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ON BABBALANJA'S STOICISM In *MARDI*

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It seems that Melville at the time of writing *Mardi* concerned himself not so much with revealed religion as with natural religion. Babbalanja, the philosopher, accepts "the theology in the grass and the flower, in seed-time and in harvest." When "broken with spontaneous doubts," he sees: "...but two things in all Mardi to believe: —that I myself exist, and that I can most happily, or least miserably exist, by the practice of righteousness."<sup>1</sup> During the tour of the world represented by the archipelago called Mardi<sup>2</sup> in quest of the maiden Yillah ("the Ultimate," or Ultimate Truth),<sup>3</sup> it is noteworthy that Babbalanja does most of the talking. The chapters of *Mardi* dealing with the philosophical debates among Babbalanja, Yoomy the poet, Mohi the historian, and Media the king are reminiscent of Cicero's dialogue *De Natura Deorum* (*On the Nature of the Gods*) or Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*; and the difference is, that none of the roles of a Stoic, and an Epicurean, and a Skeptic are fixed upon the travelers, and that whenever occasion requires, each role is acted by Babbalanja. His views and those of the ancient sage Bardianna, whom he so reverently quotes, are especially important as affording insight into ideas that Melville entertained at this time. The significant place that Melville gave *Mardi* to a book by a "heathen" author throws much light on his own ideas about ethics and religion. Babbalanja comes by chance upon *A Happy Life*, by an anonymous pagan author, and reads from it to the other travelers. What Melville does here is simply to quote a passage, in condensed form and with minor changes, from Seneca's *Morals*:<sup>4</sup>

I would bear the same mind, whether I be rich or poor, whether I get or lose in the world. I will reckon benefits well placed as the fairest part of my possession, not valuing them by number or weight, but by the profit and esteem of the receiver; accounting myself never the poorer for anything I give. What I do shall be done for conscience, not ostentation. I will eat and drink, not to gratify my palate, but to satisfy nature. I will be cheerful to my friends, mild and placable to my enemies. I will prevent an honest request, if I can foresee it; and I will grant it, without asking. I will look upon the whole world as my country; and upon Oro [God] both as the witness and the judge of my words and my deeds. I will live and die with this testimony: that I loved a good conscience; that I never invaded another man's liberty; and that I preserved my own. I will govern my life and my thoughts, as if the whole world were to see the one, and to read the other; for what does it signify, to make anything a secret to my neighbor, when to Oro all our privacies are open.

Righteousness is sociable and gentle; free, steady, and fearless; full of inexhaustible delights.

The true felicity of life is to understand our duty to Oro. True joy is a serene and sober motion.

A peaceful conscience, honest thoughts, and righteous actions are blessings without end, satiety, or measure. The poor man wants many things; the covetous man, all. It is not enough to know Oro, unless we obey Oro.<sup>5)</sup>

The aphoristic sentence form, the disregard of public opinion, the moral certainty, the constant appeal to nature, as expressed here, are all typical of the later Stoics. Not he is happy "who can alter matter, but he who can alter my state of mind."<sup>6)</sup> Emerson was well read in the philosophy of Stoicism, and the stoic code of behavior as well as its thought appealed to Emerson's reserved and unemotional nature. For him the Stoic philosophy was a response to the loss of his own orthodox Unitarian Christianity, —a deliberate rejection of the faith of his forefathers.<sup>7)</sup> "The very spirit of the first followers of Alma [Jesus Christ], as recorded in the legends," says Mohi. "Alma all over....sure, you read from his sayings." Babbalanja answers that they are "from one, who though he lived ages ago, never saw, scarcely heard of Alma," and continues: "...that a mere

man, and a heathen, in that most heathenish time, should give utterance to such heavenly wisdom, seems more wonderful than that an inspired prophet should reveal it;” and when Babbalanja says, “He speaks not by authority,” Melville, it is clear, has in mind the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus instructed his followers in doing the “righteousness,” which means “that which is but the price paid down for something else,” as interpreted by Babbalanja.<sup>8)</sup> One of the reasons Melville admired Seneca is that Seneca taught the moral beauty of the good life itself: “And is it not more divine in this philosopher, to love righteousness for its own sake, than for pious sages to extol it as the means of everlasting felicity?”

Apart from the attitude toward immortality and the absence of reference to Jesus, the views on ethics and religion expressed here, as will be shown later, are fundamentally the same as those attributed to the inhabitants of Serenia, who represent Melville’s true Christianity. What Melville considers true in this respect, however, stands out in greater relief when set against his unfavorable criticism of Christianity. Babbalanja cannot accept Mohi’s story from his “Chronicles” about “an illustrious prophet, and teacher divine,” who had appeared to the Mardians “under the different titles of Brami, Manko, and Alma.”<sup>9)</sup> He rejects the conclusion that although the maxims of these three incarnations were similar, “as Alma, adapting his lessons to the improved condition of humanity, the divine prophet had more completely unfolded his scheme; as Alma, he had made his last revelation.”<sup>10)</sup> From the various constructions of the principles of Alma, Babbalanja affirms, have come ten thousand errors. He concludes:

.....then, I wholly reject your Alma; not so much because of all that is hard to be understood in his histories; as because of obvious and undeniable things all around us; which, to me, seem at war with an unreserved faith in his doctrine as promulgated here in Maramma.

The people of Maramma believe in the divine authority of Alma and

in the total depravity of man. Oro and Alma, they say, command that man grovel in the dust and "declare himself the vilest creature that crawls."

This is why the ancients taught the maxim, "Know thyself."<sup>11</sup> That is always "best which gives me to myself. The sublime is excited in me by the stoical doctrine, Know thyself. That which shows God in me, fortifies me. That which shows God out of me, makes me a wart and a wen."<sup>12</sup> It may be a question whether "we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity, entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?"<sup>13</sup>

The doctrine of Christianity is based to such an extent on authority derived from Christ that into the discussion between Babbalanja and Mohi steals the Biblical concept of election.<sup>14</sup> It was devoutly believed in Maramma that Alma appeared to the Mardians to exhort them "to good by promises of beatitude hereafter."<sup>15</sup> He came "to guarantee our eternal felicity; but according to what is held in Maramma, that felicity rests on so hard a proviso, that to a thinking mind, but very few of our sinful race may secure it."<sup>16</sup> Mohi says:

"Do you deny, then, the everlasting torments?"

"'Tis not worth a denial. Nor by formally denying it, will I run the risk of shaking the faith of thousands, who in that pious belief find infinite consolation for all they suffer in Mardi."

"How?" said Media; "are there those who soothe themselves with the thought of everlasting flames?"

"One would think so, my lord, since they defend that dogma more resolutely than any other. Sooner will they yield you the isles of Paradise, than it. And in truth, as liege followers of Alma, they would seem but right in clinging to it as they do; for, according to all one hears in Maramma, the great end of the prophet's mission seems to have been the revealing to us Mardians the existence of horrors, most hard to escape. But better we were all annihilated, than one man should be damned."

Rejoined Media: "But think you not, that possibly, Alma may have been misconceived? Are you certain that doctrine is his?"

"I know nothing more than that such is the belief in this land."<sup>17</sup>

Emerson is very outspoken and declares all church rites futile. "Alone in all history he [Jesus Christ] estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me."<sup>18)</sup> As it appears to us, historical Christianity "is not the doctrine of the soul, but an exaggeration of the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has dwelt, it dwells, with noxious exaggeration about the *person* of Jesus. The soul knows no persons."<sup>19)</sup> Babbalanja cites his authority Bardianna: "The soul needs no mentor, but Oro; and Oro, without proxy. Wanting Him, it is both the teacher and the taught."<sup>20)</sup> It follows that "...out of itself, Religion has nothing to bestow....her only, but ample reward, herself. He who has this, has all. He who this, whether he kneels to an image of wood, calling it Oro; or to an image of air, calling it the same; whether he fasts or feasts...that man can be no richer."<sup>21)</sup>

As to God's omnipresence, Melville believes that "orthodoxy and heresy are one."<sup>22)</sup> Referring to the idea around which Melville writes God, the Master Potter, molding people and nations, Babbalanja says: "[That a man] is not bad, is not of him. Potter's clay and way are all moulded by hands invisible. The soil decides the man."<sup>23)</sup> Melville here sees how it is that the distinction between Stoicism and Christianity, a distinction he credits to the Stoics, is reason or logos. Babbalanja asks: "...shall we employ it but for a paw, to help us to our bodily needs, as the brutes use their instinct? ...we are men, we are angels. And in his faculties, high Oro is but what a man would be, infinitely magnified."<sup>24)</sup> Similarly Bardianna affirms that "we need not be told what righteousness is; we were born with the whole Law in our hearts."<sup>25)</sup> And Emerson speaks in the same strain: "...as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away."<sup>26)</sup>

Melville expressed no doubt at this time about the being of God. "God is my Lord," he says emphatically; "and though many satel-

lites revolve around me, I and all mine revolve round the great central Truth, sun-like, fixed, and luminous forever in the foundationless firmament."<sup>27)</sup> The general tone of *Mardi* makes one feel that Babbalanja speaks for Melville when he asserts that "atheists there are none. For in things abstract, men but differ in the sounds that come from their mouths, and not in the wordless thoughts lying at the bottom of their beings."<sup>28)</sup> From this kind of pantheism the question "What is God?" is answered by the question, "What is God not?" or by the idea that "to Himself His own universe is He."<sup>29)</sup> The Stoics undertook, not only to prove that gods exist, but also to explain their nature. But these inquiries were preliminary to their main thesis that the universe and all its parts are ordered and administered by God and that all events subserve the highest end, the welfare and advantage of men.<sup>30)</sup> In taking up this position they found themselves in direct hostility to Epicurus, who denied the interference of the gods in the world of nature. Melville has the poet, Yoomy, say that God champions the right among men, but the philosopher, Babbalanja, argues that God is often indifferent as to whether right or wrong prevails among men.

In the visit to South Vivenza the travelers meet with "Nulli: a cadaverous, ghost-like man; with a low ridge of forehead; hair, steel-gray; and wondrous eyes,"<sup>31)</sup> from whom they learn the position which he takes on the question of slavery. Ironically, they have already observed in the north the statue of the helmeted female, the tutelar deity of Vivenza, with the inscription, "In-this-republican-land-all-men-are-born-free-and-equal," and the addition, "Except-the-tribe-of-Hamo."<sup>32)</sup> Indeed, Nulli, the Epicurean exponent in *Mardi*, as he perhaps ought to be called, must be seen against the background of the United States of the pre-Civil War times when he says to the King Media:

"These serfs are happier than thine; though thine, no collars wear;  
more happy as they are, than if free. Are they not fed, clothed, and cared

for ? ”

“Thoughts and cares are life, and liberty, and immortality” cried Babbalanja; “and are their souls, then, blown out as candles ? ”<sup>33)</sup>

“Ranter ! they are content,” cried Nulli.

“Oro ! Art thou ? ” cried Babbalanja ; “and doth this thing exist ? It shakes my little faith. “Then, turning upon Nulli,” “How can ye abide to sway this curs’d dominion ? ”

“Peace, fanatic ! Who else may till unwholesome fields, but these ? And as these beings are, so shall they remain ; ’tis right and righteous ! Mamma champions it ! I swear it ! The first blow struck for them, dissolves the union of Vivenza’s vales. The northern tribes well know it ; and know me.”

“Pray heaven ! ” cried Yoomy, “they may yet find a way to loose their bonds without one drop of blood. But hear me, Oro ! were there no other way, and should their masters not relent, all honest hearts must cheer this tribe of Hamo on....’Tis right to fight for freedom, whoever the thrall.”

“These South savannahs may yet prove battle-fields,” said Mohi, gloomily, as we returned on steps.

“Be it.” said Yoomy. “Oro will van the right.”

“Not always has it proved so,” said Babbalanja. “Ofttimes, the right fights single-handed against the world ; and Oro champions none.”<sup>34)</sup> In all things, man’s own battles, man himself must fight. Yoomy : so far as feeling goes, your sympathies are not more hot than mine ; but for these serfs you would cross spears ; yet, I would not. Better present woes for some, than future woes for all.”

“No need to fight,” cried Yoomy, “to liberate that tribe of Hamo instantly ; a way may be found, and no irretrievable evil ensues.”

“Point it out, and be blessed, Yoomy.”

“That is for Vivenza.”

“That is for Vivenza,” said Media.

“Mohi, you are old : speak then.”

“Let Vivenza speak,” said Mohi.

“Thus, then, we all agree ; and weeping, all but echo hard-hearted Nulli.”<sup>35)</sup>

“Taken generally,” says one of the golden sentences, “justice is the same for all, but in its application to particular cases of territory or the like, it varies under different circumstances.”<sup>36)</sup> In other words, justice is the foundation of all positive law, but the positive law of



one state will differ from that of another. "Whatever in conventional law is attested to be expedient in the needs arising out of mutual intercourse is by its nature just, whether the same for all or not, and in case any law is made and does not prove suitable to the expediency of mutual intercourse, then this is no longer just. And should the expediency which is expressed by the law vary and only for a time correspond with the notion of justice, nevertheless, for the time being, it was just, so long as we do not trouble ourselves about empty terms but look broadly at facts."<sup>37</sup> And Epicurus is equally well able to meet the conservative dislike and dread of legislative innovation as something essentially immoral. "Where without any change in circumstances the conventional laws when judged by their consequences were seen not to correspond with the notion of justice, such laws were not really just; but wherever the laws have ceased to be expedient in consequence of a change in circumstances, in that case the laws were for the time being just, when they were expedient for the mutual intercourse of the citizens, and ceased subsequently to be just when they ceased to be expedient."<sup>38</sup> "He who best insured safety from external foes made into one nation all the folk capable of uniting together, and those incapable of such union he assuredly did not treat as aliens; if there were any whom he could not even on such terms incorporate, he excluded them from intercourse whenever this suited with his own interests."<sup>39</sup> Thus, the Epicurean in Babbalanja does nothing but suggest that "The future is all hieroglyphics. Who may read? But, methinks the great laggard Time must now march up apace, and somehow befriend these thralls....Time—all-healing Time—Time, great Philanthropist! —Time must befriend these thralls!"<sup>40</sup>

Melville had begun to worry as to why a benevolent Deity permits the existence of evil in the world. He could not solve the problem so easily as some of his contemporaries. Emerson, for instance, maintained that evil is merely the privation of good, as cold is the

privation of heat, and that all tends toward ultimate good.<sup>41)</sup> There is an assertion in *Mardi* that "what seems evil to us may be good" to God,<sup>42)</sup> but Melville found little comfort in the idea. Epicurus inquired whether it was because he could not or because he would not that God refrained from banishing evil from the world. The Stoic reply is in effect that of the Hebrew prophet: God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways His ways; He must by the necessity of His nature allow evil and baseness among men.<sup>43)</sup> Melville repeats, through Babbalanja, the old proposition of Epicurus: "...since evil abounds, and Oro is all things, then he cannot be perfectly good; wherefore, Oro's omnipresence and moral perfection seems incompatible."<sup>44)</sup> And he argues that it is vain to say evil exists because "a rebel angel" temporarily governs the world; God has no viceroys; he himself rules continuously. Belief in the infinite power of God and awareness of evil are responsible for the mournful cry against how God can "witness all this woe, and give no sign."<sup>45)</sup> The questioning of God's justice to man reaches a climax when Babbalanja asks an angel in a vision: "...why create the germs that sin and suffer, but to perish?" The angel answers that this makes of God "the everlasting mystery he is."<sup>46)</sup>

Yet, finally, in Serenia, the "land of Love,"<sup>47)</sup> the relation of the individual man to his fellow-men is based on the teaching of the later Stoics as well as of Christ. Yet no reference is made to previous incarnations of Alma; his divinity makes him unique: "...never before was virtue so lifted up among us, that all might see; never before did rays from heaven descend to glorify it,"<sup>48)</sup> but he is loved not only because he came from God and performed miracles and gave eternal life, but also because of "an instinct in us; —a fond, filial, reverential feeling."<sup>49)</sup> Alma is the supreme example of man doing good works: "He fed the famishing; he healed the sick; he bound up wounds. For every precept that he spoke he did ten thousand mercies."<sup>50)</sup> Jesus called brothers those who "hear the word

of God and do it."<sup>61)</sup>

"Call ye us brothers, whom ere now ye never saw?"

"Even so," said the old man, "is not Oro the father of all? Then, are we not brothers? Thus Alma, the master, has commanded."

"No, no," said Babbalanja; "old man! your lesson of brotherhood was learned elsewhere than from Alma; for in Maramma and in all its tributary isles true brotherhood there is none."

"Alas! too true. But I beseech ye, judge not Alma by all those who profess his faith."

"All that is vital in the Master's faith, lived here in Mardi, and in humble dells was practiced, long previous to the Master's coming...But are Truth, Justice, and Love, the revelations of Alma alone? Were they never heard of till he came? Oh! Alma but opens unto us our own hearts."<sup>62)</sup>

So, too, Marcus Aurelius was too anxious that all men should have God for their father and be by nature brothers: "When thou art troubled about anything, thou hast forgotten this...how close is the kinship between a man and the whole human race, for it is a community, not of a little blood or seed, but of intelligence. And thou hast forgotten this too, that every man's intelligence is a god, and is an influx of the deity."<sup>63)</sup> For Jesus, then, the greatest commandments are love of God and of neighbor.<sup>64)</sup>

"What hope for the fatherless son?"

"Adapted as a son."

"Of one poor, and naked?"

"Clothed, and he wants for naught."

"If ungrateful, he smites you?"

"Still we feed and clothe him."

"If yet an ingrate?"

"Long, he can not be; for Love is a fervent fire."

"Old man," said Media, "From all I have heard and now behold, I gather that here, there dwells no king; that you are left to yourselves; and that this mystic Love, ye speak of, is your ruler. Is it so?"<sup>65)</sup>

That is, we are required by nature to love genuinely, and from our hearts. "For what more dost thou want when thou hast done a man a service? art thou not content that thou hast done something conformable to thy nature, and dost thou seek to be paid for it? just as if the eye demanded a recompense for seeing, or the feet for walking. For as these members are formed for a particular purpose, and by working according to their several constitutions obtain what is their own; so also as man is formed by nature to acts of benevolence, when he has done anything benevolent or in any other way conducive to the common interest, he has acted conformably to his constitution, and he gets what is his own."<sup>56)</sup> In *Serenia* man is not considered vile, as in *Maramma*; nor is he believed to be capable of perfection. He is thought rather to have in his heart a germ of goodness which can be developed. The vicious are separated from the virtuous until they are reclaimed, but the treatment they are given soon remedies their faults and weaknesses.<sup>57)</sup> That we must love the sinner and try earnestly to improve him is a favorite thought of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. "It is man's special gift to love even those who fall into blunders; this takes effect the moment we realize that men are our brothers, that sin is of ignorance and unintentional, that in a little while we shall both be dead, that, above all, no injury is done us; our inner self is not made worse than it was before."<sup>58)</sup> "Use your moral reason to move his; show him his error, admonish him."<sup>59)</sup> "If you can, set the doer right."<sup>60)</sup> "Men exist for one another. Teach them, then, or bear with them."<sup>61)</sup> "Convert men, if you can; if you cannot, charity, remember, has been given you for this end. See! the gods, too, have charity for such, helping them to divers things, health, wealth, and reputation; so good are they. You, too, can do the same; who hinders you?"<sup>62)</sup> "If a man is mistaken, reason with him kindly and point out his misconception. If you fail, blame yourself or no one."<sup>63)</sup> "Reverence the gods, help men."<sup>64)</sup> Perhaps relevant is Melville's marking years

later in Arnold's *Literature and Dogma* a passage on a critic who maintained that the more one studies, the more one is convinced "that the religion which calls itself revealed contains, in the way of what is good, nothing which is not the incoherent and ill-digested residue of the wisdom of the ancients."<sup>65</sup> Certainly in the section on Serenia, Melville is concerned with presenting not the mysteries of the Christian religion but Christ's embodiment and glorification of age-old virtues, and especially his active sympathy for the unfortunate.

Of all the islands visited, the only one which Melville describes in terms entirely favorable is Serenia, where his true Christians live. Babbalanja finds here the end of his journeying. His "conversion in Serenia is thus not a rejection of the Narrator's quest for Yillah but the solution to his own quest."<sup>66</sup> It is true that Serenia has provided a solution to Babbalanja's quest, and he readily gives up all hope of attaining Ultimate Truth. "My voyage is ended," he concludes. "Not because what we sought is found; but that I now possess all which may be had of what I sought in Mardi."<sup>67</sup> But what is more important here is that "Within our hearts is all we seek: though in that search many need a prompter. Him I have found in blessed Alma." Jesus, seeing that he will soon be betrayed and condemned to death, says, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt," and says again, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."<sup>68</sup> And Babbalanja does not even hesitate to say, "...Death is Life's last despair. Hard and horrible is it to die. Oro himself, in Alma, died not without a groan."<sup>69</sup> The Stoics are entitled to argue that to desire the unattainable is futile and that, as certain things are not in our power to command, our efforts must be withdrawn from them and concentrated upon those things which are in our power.<sup>70</sup> By confining our attention to these we can insure success. This brings us to the conception in

which success is embodied as happiness. "To exist, is to be," says Babbalanja; "to be, is to something: to be something, is—," and, urged to continue by others, Babbalanja complies, saying only, "It has snapped."<sup>71</sup> But one may here add, "to be happy." To be happy on the rack is unintelligible unless by this so-called happiness is understood the doubleness of our existence. Babbalanja confesses: "...I have not yet been able to decide who or what I am. To you, perhaps, I seem Babbalanja; but to myself, I seem not myself....For aught I know, I may be somebody else. At any rate, I keep an eye on myself, as I would on a stranger." "By the incomprehensible stranger in me, I say, this body of mine has been rented out scores of times, though always one dark chamber in me is retained by the old mystery." "Yet all the time, this being is I, myself."<sup>72</sup> In a vision Babbalanja's heavenly guide admonishes, "But know that heaven has no roof. To know all is to be all. Beatitude there is none. And your only Mardian happiness is but exemption from great woes—no more."<sup>73</sup> This is intended to imply that there is no ultimate state of being, that there is only a state of becoming.

### Notes

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- 1) Herman Melville, *Mardi; and a Voyage Thither* (Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 428.
- 2) *Ibid.*, p. 176.
- 3) *Ibid.*, p. 390.
- 4) William Braswell first observed the value of this volume as a source for *Mardi*, thus indicating that it was in Melville's hands when he was writing the book. See William Braswell, "Melville's Use of Seneca," *ALXII* (March 1940), 98-104.
- 5) *Mardi*, p. 388.
- 6) Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Complete Works of RWE* (Houghton Mifflin, 1903), vol. I, 105.
- 7) For his reading on the subject, see Ralph R. Rusk, *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 143.
- 8) *Mardi*, p. 389. Compare Matthew 5: 20, 48; 7: 21.
- 9) *Ibid.*, p. 348.

- 10) *Ibid.*, p. 349.
- 11) Long, G., *The Discourses of Epictetus* (London, 1891), I, 18.
- 12) Emerson, vol. I, 131-132.
- 13) *Ibid.*, vol. II, 85.
- 14) See Mark 13: 20-27; Matthew 22: 14.
- 15) *Mardi*, p. 348.
- 16) *Ibid.*, p. 349.
- 17) *Ibid.*, p. 350, and see pp. 487, 627. Compare Matthew 25: 31-46. Cf. There are two kinds of Christianity, as Lawrence puts it, "the one focused on Jesus and the Command: Love one another! and the other focused, not on Paul or Peter or John the Beloved, but on the Apocalypse" (*Apocalypse*, Penguin, 1974, p. 71). The Christianity of Jesus applies to a part of our nature only, and there is another big part to which it does not apply. And to this part, Revelation does apply. "Man is individual only in part of his nature. In another great part of him, he is collective" (*Apocalypse*, p. 15). Yet Jesus only saw the individual when he said, "Render.....unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22: 21). But since every man must be a member of some political State, or nation, he is forced to be a unit of worldly power. ".....If it pleases you, there may be such a thing as being free under Caesar. Ages ago, there were as many vital freemen, as breathe vital air today" (*Mardi*, p. 528). Therefore Babbalanja says: "No, no.....as an intruder he came, and an intruder could he be this day. On all sides, would he jar our social systems" (*Mardi*, p. 628).
- 18) Emerson, vol. I, 128.
- 19) *Ibid.*, vol. I, 130.
- 20) *Mardi*, p. 576.
- 21) *Ibid.*, p. 389.
- 22) *Ibid.*, p. 428.
- 23) *Ibid.*, p. 534. Compare Isaiah 45: 9 and *The Thoughts of the Emperor M. Aurelius Antoninus*, trans. by Long, G. (London, 1886), III, 3.
- 24) *Ibid.*, p. 426.
- 25) *Ibid.*, p. 577.
- 26) Emerson, vol. II, 271-272.
- 27) *Mardi*, p. 368.
- 28) *Ibid.*, p. 428.
- 29) *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- 30) Cf. Emerson, vol. I, 64; vol. II, 47, 48.
- 31) *Mardi*, p. 532.
- 32) *Ibid.*, pp. 512-513.
- 33) In this connection another problem that concerned Melville is the question of flesh and spirit. See pp. 426, 433, 504, 575, 593.
- 34) By no means does Epicurus deny the existence of gods, but at the beginning

of his *Letter to Menoeceus*, he refuses to accept the popular conception of the gods, according to which the greatest misfortunes befall the wicked and the greatest blessings the good by the gift of the gods.

- 35) *Mardi*, pp. 532-534.
- 36) Usener, H. *Epicurea* (Leipzig; B. G. Teubneri, 1887), p. 79, 8, golden maxim No. XXXVI.
- 37) *Ibid.*, p. 79, 12, golden maxim No. XXXVII.
- 38) *Ibid.*, p. 80, 6, golden maxim No. XXXVIII.
- 39) *Ibid.*, p. 80, 15, golden maxim No. XXXIX.
- 40) *Mardi*, p. 535.
- 41) Emerson, vol. I, p. 124, and see vol. II, p. 51.
- 42) *Mardi*, p. 620.
- 43) Isaiah 55: 8-9.
- 44) *Mardi*, p. 620.
- 45) *Ibid.*, p. 339.
- 46) *Ibid.*, p. 634.
- 47) *Ibid.*, p. 623.
- 48) *Ibid.*, p. 626.
- 49) *Ibid.*, p. 628.
- 50) *Ibid.*, p. 629.
- 51) Luke 8: 20.
- 52) *Mardi*, pp. 626, 627.
- 53) Marcus Aurelius, XII, 26.
- 54) Mark 12: 28-34.
- 55) *Mardi*, pp. 626, 627.
- 56) Marcus Aurelius, IX, 42.
- 57) *Mardi*, p. 627.
- 58) Marcus Aurelius, VII, 22.
- 59) *Ibid.*, V, 28.
- 60) *Ibid.*, VIII, 17.
- 61) *Ibid.*, VIII, 59.
- 62) *Ibid.*, IX, 11.
- 63) *Ibid.*, X, 4.
- 64) *Ibid.*, X, 30.
- 65) Quotation from William Braswell, *Melville's Religious Thought* (New York, 1977), p. 40.
- 66) Merrell R. Davis, *Melville's Mardi; A Chartless Voyage* (Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 198-199.
- 67) *Mardi*, p. 637.
- 68) Matthew 26: 39, 42.
- 69) *Mardi*, pp. 618-619. See also Matthew 27: 46.
- 70) Epictetus, IV, 7.
- 71) *Mardi*, p. 458.



72) *Ibid.*, pp. 456, 457. On this point, Thoreau is more obvious: "With thinking we may be beside ourselves in a sane sense. By a conscious effort of the mind we can stand aloof from actions and their consequences....I only know myself as a human entity; the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections; and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it; and that is no more I than it is you....This doubleness may easily make us poor neighbors and friends sometimes" (Henry David Thoreau, *Walden and Civil Disobedience*, ed. Owen Thomas New York, 1966, pp. 90-91). It has often been said that Thoreau lived the life which Emerson merely theorized about, and this is particularly true of the way in which Thoreau put to work the ideal of Stoicism in his daily life. Emerson wrote about Thoreau, who, though he was a "hermit and stoic," "was really fond of sympathy:" "He was a speaker and actor of the truth, born such, and was ever running into dramatic situations from this cause. In any circumstance it interested all bystanders to know what part Henry would take and what he would say; and he did not disappoint expectation." (Emerson, vol. X, 456-457).

73) *Mardi*, p. 636.