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Review Essay

*The Authoritarian Secularism  
of John Stuart Mill*

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**John Stuart Mill and the Religion of Humanity**, by Linda C. Raeder. *Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002. 402 pp. \$49.95.*

I first encountered John Stuart Mill in an undergraduate political theory survey course. As I recall, the class read selections from *On Liberty* and the instructor emphasized that this treatise was the *locus classicus* for the defense of free speech, individuality, and toleration, the basic values of the genuinely open society. I encountered Mill again in a graduate school seminar devoted exclusively to his writings, primarily his political works. We examined with care *On Liberty*, *Representative Government*, and *Utilitarianism*. At this point I began, however dimly, to perceive problems. For instance, we were asked to write a short paper on how Mill, if he had been a Supreme Court justice, would have ruled in the *Dennis* case—a relatively early “cold war” case involving the conviction of communist leaders under the Smith Act on the charge of “conspiring to advocate” the overthrow of the government. I don’t recall where I came down on this question, but I do recall that his teachings regarding the acceptable range of individual liberty seemed to be somewhat contradictory. At the very least they raised legitimate questions that Mill did not address in the essay. To be sure, there is the “one very simple principle” statement up front, the one so dear to libertarians, that seems to limit any interference with another’s liberty by the state, an individual, or the

*On Liberty’s  
libertarianism  
much  
diminished  
before book’s  
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community to matters of “self-protection” or “preventing harm to others.” But how, I wondered, did this square with his sanctioning punishment “by opinion” of those whose “acts may be hurtful to others or wanting in due consideration for their welfare,” though they violate no “constituted right”? Mill tells us that we have every right to shun such an individual, “to caution others” against him, and to accord “others a preference over him in optional good offices.” True enough, Mill is here treating of “severe penalties at the hands of others,” penalties that come from social sanction, not the law. It occurred to me, however, that Mill was sanctioning a penalty, a form of social ostracism, that could be more severe and insidious than many forms of legal punishment. More generally, as Mill proceeds in *On Liberty*, he seems to take away a good deal of what he “gives” at the beginning, so that by the final chapter, “Applications,” wherein he discusses specific issues (e.g., gambling, drinking) and state regulation, his conclusions fall well within the realm of conventional morality. It appeared to me that Mill’s distinction between “self-regarding” and “other-regarding,” so central to his thesis, had broken down as well. In sum, I didn’t know what to make of *On Liberty*.

*Teachings in  
Representative  
Government  
thoroughly  
traditional.*

Then, to add to my perplexity, the Mill of *On Liberty* in his more audacious moments seems to praise and defend nonconformity; to view nonconformity as an essential ingredient of true individuality. In any event, there is no gainsaying that Mill provides grounds for challenging accepted truths, traditions, and conventional morality. This is the Mill civil libertarians have come to adore and adopt as their very own. On the other hand, I found a very sober Mill in the pages of *Considerations on Representative Government*, whose teachings are thoroughly traditional and whose prescriptions for the ailments of representative government are even cast in an Aristotelian mold. The differences I perceived between his approach in *On Liberty* and *Representative Government* were sufficient to make me wonder whether Mill’s philosophical outlook had not drastically changed shortly after he wrote *On Liberty*. Years later, after reading Gertrude Himmelfarb’s *On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill*, I was pleased to see that I was not alone in noting the difference between the two works. Moreover, Himmelfarb constructed a plausible case to affirm what I had suspected as a graduate student, namely, that this difference

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could be attributed to the fact that during the time Mill was writing *On Liberty*, he had fallen under the spell of Harriet Taylor.

Finally, while I understood the principal message of Mill's *Utilitarianism*, I regarded it as an effort to "save" utilitarianism by acknowledging what anybody with any sense knows: that there are higher and lower forms of pleasure. In fact, I felt that he actually demolished the utilitarian principle with the introduction of this "qualitative" dimension, but, in any event, with others, I had difficulty in seeing how his arguments and positions in *On Liberty* could be based, as he contended, on the principle of utility, particularly on his "modified" version. *On Liberty*, *Representative Government*, and *Utilitarianism* were, in my estimation, three substantial works that raised profound questions. They did provide fuel for spirited seminar sessions, but their relationship to one another was not evident to me, other students, or the instructor. We treated them as separate, largely unrelated works.

The first inkling I had that I (along with just about everybody else) had totally misunderstood Mill came after reading an article the late Joseph Hamburger wrote for a Mill symposium in the *Political Science Reviewer*. One of Hamburger's points was that Mill subscribed to the traditional view that a stable political society rested upon an "orthodoxy" or, if that seems too strong a word, on the society's unquestioning acceptance of values, assumptions, opinions that, to serve their purpose, ought to remain outside the realm of public dispute or contention. My first reaction to this was one of disbelief because its implications are so enormous. If true, it not only brings into question the standard interpretation of *On Liberty*, but leads one to ask, Why did Mill write this book? Can we make sense of his teaching in light of what he regarded as requisites for social stability? I was also curious (I still am) why Mill scholars—i.e., those familiar with the whole range of his enormous output—had not pointed out and dealt with this aspect of Mill's thinking before.

*Mill's view that society requires an unquestioned orthodoxy raises questions about On Liberty.*

Alas, as Hamburger makes abundantly clear, Mill's treatment of "social statics" in his *Logic* and elsewhere leaves no doubt about his seeing the need for an orthodoxy. Of course, Hamburger had much more to say about Mill's objectives and teachings in articles and in his posthumously published book, *John Stuart Mill on Liberty and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). And what he does say is truly astonishing: It calls for an entirely new

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*Previous Mill scholarship undermined by Joseph Hamburger's new paradigm.*

paradigm for understanding John Stuart Mill's teachings and objectives; it points up as well the gross inadequacies of the older, generally accepted paradigms. I came to realize that what I had learned about Mill through my classes and readings, particularly with respect to his views on social and individual liberty, was almost the reverse of what he actually believed. Henceforth, I dare say, we are going to witness intense intellectual warfare between an "old guard," those who stubbornly cling to the older paradigms that see Mill as the champion of individuality and the widest possible extension of individual liberty, and the "revisionists," those who have come to see the full dimension and coherency of Mill's philosophy by examining all of his writings, public and private.

Mill, should the "revisionists" prevail, will lose his status as the intellectual forebear of civil libertarianism, as a "poster boy" for the American Civil Liberties Union, as a champion of diversity. By the same token, he will no longer serve as the "whipping boy" for conservatives such as Robert Bork, who viewed his teachings as opening up the flood gates for the trash that infests our culture. Nor, when all is said and done, can it be said that he abandoned his otherwise traditional moorings because of Harriet Taylor. No longer, in sum, can Mill be looked upon, as Willmoore Kendall did, as the "father" of the open society.

*Raeder shows that a chief purpose of Mill's work was to replace Christianity with a secular religion.*

So much by way of introduction. We now have Linda Raeder's splendid work *John Stuart Mill and the Religion of Humanity* that fully confirms my view that the "revisionists" are certain to win out. Raeder views Mill from essentially the same perspective as Hamburger while concentrating on Mill's works on religion, throughout emphasizing the seriousness and determination with which he sought to advance his "Religion of Humanity." Why does she subject Mill's views on religion to such scrutiny? Principally because, in her words, "From beginning to end, religious themes abound, implicitly and explicitly, in his books, articles, correspondence and diary. Neither Mill's philosophy nor his politics can be adequately comprehended without taking into account his religious views and purposes." "Indeed," she continues, "Mill's commitment to the replacement of Christianity with a Religion of Humanity was one of the chief purposes governing his philosophical endeavors throughout his life."

Now to comprehend fully Raeder's mission, it is necessary to

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set forth key elements of the new paradigm to which I referred above. To begin with, it is vital to acknowledge that Mill's views were greatly influenced by Saint-Simon and Comte. It is clear from his "The Spirit of the Age," published in 1831, that Mill accepted the main outlines of Saint-Simon's philosophy of history to which Comte, with some variation, also subscribed. As Saint-Simon would have it, history can be understood as a progressive movement of societies from one stage of development to another, the fruition of their development characterized by "natural" or "organic" periods, with "transitional" periods in between. The societies in the natural or organic stage are marked by a feeling of unity, stability, and consensus on values, those in the transitional periods by disagreement on basic values and outlook, resulting in division, disharmony, and unrest. Mill agreed with Saint-Simon and Comte that they were living in the midst of a transitional period, that each successive stage in history represented an advance over the preceding, and that the next stage would be the last, i.e., the "highest" stage of human development. More specifically, as Raeder points out, Mill had come to accept fully Comte's "social dynamics" in which "the necessary and inevitable movement of history was from the primitive 'theological' state of the human mind (and society) through the intermediate 'metaphysical' state toward the establishment of the final 'positivist' state." Mill, moreover, was utterly fascinated with Comte's "Religion of Humanity," a secular religion that would replace Christianity and provide the necessary moral unity and cohesion for society in the final state. While it is true that Mill later criticized and rejected Comte's version of the "Religion of Humanity," he still embraced the idea, regarding it as essential for providing the spiritual force and authority necessary to avoid social dissolution.

Still other aspects of Mill's thinking are important for understanding the full dimension of the new paradigm and Raeder's thesis. Foremost among these is Mill's deep-seated animus towards Christianity. As Raeder takes pains to document, major themes in his three essays on religion ("Nature," "Utility of Religion," and "Theism"), all published posthumously, indicate that this animus stemmed from the early influences of both his father, James, and Jeremy Bentham. His most basic criticism of Christianity—one that fit in very well with his "strategic" plans for promoting the ascendancy of his Religion of Humanity—was what he

*Mill viewed Christianity as encouraging selfishness.*

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took to be its inherent selfishness. In Mill's view, Raeder writes, "Christian ethics, whose conception of divinely administered rewards and punishments, as well as its emphasis on personal salvation, taints moral action by encouraging self-interested behavior or outright selfishness." This selfishness, moreover, ran counter to the very goal he sought, namely, a society in which altruism, fueled by "social feeling," would flourish. Indeed, she observes, he perceived a basic "moral dichotomy between the evil of the selfish (associated with Christianity) and the good of the social (associated with the Religion of Humanity)."

Also essential for understanding the new paradigm is acknowledging the extent to which Mill shared Saint-Simon's and Comte's conviction that, in Raeder's words, it is "the duty of the philosopher to assist the processes of history by easing the transition from the old age to the new." The evidence for this interpretation is overwhelming. In a letter to d'Eichthal, a committed Saint-Simonian, Mill acknowledges as much: "[We] ought to consider what is the stage through which, in the progress of civilization, our country has next to pass, and to endeavour to facilitate the transition & render it safe & healthy." On this score, Raeder remarks that "Mill was proud to be almost single-handedly responsible for bringing Comte's philosophy to the attention of the English public" and that he was also a "tireless proselytizer in any area that engaged his interest, and one of his chief interests was to encourage the widespread embrace of what he, with Comte, sometimes called the 'final philosophy' of positivism." By examining primarily his correspondence with Comte, she shows as well that his "private writings reveal the extent to which he regarded his mission as bound up with the overthrow of Christianity and the propagation of a new humanitarian creed."

The new paradigm rests on still another proposition which, in an important sense, is the most crucial of all: Mill's published works cannot be taken at face value. On the contrary, they can only be understood, as he intended them to be understood, in light of his purposes and beliefs which find expression in his private correspondence. Accordingly, Raeder examines his private correspondence with great care because, in her view, it alone can reveal the full "extent to which he regarded his mission as bound up with the overthrow of Christianity and the propagation of the new humanitarian creed." Raeder's researches, moreover, lead her

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to charge that Mill was a “manipulative strategist who carefully crafted his arguments to obscure his genuine views while attempting to lead the unsuspecting reader closer to his own position. This pertains above all to the subject of religion.” Thus, she concludes, “Mill’s published writings must therefore be interpreted with some care, that is, with an awareness of the subterranean current running throughout its corpus—its antitheological and especially its anti-Christian themes.” To some extent, Raeder concedes, Mill dissembled because of the law punishing “blasphemous libel” that posed “real, legal dangers . . . to the public expression of religious criticism.” But in his correspondence with Comte—which is, on Raeder’s showing, indispensable for interpreting his major works—we find a “calculating” Mill who, aware of popular religious sentiments, is careful not to push his views too far lest he lose respectability. Hemmed in by the law and by what the public would tolerate, Raeder maintains, “Mill early developed what [Joseph] Hamburger calls his ‘habit of prudently dissembling.’” For Mill, in large part, this came down to how far he could go in undermining Christianity and advancing the cause of positivism, without arousing countervailing forces that might retard the transition of society to the stage where no “concessions, even tacit,” would have to be made “to theories of the supernatural.”

*Sought society in which no “concessions, even tacit,” would be made “to theories of the supernatural.”*

Raeder, it is important to understand, is not engaging in “secret reading”; she takes pains to document her charge throughout, using Mill’s own words. Her task in this regard is not at all difficult because Mill is quite open in his correspondence with Comte on this matter. On one occasion, he writes, “Today, I believe, one ought to keep total silence on the question of religion when writing for an English audience, though indirectly one may strike any blow one wishes at religious beliefs.” On another, “You are doubtless aware that here [in England] an author who should openly admit to antireligious or even antichristian opinions, would compromise not only his social position, which I feel myself capable of sacrificing to a sufficiently high objective, but also, and this would be more serious, his chance of being read.” Mill goes so far as to inform Comte not to take his treatment of “philosophical issues” in his soon to be published *Logic* at face value because he was “forced” to make “concessions . . . to the prevailing attitudes of my country.” In discussing the prudence of publishing one of Comte’s pamphlets in England, he again cautions: “The time has

*Mill’s strategy: total silence on religion.*

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not yet come when we in England shall be able to direct open attacks on theology, including Christian theology, without compromising our cause." The pamphlet's message, he concludes, "would turn away a great number of minds from positivism."

Most of Raeder's work consists of an intensive analysis of Mill's major works on religion, his posthumously published essays on religion, and his attacks on the metaphysical teachings of William Hamilton and Henry Longueville Mansel. What emerges from this analysis is that Mill, sometimes even at the expense of his own canons of logic, consistently endeavored to undermine the foundations of Christian belief. For instance, as Raeder remarks, he lost no opportunity to attack "intuitionism" when it supported "traditional religious beliefs," but affirmed it when it served his purposes, i.e., when it could be used to justify the moral foundations of his Religion of Humanity. For the most part, though, Mill is content to bring into question critical elements of Christian belief, as well as its utility in promoting moral character and the well being of society. He could not, Raeder contends, reconcile the evil, injustice, and misery of this world with the belief in an "omnipotent and all benevolent Creator of Christian theology." Mill even attributed the belief in life after death to the widespread recognition of the injustice of this world. For him, this irreconcilability was self-evident; it was the basis for most of his thrusts against traditional religion. It also justified massive human intervention, guided by a moral framework of distinctly human origins, to remedy the wrongs. Throughout, of course, Mill presumed to know what constituted the proper, the just, and the good. To this point, Raeder observes, "Throughout his adult life, Mill was convinced of the utter superiority of his purely human morality and seems never to have feared that his own moral conceptions might be incomplete or erroneous."

*Saw no essential connection between religion and morality.*

Mill also challenged the belief that traditional religion is indispensable for the promotion of social virtue and morality. He not only thought that Christianity had been unfairly given credit for inculcating these qualities, but also that, in his words, "any system of moral duties inculcated by education and enforced by opinion" would produce the same effect. Raeder points out that in elaborating upon this view, Mill goes to great lengths in discussing "the three principal sources of morality in human existence—authority, education, and public opinion—none of which has any

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essential or necessary connection to religion." Nor did Mill believe that the ultimate origins of morality had to be divine or supernatural. He asks rhetorically: "Are not moral truths strong enough in their own evidence, at all events to retain the belief of mankind once they have acquired it?"

Mill believed that over time societies had retained those parts of Christian morality that were useful. But again, to clear the way for a new, nontheologically based morality, he maintains that Christianity is a spent force; the benefits of its moral teachings have been realized to their fullest. Moreover, he argues, its sanctions are largely "inefficacious" in controlling human behavior. As Raeder summarizes his argument: "the remoteness and uncertainty of reward and punishments, eminently characteristic of the religious sanction and especially of those thought to be effected posthumously, greatly detracts from their ability to govern human behavior. . . . All religions assist the 'self-delusion' that bad behavior in this life will in fact escape the divine punishment. This is because judgment is thought to be passed on one's life as a whole, and not on isolated acts; thus every person, even the worst criminal, is easily convinced that in the end the balance will be in his favor." Mill also believed, as Raeder points out, that the efficacy of religious sanctions depended on public opinion; those sanctions supported by public opinion, such as "Oath in courts of law" would be taken seriously, whereas those not so supported (e.g., "university and custom house oaths") would not.

*Viewed  
Christianity  
as a spent  
force.*

While Raeder's analysis of Mill's writings on religion covers all his twists and turns, we need only note here that, as intimated above, his arguments were designed to achieve specific goals.

One of the more important objectives, as we have seen, was to establish that viable morality need not have theological foundations since this was essential for the realization of his Religion of Humanity. Beyond this, he had to demonstrate that Christianity needed to be replaced. This, in turn, involved showing the ineffectiveness of its sanctions and debasing the ethics of its basic doctrines. These two ends were advanced simultaneously and ingeniously with his introduction of a "limited God," a concept that he develops most fully in "Theism" written during the last years of his life. In this essay he adopts the tactic of conciliation; that is, he does acknowledge that the most rigorous applications of modern scientific methods cannot rule out the argument from design

*Mill intro-  
duces a  
"limited"  
God.*

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as proof of God's existence. As Raeder explains, Mill "claims that the order of nature does in fact evince purposiveness—a 'final cause'—that points to the existence of an intelligent mind conspiring to an end, to a God." But Mill's god was not omnipotent; he possessed only limited powers that proved insufficient for the full realization of the conditions he sought. Mill's god, Raeder emphasizes, "is not the Christian God who created the world, but Mill's own god, one that resembles the Platonic Demiurge." His god, she continues, while evidencing "certain utilitarian leanings," did "not quite measure up to the standards of the best human morality—nontheological utilitarianism." In other words, the Demiurge was not "*exclusively* concerned with realizing the greatest possible happiness for the greatest number of human beings." While Mill leaves the reader to choose between the work of the limited God and nontheological utilitarianism (the very heart of his Religion of Humanity), his message seems clear: The limited God (and even Christianity) has produced some good, but it is now up to humans to build upon that good, to move on to the realization of the fullest human happiness.

*Utility to become "the ultimate source of moral obligations."*

Raeder devotes a chapter each to *On Liberty* and *Utilitarianism* to indicate their place in Mill's grand design. "*Utilitarianism*," she maintains, "is Mill's most carefully crafted effort at proselytization on behalf of the new humanitarian faith; his aim throughout is to bring everyone, and especially wavering Christians, into the utilitarian fold." Mill acknowledges that he wants to establish utility as "the ultimate source of moral obligations." To achieve this requires some doing, including the remodeling of Bentham's utilitarianism to include the qualitative dimension of happiness ("better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied"). Significantly, in this remodeling, Mill also concludes that the goal of utilitarianism is collective happiness, the happiness of the whole society. Indeed, Mill seems to embrace a secular altruism, what Raeder describes at one point as "selfless concern for the good of the whole over the concern for a particular and personal salvation centered on the 'miserable individuality' of the average person." He regarded the readiness to sacrifice one's individual interest for the good of the whole (i.e., "the happiness of others") as "the highest virtue which can be found in man." But, as Raeder makes clear, the selflessness and self-sacrifice of Utilitarianism, though bearing a resemblance to Christian morality, differs from it: Utilitari-

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anism requires (as Mill would have it) that the self-sacrifice increase “the sum total of human happiness,” whereas, as Raeder puts it, “the sacrifice of worldly happiness in humility toward God and in service of eternal life” does not. The Religion of Humanity, then, comes into being as people, through education, are immersed in utilitarianism. The purpose of this education is to produce individuals who, Raeder remarks, “will be unable even to think of disregarding other people’s interests. They will identify their feelings more and more with the good of others, until concern for the good of others becomes as a second nature.” Mill goes so far as to write that “If we now suppose this feeling of unity [stemming from social impulses and the altruism they inspired] to be taught as a religion, and the whole force of education, of institutions, and of opinion, directed, as it once was in the case of religion, to make every person grow up from infancy surrounded on all sides both by the profession and the practice of it, I think that no one, who can realise this conception, will feel any misgiving about the sufficiency of the ultimate sanction for the Happiness morality.” Clearly, in this account, there would be no need for any supernatural sanction for morals or ethics.

*Goal of Mill’s religion was socialization toward a “feeling of unity” with others.*

While Raeder deals extensively with other arguments in *Utilitarianism* that bear upon Mill’s design, enough has been said to indicate that *On Liberty* must be interpreted anew. To understand one of its major purposes, Raeder believes, we would do well to recur to Saint-Simon’s belief that “liberty of discussion [is] an indispensable element of the transitional stage, essential for the destruction of old beliefs and the engendering of new truths of the organic age aborning.” Along with Hamburger, Raeder sees Mill employing Saint-Simon’s tactic in *On Liberty* by advocating “the absolute freedom of discussion that would prove fatal to the preservation of traditional religious belief.” She also sees, particularly in Mill’s criticisms of Christianity that abound, a veiled effort to advance his Religion of Humanity. Viewed from this perspective, the frequently noted inconsistencies in Mill’s argument vanish. For instance, Raeder observes, Mill championed “a general freedom not, as it appears and is generally thought, from the restraints of all social conventions, but merely from convention and custom derived from traditional religion.” In this regard, and as we might expect from our knowledge of his ultimate goal, Raeder calls attention to the fact that he “was far from averse to employing the

*Mill sought freedom only from those social restraints derived from traditional religion.*

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social sanction of public opinion in suppressing what he regarded as socially undesirable ('selfish') behavior and encouraging what he regarded as its opposite ('altruism')."

*Raeder's understanding of Mill too well-grounded to be explained away.*

While it is not possible here to trace in detail Raeder's analysis of Mill's works, the comprehensiveness of her effort should be clear. Indeed, her work is a *tour de force*, the most comprehensive and systematic integration of Mill's varied writings that we have from the vantage point of the new paradigm. As such it is destined to arouse considerable controversy for years to come. It will have the effect, however, of putting those who would like to preserve the image of Mill as the champion of non-conformity, free speech, individuality and the like on the defensive. In the last analysis, though, Raeder's understanding of Mill is too well-grounded to be explained away.

*United States now has a centralized government charged with godlike powers and duties.*

In Raeder's final chapter, "Consequences and Implications," we find other lasting contributions. Mill's writings concerning liberty, the state, and the individual, it should be clear, do not contribute much to resolving perennial problems associated with modern liberal democracies. Raeder is clearly on solid ground in suggesting that Mill's legacy is "secular humanism," "a new religiosity in secular garb." Leaving to one side what Mill's impact has been, it seems clear that the United States has, since the emergence of Progressivism, followed the path Mill marked out. Our politics has been thoroughly secularized; we now have, as Raeder puts it, "a centralized government charged with godlike power and duties and the thoroughgoing politicization of social life. Modern government has replaced God as the object of petition and the bestower of blessings." The collective good and service for humanity have taken on all the force of "religious" obligations for the modern American liberal.

More significantly, perhaps, through her study of Mill, Raeder is able to convey some sense of the depth of modern liberalism's hostility towards Christianity that is so evident in our culture today. "Mill," she insists, "was very far from" being merely a convinced secularist or, as other commentators have pictured him, as "more or less indifferent to spiritual matters and preoccupied with mundane considerations." On the contrary, he was a "true believer," one who looked upon his Religion of Humanity as "a new and full bodied religion." The difference between Mill's religion and Christianity does not center on conviction, certainty, or inten-

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sity of belief, but basically on the replacement of “God with Humanity.” Raeder reminds us that Mill, above all, understood mankind’s spiritual needs; that undermining traditional beliefs would leave a void; that what was needed in place of Christianity was a complete secular equivalent. In sum, Raeder’s analysis leads her to conclude that “the modern secular humanism that stems from Mill is, as both its proponents and opponents have recognized, itself akin to a religion. Moreover, it is a religion *defined* in its origin by its animus toward Christianity and, more generally, toward the notion of a transcendent source of order and obligation.”

*God to be  
replaced by  
“Humanity.”*

To the extent that Mill can be seen as having marked out the path that we have followed, we are led to ask, Where are we today? Any sensible estimate, I believe, would still place us somewhere in a critical or transitional period. Certainly our culture manifests all the attributes of such a period, perhaps even to a degree greater than England of the nineteenth century. And, to the extent that we can extrapolate from what has transpired since Mill’s death, the eventual organic stage, if there ever be such, will be nothing like what he pictured. Missing in the emergence of secular humanism, to date, is any surge of the genuine altruism that he envisioned. As matters stand, it is more likely that those in the organic stage will find themselves in Tocqueville’s democratic despotism, living in “perpetual childhood” under the caring eye of an “immense and tutelary” state.