἀνδράσιν ἀλφιστῆσιν (82). The second word taken alone can mean literally “barley-eaters” or “bread-eaters”, and is one example of both the idiosyncratically literal nature, and agricultural nature of the Greek language: θῆκε θεῶν κῆρυξ, ὀνόμηνε δὲ τήωδε γυναῖκα/ Πανδώραν, ὅτι πάντεσ' Ὀλυμπια δώματ' ἔκοντες/ δῶρον ἐδώρησαν, πῆμ' ἀνδράσιν ἀλφιστῆσιν (80-82).

<sup>30</sup> Herodotus is more balanced in describing non-agricultural people and does not always portray them in a negative light (Herodotus IV.19).

<sup>31</sup> Robin Osborne. *Greece in the Making*. (London & New York: Routledge, 1996) 154-155.

<sup>32</sup> οἱ ῥα θεοῖσι πεποιθότες ἀθανάτοισιν/ οὔτε φυτεύουσιν χερσὶν φυτὸν οὔτε ἀρόωσι· (1115-1116).

From French/Greek text: *L'Odyssée « Poésie Homérique » Tome II : Chants VIII-XV*. Texte établi et traduit par Victor Bérard. Neuvième tirage. Paris Société D'Édition « Les Belles Lettres ». 1974.

<sup>33</sup> Nelson, Stephanie A. *God and the Land: the Metaphysics of Farming in Hesiod and Virgil*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 37.

<sup>34</sup> In these instances the word is either δμῶή or δμῶς.

<sup>35</sup> Εὖτ' ἂν δὲ πρῶτιστ' ἄροτος θνητοῖσι φανείη,/ δὴ τότε' ἐφορμηθῆναι ὁμῶς δμῶές τε καὶ αὐτὸς/ αὐτὴν καὶ διερὴν ἀρότοιο καθ' ὥρην,/ πρῶι μάλα σπεύδων, ἵνα τοι πλήθωσιν ἄρουραι. (458-462)

<sup>36</sup> M.L West, *Hesiod, Theogony, Works and Days*, (Oxford University Press, 1988).

<sup>37</sup> The degree to which the different monastic communities got their views on physical work primarily from the Bible, or from Hesiod second hand though Virgil's *Georgics*, would be the subject of a specific study.

<sup>38</sup> James A. Montmarquet, *The Idea of Agrarianism*. (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1989) 32.

<sup>39</sup> For the important distinction between the planter and yeoman classes in the antebellum South, see Andrew Nelson Lytle's essay “The Hind Tit” in *I'll Take My Stand*, and for a discussion of the Southern yeoman class specifically see Frank Lawrence Owsley's *Plain Folk of the Old South* (1949).

<sup>40</sup> It is difficult to say if this has changed recently in a significant way, although the increased legitimacy of the environmental movement may have effects in this area if small-farming continues to grow in its association with it. And yet this is still one step removed from legal protection or political advocacy in the public forum, and actual perpetuation.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Jefferson was obviously a distinguished advocate of these ideas. For his views on this subject see: Everett E. Edwards. *Jefferson and Agriculture: A Sourcebook*. (Published by US Department of Agriculture, 1943); also: Whitney A. Griswold. *Farming and Democracy*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

<sup>42</sup> μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι καιρὸς δ' ἄρ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος (694).

<sup>43</sup> Tandy and Neale, 68 (nt.43).

<sup>44</sup> This thesis is not aware of studies on women in agrarianism per se, although the following might offer an introduction to the more general subject: P. Herfst, *Le Travail de la femme dans la Grèce ancienne* (1922); D.M. Schaps, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece* (1979); J. Archer et al (eds.), *Women in Ancient Societies* (1994).

<sup>45</sup> Fränkel, 129.

<sup>46</sup> Of the translations available, that in French with the Greek text facing by Paul Mazon (1947) was very good; the Greek/English translations in English are not as fluid or convincing; of the English only Hines's new translation passes as quite good (2005), as well as Tandy and Neale's (1996).

<sup>47</sup> A standardized text of Hesiod did not appear until Rzach's *Hesiodi Carmina* (1902). (Tandy and Neale, 2).

<sup>48</sup> Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, U. von. *Hesiodos Erga*. Berlin, ed.1962.

<sup>49</sup> Tandy & Neale, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Jaeger cites Wilamowitz often, showing that he was the authority up to that point.

<sup>51</sup> Werner Jaeger. *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*. Vol.1. Trans. by Gilbert Highet. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945) 58-59.

<sup>52</sup> Jaeger, 62.

<sup>53</sup> Herodotus asserted that both Homer and Hesiod had lived 400 years before his own time, that is, about 830-820 BC. Hugh G. Evelyn-White. *Hesiod: Homeric Hymns, Epic Cycle, Homerica*. (1914; Cambridge, Mass. & London:

Loeb, 1998) xxvi. Although the dating of the poem gets into to what degree one sees it as representing Dark Age or polis context. See the discussion for this further on in this section.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>55</sup> Fränkel, ix.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>58</sup> νήπιε Πέρση,/ ἔργα, τά τ' ἀνθρώποισι θεοὶ διετεκμήραντο, (397-398)

<sup>59</sup> Fränkel, 126.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>61</sup> James A. Montmarquet. *The Idea of Agrarianism*. (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1989).

Montmarquet's study has some flaws in the sloppiness of the language and un-factual comments, but it is still an impressive work because of its scope, and as was mentioned is the only one of its kind.

<sup>62</sup> See the work of M.C. Amouretti for example (in Bibliography I).

<sup>63</sup> Lattimore (1959), Wender (1973), Athanassakis (1983), Frazier (1983), West (1988), and Lombardo (1993). In Tandy and Neale, 2-3.

<sup>64</sup> See essay "A Secular Pilgrimage" in: Wendell Berry. *A Continuous Harmony* (Washington D.C.: Shoemaker and Hoard, reprint of 1970, 1972 ed.).

<sup>65</sup> For another detailing of scholarship on Hesiod see the essay "Introduction" by Apostolos N. Athanassakis, in *Ramus* 21 (1992) 1-10.

<sup>66</sup> The consensus was founded on Edourd Will's 1957 article "Aux Origines Du Régime Foncier Grec, Homère, Hésiode, et L'arrière-Plan Mycénien." *Revue des Études Anciennes* 59 : 5-50. (In Edwards, 1).

<sup>67</sup> Hanson, 125. The main features of Solon's economic legislation appears to be the release of debtor-slaves and the removal of unlawful enclosures, Hanson's characterization speaking to the latter. In general we should keep in mind that the two conspicuous examples of agrarian reforms in antiquity are those of Solon in Attica and the Gracchi in Italy. This thesis also notes those of Lycurgus in Lacedemonia that Plutarch describes in his life.

<sup>68</sup> Edwards, 4.

<sup>69</sup> Boeotia was dominated by the city of Thebes from circa the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC; but a number of cities also existed in the territory.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., xii.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 2. The view we have from Theognis is from the other side: the feeling of the aristocracy of being under siege from other classes (Freeman, 182).

<sup>73</sup> See: Karl Polanyi. 1977. *The Livelihood of Man*. Academic Press. (ed. By Harry W. Pearson); and for a more recent Marxist overview of major Greek works see: Peter W. Rose, *Sons of the Gods, Children of Earth: Ideology and Literary Form in Ancient Greece* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

<sup>74</sup> Hanson has compared his Classical colleagues to the Linear B scribes of the Mycenaean period (*The Other Greeks*, 417). He has also come out strongly in favor of the war in Iraq. The second decision is unfortunate and reinforces that Hanson has a habit of needlessly discrediting his valid assertions.

<sup>75</sup> Hanson, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Tandy and Neale, 3.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>78</sup> Ian Morris. *Archeology as Cultural History. Words and Things in Iron Age Greece* (Oxford, 2000) 164, 166.

<sup>79</sup> Edwards, 26.

<sup>80</sup> Hanson, 45. See Appendix C for a more detailed look at γεωργός and other Greek terms.

<sup>81</sup> Tandy and Neale, 1.

<sup>82</sup> N. Nelson, *Medieval Agrarian Economy* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1936) 7. Nelson says, "The individual farmer with his own land to be cultivated at this own will and in his own way appears rarely, if at all."

<sup>83</sup> David Stockton. *The Classical Athenian Democracy*. (New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990) 8.

<sup>84</sup> πεντάκοσιομεδιμοι (Thuc.3.16) (Arist. Pol. 2.12,6) (Plut. Solon 18); ἵππεις (Thuc. 7.75) for one to be a member of this class one had to possess land producing 300 medimni, a charger, and a hackney for their groom or esquire (Liddell & Scott); ζευγίται, so called for being able to keep a team (ζεῦγος) of oxen (Arist. Pol 2.12.6); θῆτες (Arist. Pol. 2.12,6; 4.4,10; 6.7,1).

<sup>85</sup> Stockton (1990), 26.

<sup>86</sup> γεωργός is the Greek term for "small land-owners" (Arist. Pol. 4.12,3). It is interesting to note that the word does not occur in *Works and Days*. This may mean that it simply never came up or could reinforce the overall

picture that Hesiod is not a self-conscious, self-styled farmer who thinks he is anything special, or that farming is a blissful occupation.

<sup>87</sup> This supplementary information is an attempt to focus on comparative elements between the two through a study of the Greek terms the translators used.

<sup>88</sup> Evan Eisenberg, "The Ecology of Eden". In: Hava Tirosh-Samuelson (editor). *Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed Word*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002) 31. This must be referring to some sort of commons.

<sup>89</sup> Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, 31.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>92</sup> "Israel and Judah". *The Encyclopaedia of World History*. 2001. <<http://www.bartleby.com/67/104.html>>

<sup>93</sup> "The New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period (18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> Dynasties)." *The Encyclopedia of World History*. 2001. <<http://www.bartleby.com/67/93.html#c2p00137>>

<sup>94</sup> Tirosh-Samuelson, 39.

<sup>95</sup> The Harvard collection in general is comprised of highly academic contributions that do not provide many practical insights into Judaism's relation to the environment, but Eisenberg's essay stands out.

<sup>96</sup> Tirosh-Samuelson, 43.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 45.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 39-41.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 39. He does not give evidence to clarify the exact nature of the Egyptian influence or involvement.

Another interesting point Eisenberg raises is that Ezek.28.12-16, which refers of the king Tyre as having been in Eden, describes the history of the Canaanites. This would trace the descendants of the Canaanites through Tyre to the Carthaginians. This is not usually thought of when Carthage is being discussed.

<sup>101</sup> This intimate knowledge of local geography found in Joshua is noteworthy because it argues both that the book was written after the Israelites had lived in the Promised Land for quite some time, and that the Israelites knew and loved every nook and cranny of it.

<sup>102</sup> All quotes from the Bible are the following translation unless otherwise stated: *The Holy Bible, New International Version*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984).

<sup>103</sup> "redemption" or "right or price of redemp." (*geullah*): Lev.27.20, Ruth 4.7; Jer.32.7, 32.8; "to free" (by avenging or repaying) (*gaal*) (in agricultural sense): Lev.25.25, 25.26, 25.48, 25.49; Lev.27.13, 27.15, 27.19, 27.20, 27.31; Ruth 4.4, 4.6; (in non-agricultural sense): Gen.48.16; Ex.6.6; Psalms 69.18, 72.14, 74.2, 77.15, 103.4; Isa.43.1, 44.22, 48.26; Lamentations 3.58; Hos.13.14; Mic.4.10; "freedom" or "redemption" (*geullah*): Lev.25.26, 25.29, 25.32; "to be or become freed" or "redeemed" (*gaal*)(2): Lev.25.30, 25.54; Lev.27.20, 27.27, 27.28, 27.33. Leviticus chapter 27.16-25 is also a detailing of the contingencies and requirements surrounding "sanctifying" and "redeeming" a field.

<sup>104</sup> Tirosh-Samuelson, 41.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 38-39.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 27. Eisenberg in the first instance is denoting the Canaanite and Israelite, which his thesis extends to the Archaic Greek, and in the second the Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian.

<sup>110</sup> There are many ancient and modern examples of this. For example, the Roman "bread and circuses" and the New Deal. For the unquestionably best discussion of this subject to which the author is openly indebted, see De Tocqueville. Alexis De Tocqueville. *De la Démocratie en Amérique I*. (Édition Gallimard, 1961), 148-149, 162-163, especially 318, also 390; *Vol.II* : 422, 424-425, 427, 342, 432-438.

<sup>111</sup> The section on criticism contains more on the subject of dates. The book of Proverbs begins with the statement that these are the proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel (Prov. 1.1).

<sup>112</sup> In fact the Old Testament seems to represent each of these classes in its different books: the Torah being the proof of the existence of the priests, the major and minor prophetic books of the prophets, and the wisdom literature of the counsel of the elders (this last also known as the "counsel of the wise").

<sup>113</sup> A. Cohen. *Proverbs*. (1946; London, Jerusalem, New York: The Soncino Press, 1985) xi.

<sup>114</sup> Cohen, xi.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., xi.



<sup>116</sup> The books of the major and minor prophets also hold much for agrarian analysis. The *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, whose entry on agrarianism shows an in depth knowledge of the sources, says in referring to the Prophets that, “the main social problem was the preservation of a free peasantry...” This leaves the door wide open for analysis.

“Agrarianism,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, (1907).

<sup>117</sup> For the period leading up to the first exile, there is also the evidence of the strange carrot dangled in front of the noses of the besieged residents of Jerusalem by the Assyrians during the reign of Hezekiah (c.715-686 BC), where the Assyrian commander enjoins them to, “Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every one of you will eat from his own vine and fig tree and drink water from his own cistern, until I come and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey...” The Assyrian social structure was one employing mass slave-gangs of Arameans—who as the slaves of the later Roman Empire eventually took over the former empire of their masters—not one of small independently owned farms. So the Assyrian’s taunts could be a reference to a system or practice for which the Jews were known.

<sup>118</sup> For a very brief history of agrarianism as seen through the lens of this thesis see Appendix F.

<sup>119</sup> Other translations of the Bible divide the book of Proverbs at different points.

<sup>120</sup> Or “Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue (17.28).”

<sup>121</sup> Or “Better to meet a bear robs of her cubs than a fool in his folly (17.12).”

<sup>122</sup> If a simple “right and wrong” dualism were the case here, the following proverbs (to cite a few examples) would not fit: “Many are the plans of a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails (19.21)” or “A kin’s rage is like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass (19.12)”. To state it another way, the parallel structure does not evidence a belief in some abstract “right and wrong” than one can impose upon every situation, but rather a belief that truth is arrived at through the experience of real-life situations, and is best illustrated through two situations or ideas that clarify each other. This demonstrates a practical mindset, and is the derivative of the agricultural society from which the proverbs originated. For a respected work of scholarship on the parallelism of Hebrew proverbs, see: James L. Kugel. *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and its History*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

<sup>123</sup> The section on criticism, c), will relate the views of scholars regarding such questions of origin.

<sup>124</sup> R.N. Whybray, *Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press) 9. It is assumed that Whybray is referring to the social group among whom the proverbs originated.

<sup>125</sup> Whybray (1990), 62.

<sup>126</sup> The author confesses genuine regret that he is not able to read one of the two languages (Hebrew) of the works he has chosen to compare. He is usually the first to consider knowledge of original languages to be essential to an accurate reading of a work. However, the lack of eco-critical analysis of Proverbs, and the implications of the comparative thesis hopefully excuse the lack of qualification for the undertaking.

<sup>127</sup> Cohen, xiv.

<sup>128</sup> R.N. Whybray, *The Book Of Proverbs* (Cambridge University Press, 1972) 16.

<sup>129</sup> However, this thesis must be careful not to draw a neat division between the Law and the Hebrew wisdom literature, as one scholar (Peter Enns) has rightly pointed out that the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament is in many ways interpreting the Law. The awareness of this point came by word of mouth.

<sup>130</sup> Whybray (1972), xiv.

<sup>131</sup> For example, we don’t think it sounds strange for an English proverbs to say, “Enough is as good as a feast” and not “Enough is as good as a feast for an Englishman”.

<sup>132</sup> Agriculture: 10.5, 11.26, 12.11, 13.23, 20.4, 23.10, 24.30-34, 27.18, 27.22, 27.23-27, 28.19(\*), 31.16. Because many of the proverbs are self-contained units (not related to the next), while a minority span more than one, “passage” will be used instead of “verse” to cover both instances.

<sup>133</sup> Work and hunger: : 10.3, 12.9, 12.11, 20.13, 28.21(\*)

<sup>134</sup> Work: 10.4, 12.24, 12.27, 13.4, 14.23, 18.9, 19, 24, 21.25, 26.15.

<sup>135</sup> Neighbors: 3.28-29, 6.1-5, 11.9, 11.12, 13.25, 14.21, 15.17, 21.10, 24.28, 25.17, 25.18, 26.18-19, 27.10, 27.14, and 29.5.

<sup>136</sup> Wealth and poverty: 6.10-11, 10.2, 10.15, 10.22, 11.4, 11.24, 11.28, 13.11, 13.18, 14.20, 14.24, 15.6, 15.16, 16.8, 18.11, 20.21, 21.5, 21.6, 21.17, 22.16.

<sup>137</sup> For example, “The wages of the righteous brings them life, but the income of the wicked brings them punishment” (10.16). Is this referring to the wages agricultural day laborers, or some other form of wages? Given that according to the Law the wages of an agricultural worker were the basis for determining wages in general (Leviticus 25.50), it could be included in the list on agriculture but does not refer to it explicitly so here is not. See also Job 7.1 to clarify that a “hired man” is referring an agricultural situation.

<sup>138</sup> Whybray (1990), 13.

- <sup>139</sup> Ibid, 23.
- <sup>140</sup> Cohen, 56.
- <sup>141</sup> For the injunctions in the Torah referring to firstfruits see Deuteronomy 18.4, and 26.1-15.
- <sup>142</sup> The information concerning this point came by word of mouth.
- <sup>143</sup> Whybray (1972), 172.
- <sup>144</sup> Ibid, 172. Whybray says here that Agur's sayings probably originally did not extend past the first three, possibly four verses.
- <sup>145</sup> According to the Law, such vulnerable cases were under the special protection of Yahweh (Exodus 22.22-24, Deuteronomy 10.18-19).
- <sup>146</sup> Whybray (1990), 38.
- <sup>147</sup> See Proverbs 1.20, 3.13-18, 4.6, 8.1, 9.1-12, and 14.33.
- <sup>148</sup> See also *Works and Days* 702-703; Semonides fr.7.87-97.
- <sup>149</sup> However, apparently these two nouns in the Hebrew are cognates, which means that the verse may be referring to two types of the same thing, either vineyards or fields. Although the NIV and the KJV make the distinction.
- <sup>150</sup> Tirosh-Samuelson, 56-57.
- <sup>151</sup> Eisenberg goes on: "For a clear presentation of this general approach, see Robert B. Coote, *Early Israel: A New Horizon* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990)...On the ecology and husbandry of ancient Israel, see Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible*; David C. Hopkins, *The Highlands of Canaan: Agricultural Life in the Early Iron Age* (Sheffield, England: Almond, 1985); Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*; Reifenberg, *The Struggle between the Desert and the Sown*; Hillel, *Out of the Earth*; and the eccentric but interesting works of Nogah Hareuveni, founder of the biblical landscape garden Ne'ot Kedumin." (Tirosh-Samuelson, 56-57). He also notes that Theodore Hiebert, a Harvard scholar, shares many of his views on nature in ancient Israel in his *The Yahwist's Landscape: Nature and Religion in Early Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). (Ibid., 57)
- <sup>152</sup> Whybray (1990), 44 (nt.1). He lists as expressing this view: A. Kuschke, "Arm und reich im Alten Testament mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der nachexilischen Zeit", *ZAW* 57 (1939), p.47; R. Gordis, "The Social Background of Wisdom Literature", *HUCA* 18 (1943/44), p.77-118; H.J. Hermisson, *Studien zur israelitischen Spruchweisheit* (1968), p.94-96; B.V. Malchow, "Social Justice in the Wisdom Literature" (1982); Coggins, "The Old Testament and the Poor" *ET* 99 (1987-88), p.11-14; T.R. Hobbs, "Reflections on 'the Poor' and the Old Testament", *ET* 100 (1988-89), p.291-294.
- <sup>153</sup> For Near Eastern sources that may have influenced or are comparable to the Wisdom books in the Bible, see: James B. Pritchard. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. (Princeton, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. w/ supplements, 1969). This is the classic source for English language scholarship of scholarly translations of Egyptian, Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Babylonian, and Assyrian documents; from annotated bibliography in: Rev. Joseph W. Gaspar. *Social Ideas in the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*. (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1947).
- <sup>154</sup> Whybray (1990), 59.
- <sup>155</sup> M. Lurje. *Studien zur Geschichte der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Verhältnisse im israelitisch-jüdischen Reich* [1927]. (BZAW 45: Töpelmann, 1927) 17-19. From Whybray (1990), 45 (nt.1).
- <sup>156</sup> von Rad made this point, in opposition to Hermisson and Skladny (*Die ältesten Spruchsammlungen in Israel* [1962]), in *Weisheit in Israel*. (Neukirchener Verlag, 1970) 105; *ET: Wisdom in Israel*. (London: SCM, 1972) 76. The "magisterial" study Whybray refers to is: G. von Rad. *Theologie des Alten Testament I*. (Munich: Kaiser, 1957). *ET: Old Testament Theology I*. (Edinburgh & London: Olivier & Boyd, 1962)
- <sup>157</sup> Cohen, ix.
- <sup>158</sup> Ibid., xi.
- <sup>159</sup> Ibid, xiii.
- <sup>160</sup> Whybray (1972), 3.
- <sup>161</sup> Ibid, 2.
- <sup>162</sup> Ibid, 2-3. Whybray cites 25.11-12 as an example.
- <sup>163</sup> Ibid, 4.
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid, 7.
- <sup>165</sup> Ibid, 6.
- <sup>166</sup> Whybray (1990), 9.
- <sup>167</sup> Ibid, 31.
- <sup>168</sup> Ibid, 31.
- <sup>169</sup> Ibid, 36. Leviticus 19.9-12 says, "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that

have fallen. Leave them for the poor and alien. I am the Lord your God. Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another. Do not swear falsely by the name of your God. I am the Lord (et al)."

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid, 34, 40.

<sup>172</sup> See Appendix G for a very brief statement on the state of eco-criticism in relation to this thesis.

<sup>173</sup> Hava Tirosh-Samuelson, xxxiv.

<sup>174</sup> The author mentions Protestantism because that is the branch of Christianity with which he is most familiar.

<sup>175</sup> I Samuel 5.5-9 says, "The king (David) and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites who lived there...David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the supporting terraces inward."

<sup>176</sup> Wendell Berry. *Standing by Words*. "Poetry and Place" (1983; Washington DC: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2005) 142-143.

<sup>177</sup> Berry (1983), 143. Miles Coverdale (1488-1568) worked off of Latin and German translations of the Bible, but... "If he was in fact (which has been questioned) the translator of the version of the Bible attributed to him, he is entitled to the credit for much of the noble language of the Authorized Version..." ("Coverdale," *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 1985 ed.) The Authorized Version (King James Version) was primarily derived from Tyndale's translation from the Hebrew, with references to the Vulgate, Erasmus's Latin version, and Luther's Bible ("Bible, The", Ibid.).

<sup>178</sup> Luther translated the verse, and the author does not know if he wrote commentary on it. In general, Montmarquet says that Luther was socially conservative when it came to occupational subjects; he says that after the barbarian invasions that the early Medieval Church put the scale of virtue with agriculture first, then handi-craft, and then commerce, and that Luther stuck to the program in this area. (Montmarquet, 115). Obviously this changed in Protestant countries as time passed, with an occupation in commerce and the professions becoming more socially desirable than earning a living off of owning agricultural land.

<sup>179</sup> Jeremy Cohen. "Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It": The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989).

<sup>180</sup> "Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" by Lynn White Jr. In: Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks of Literary Ecology*. (Athens and London, the University of Georgia Press, 1996).

<sup>181</sup> He asserts, "Especially in its Western form, Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has seen.(p.9)" Also, "No new set of basic values has been accepted in our society to displace those of Christianity. Hence we shall continue to have a worsening ecologic crisis until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man. (p.14)." Glotfelty & Fromm, 9,14.

<sup>182</sup> And "We would seem to be headed toward conclusions unpalatable to many Christians. Since both *science* and *technology* are blessed words in our contemporary vocabulary, some may be happy at the notions, first, that, viewed historically, modern science is an extrapolation of natural (Christian-NM) theology, and second, that modern technology is at least partly to be explained as an Occidental, voluntarist realization of the Christian dogma of man's transcendence of, and rightful mastery over, nature." Glotfelty and Fromm, 12.

<sup>183</sup> Also Amos 3.4-12; Micah. 5.8; Nahum. 2.11-12. These are references where the writers speak intimately about the animals, arguing that they were familiar with their habits, whereas those listed in the text are direct references.

<sup>184</sup> Even if this bias is taken in the sense of only seeing nature as something to be used (which this thesis has pointed out is true only in a limited, agricultural sense), there still remain other examples in the Old and New Testaments more valuing of wild nature for its own sake that would mitigate such a characterization in the extreme sense. The book of Job, particularly Job 34-42, should be referenced in this respect.

<sup>185</sup> "St. Paul," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol.XI. (New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1911).

<sup>186</sup> Other Greek words also contain this sense. Fränkel says, "'Order' (θήμις, δίκη, νόμος, etc...) is for early Greece an encompassing reality, within which no distinction need be drawn between natural order, social order, moral order. In this sense Hesiod speaks of πεδίσων νόμος (WD 388), i.e. the natural order for agriculture; and his Eunomia, together with her sisters Dike and Eirene, daughters of Themis and Zeus, are ὥραι ὠρεύουσι (*Theogony* 901-3) men's agricultural tasks. This is how the passage cited above (WD 225-47) is to be explained: if order (in this case justice) is injured by man, the consequence is cessation of natural order (in this case fertility of fields and wives, weather for seafaring, peace, etc...). (Fränkel, nt.32, p.131).

<sup>187</sup> De Tocqueville (Vol. I), 148-149, 316-318, 390; (Vol. II) 422, 424-425, 427, 432-438.

<sup>188</sup> Fränkel, 131.

<sup>189</sup> And if agriculture is not practiced it calls into question the civilized nature of the society.

<sup>190</sup> To what extent Plato reiterated Socrates is an eternal question; this thesis settles on the former.

<sup>191</sup> See: I.M. Crombie, *An Examination of Plato's Doctrines*, 2 vols. (1962, 1963); G. Vlastos (ed.), *Plato I and II* (1971); A. Riginos, *Platonica: the anecdotes concerning the Life and Writing of Plato* (1976). "Plato", *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2003 ed.

<sup>192</sup> A look at Augustinian scholarship in terms of his views of the body would be valuable to environmental dialogue. See: J. Burnaby, *Amor Dei* (1938); H.I. Marrou, *St. Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*, 4th edn. (1958); P. Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de St. Augustin* (1950); R. Holte, *Béatitude et Sagesse* (1962); P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (1967); H. Chadwick, *Augustine* (1986); C. Kirwan, *Augustine* (1989). "Augustine, St. (Aurelius Augustinus)", *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2003 ed.

<sup>193</sup> W. Jaeger, *Aristotle* (trans. by Richard Robinson; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948); W.D. Ross, *Aristotle* (5<sup>th</sup> ed. rev.; London: Methuen, 1956); H. Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of the Academy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1944); M. Burnyeat & E. Berti (ed.), *Aristotle on Science* (Padua, 1981); E. Hartman, *Substance, Body, and Soul* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977); C. Witt, *Substance and Essence in Aristotle* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989). "Aristotle," *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2003 ed.

<sup>194</sup> See: R. Wallis, *Neoplatonism* (London: Duckworth, 1995); P. Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and their Greek Sources* (trans. by Harry E. Wedeck; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969); J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (London: Duckworth, 1977); P. Merlan, *From Platonism to Neoplatonism* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. rev.; The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1960). From: "Neoplatonism", *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2003).

<sup>195</sup> But this remains less the case with mechanical science, which still is developed out of a reaction to nature as it is.

<sup>196</sup> Martin Heidegger. *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc.. 1977). There is more depth to Heidegger's essay, and it should be consulted for the original presentation. But in summation of this process this thesis will suggest that the order of the stages appears to have been: pure abstraction, objectification, and finally reapplication.

<sup>197</sup> Thus in this also do we see the succumbing of the feminine to an illness of the masculine.

<sup>198</sup> See: Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Origin of the Work of Art," in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001) 97. However specialized scholarship should be consulted for more germane references to this in Nietzsche's works.

<sup>199</sup> Friedrich Solmsen, "Hesiodic Motifs in Plato", in O. Reverdin (ed.), *Hésiode et son Influence*. Fondation Hardt, vol.7 (Geneva: Fond. Hardt, 1962) 176.

<sup>200</sup> Reverdin, 179.

<sup>201</sup> Or as he words it in another place, "The dynamism of religious devotion, shaped by the Judeo-Christian dogma of creation, gave it (science) impetus." Glotfelty and Fromm, 11-12.

<sup>202</sup> See: C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. (1964; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); *The Abolition of Man* (c.1947; NY: The Macmillan Co., 1953).

<sup>203</sup> *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*. (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1977) 163-164.

<sup>204</sup> Or in any other renewable resource economy.

<sup>205</sup> In its harmless form science is more of a diversion or leisure, something along the lines of an infinitely complex game of solitaire. The existence of this version confirms that it is not inherently destructive. But as a means of understanding reality it is incomplete, and therefore eventually harmful when it allows itself to be attached a linear line of increased reapplication and the mass-producing capabilities of Industrialism. Strictly speaking, the reapplication of abstract science is what has caused the twenty-first century dislocation from nature, and extreme industrialism (although now intertwined with the former) is what has effected the environmental consequences. What they share is the Platonic disdain for the practical use of the body—thus its advancement in this thesis as the underlying cause of the environmental crisis. If an apology of science and technology or an advancement of them as the solution to the crisis are undertaken, which is mostly the case in governmental and environmental circles, then an explanation of the paradox of the concurrent rise of modern science and technology with the environmental crisis must also be advanced.

<sup>206</sup> See Appendix G for a short discussion on where Agrarianism can go from here.

<sup>207</sup> De Tocqueville (Vol.II), 223, 249.

<sup>208</sup> See any of Berry's works but particularly *The Unsettling of America*.

<sup>209</sup> David Stockton. *The Gracchi*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) 64.

<sup>210</sup> Stockton says, "The tribunes of Tiberius and his younger brother Gaius mark a watershed in the history of the later Roman republic." Stockton, 4. The fight surrounding this law reveal fundamental dynamics in Roman history.

<sup>211</sup> Thomas P. Govan. "Agrarian and Agrarianism: A Study in the Use and Abuse of Words", in *The Journal of Southern History*, (Vol. XXX, Feb.1964) 36.

<sup>212</sup> Govan., 36.

- <sup>213</sup> Ibid., 39.
- <sup>214</sup> Ibid., 40.
- <sup>215</sup> Ibid., 39.
- <sup>216</sup> For more regarding Berry's views on the Vanderbilt Agrarians, see: Wendell Berry. *A Continuous Harmony: Essays Cultural and Agricultural*. (1970 & 1972; Washington D.C.: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2003) 64, 115.
- <sup>217</sup> See Berry's *The Hidden Wound* (1989) for more on this subject.
- <sup>218</sup> Wendell Berry, "The Agrarian Standard", *Orion*, Twentieth Anniversary Issue 2002.
- <sup>219</sup> Montmarquet, viii.
- <sup>220</sup> Od.1.190, 11.188, 17.18, 17.182, 22.47, ; Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus* 112, 1049; Ibid. *Electra* 313, 1051; Epicharmus 162; Euripies *Suppliant Women* 884; Thucydides 2.13 c.f 14; Plato *Laws* 881 C; Aristophanes *Frogs* 344; Xenophon *Memorabilia* 2.9; Ib. *Anabasis* 5.3.9.
- <sup>221</sup> Aristophanes *Clouds* 43. There is also ἄγροτης "a country-man, rustic": Eur. Or.1270; ἄγροτικός (adj.) "rustic": Eustathius *Opuscula* (ed. Tafel) (261.24).
- <sup>222</sup> ἄγροικος: Plato *Phaedrus* 229 E cf. Isocrates 98 D; also Aristotle *Nichomachean Ethics* 7.3.9; ἄγροτερος (adv.): Plato, *Republic* 361 E; ἄγροτερον: Ibid., *Phaedrus* 260 D; ἄγροικία Ibid., *Gorgias* 461 C, *Republic* 560 D; also Aristotle *Nichomachean Ethics* 2.7, 13; ἄγροικίζομαι: Plato., *Theaetetus* 146 A; this verb also in Plutarch *Sulla* 6; Aristides I.491. All of these citations employ the negative sense.
- <sup>223</sup> ἄγροικος: Aristophanes *Clouds* 628, 646; Ibid., *Acharnians* 674; ἄγρεϊος, Ibid., *Clouds* 655. *Clouds* is a play mocking Socrates as a corrupt teacher of rhetoric.
- <sup>224</sup> And in fact Ischomachus is the one giving the respected philosophic figure advice.
- <sup>225</sup> οἰκονομία "the management of a household or family, husbandry, thrift": Plat. *Apol.* 36B, *Rep.* 498A, Xen. *Oec.* 1.1; Arist. *Eth.* N.6.8,3, *Pol.* 1.3-13; in plural: Plat. *Rep.* 407B; Arist. *G.A.* 2.6,42. οἰκονομικός (adj.) "practiced in the management of a household or family": Plat. *Alc.* 1.133E, *Phaedr.* 248D, Xen. *Oec.* 1.3; Arist. *Pol.* 1.1,2; hence "thrifty, frugal, economical": Xen. *Mem.* 4.4,39; *Phylarch.* 50. οἰκονομός "one who manages a household,= οἰκδεσπότης, Xen. *Oec.* 1,2; Plat. *Rep.* 417A; also "a house-steward", being a slave: *Corpus Inscriptionum* (Böckhii) 2512; generally "a manager, administrator": Arist. *Pol.* 5.11,19; also could be a woman "a housekeeper, housewife": Phocyl. 3, Aesch. *Ag.* 155, *Lysias.* 92.22.
- <sup>226</sup> Hdt. 4.109., 5.6; Dem.933.fin; in absol., *Soph.* O.T. 859; Eur. *El.* 75; Aristophanes *Ach.* 611.
- <sup>227</sup> Hdt. 4.18; Ar. *Pax* 296; Plat. *Phaedr.* 276B.
- <sup>228</sup> Xenophon uses the two terms together αὐτ. γεωργοί (Xen. *Oec.* 5, 4).
- <sup>229</sup> Determining cultural similarity through language study is only one approach. This could be arrived at through anthropology or archaeology, for example. However, language study is an important approach to determining similarities in ways of thinking, and in literate cultures particularly to determine similarities in intellectual concepts.
- <sup>230</sup> μὴ μεταθῆς ὅρια αἰώνια εἰς δὲ κτῆμα ὀρφανῶν μὴ εἰσέλθης. (*Prov.* 23.10)
- <sup>231</sup> θεωρήσασα γεώργιον ἐπρίατο ἀπὸ δὲ καρπῶν χειρῶν αὐτῆς κατεφύτευσεν κτῆμα. (*Prov.* 31.16)
- <sup>232</sup> διεσώθη ἀπὸ καύματος υἱὸς νοήμων ἀνεμόφθορος δὲ γίνεται ἐν ἀμῆτῳ υἱὸς παράνομος. (*Prov.* 10.5)
- <sup>233</sup> δίκαιοι ποιήσουσιν ἐν πλούτῳ ἔτη πολλὰ ἄδικοι δὲ ἀπολοῦνται συντόμως. (*Prov.* 13.23)
- <sup>234</sup> For a more thorough airing please see Montmarquet.
- <sup>235</sup> Montmarquet, 7.
- <sup>236</sup> See the following recent titles listed in full in Bibliography I: Logsdon (2007), Ochiai (2004), Summerhill (2005), Freyfogle (2001, 2003, 2006, 2007), Wirzba (2004) etc...
- <sup>237</sup> Kimberly K. Smith. *Wendell Berry and the Agrarian Tradition* (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2003) 2.

### **VITA**

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