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Cynthia E. Kerman
Villa Julie College

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ELIAS HICKS AND THOMAS SHILLITOE:
TWO PATHS DIVERGE

Cynthia Earl Kerman

Villa Julie College

ABSTRACT

Two prominent Quaker ministers, English Thomas Shillitoe and American Elias Hicks, at the end of their long lives of exhortation devoted to the mission of persuading others to follow the will of God, came together on the American continent in 1826–29. They turned out to be key players on opposite sides in the struggle which ended with the splitting of American Friends into two antagonistic groups, the Orthodox and the Hicksite.

Through a close reading of the journals of these two men, supplemented by biographies and other relevant materials, this paper analyzes similarities and differences in their views on humanity and the means of salvation, their messages and motivations, and traces cultural, environmental and personal factors that may have contributed to their divergence.

The basic question it examines is how two Quaker contemporaries, similarly schooled and practiced and totally sincere in following the leading of the Holy Spirit, could end so totally opposed.

KEYWORDS

Shillitoe, Hicks, salvation, Quietism, evangelicalism, Orthodox

Between 1826 and 1829 two elderly Quaker ministers, both respected, approved, and sent out by their home meetings, felt led to preach what they understood to be the word of the Lord to many of the Friends meetings from the Atlantic coast to the Middle West. Although these two were more catalysts than causes, the course they pursued brought them into head-to-head opposition and helped build to a climax the

incipient division of the Society of Friends on the North American continent into groups of contentious rivals who have to this day only partially moved closer to cooperation. How did these men, apparently so similar, come to be so bitterly opposite? Can this shed any light on the differences that plague Friends now?

In age they were almost contemporaries, living out their respective 82 years just 6 years apart. When they met in 1826 (TSJ2, p. 154), Elias Hicks was 78 (EHJ, p. 7) and Thomas Shillitoe 72 (TSJ1, p. 1).¹ Both had little formal education, coming from families of modest means (Forbush 1956: 6-8 and TSJ1, pp. 1-2), and both struggled in their youth to overcome temptations to amusements they came to consider vices (EHJ, pp. 11-13, 444-45 and TSJ1, pp. 2-3).

Each man was experienced and seasoned by a lifetime of Quaker preaching: Hicks recorded as a minister at 30 (Forbush 1956: 39), Shillitoe at almost 37 (TSJ1, pp. viii, 11). Both traveled extensively in the ministry, supported by minutes from their home meetings, through all kinds of difficult conditions (Forbush 1956: 106-107; EHJ, e.g. p. 71; TSJ2, esp. Chs. 27, 28), careful to pay their own way on all their travels and make provision for their families while they were gone.² Each was dedicated to following divine leadings and taking on no task except what he felt called to by the Spirit; each was a devoted Christian, familiar with the Bible and the history and practice of Friends. Yet the result of their encounters, undertaken under the direction of a Spirit that was

1. References to Hicks's *Journal* are abbreviated EHJ (Hicks 1832), and to Shillitoe's two-volume *Journal* TSJ1 or TSJ2 (Shillitoe 1839). The three volumes of Hicks's sermons used will be referred to as Q1 or Q4 (Gould 1827 or 1828) or ED (Hicks 1825).

2. The tables of contents in both journals give evidence of the places and duration of their travels. Hicks noted mileage covered, mostly on horseback, from a couple of hundred in a few days to several thousand for a trip of five or six months, contending at times with darkness and wilderness (Forbush 1956: 124). Shillitoe criss-crossed England and Ireland on foot, sometimes 30 or 40 miles in a day (e.g. TSJ1, pp. 226-28), and took uncomfortable commercial transportation on the Continent. Both crossed frozen rivers in bitter weather.

Jericho Monthly Meeting's memorial to Hicks, printed in his *Journal*, reads 'he was scrupulously careful to defray his own expenses when travelling as a minister' (EHJ, p. 446). Many of his daily journal entries record his work at 'family concerns' (EHJ, p. 197). Shillitoe regularly arranged for his 'family and outward concerns' when he left for visits in the ministry (e.g. TSJ1, p. 15).

expected to bring unity, was the splintering of the community that was central to both of their lives.

They were not only Quakers of the same generation, they were the same kind of Quakers. Both were trying to save as many souls as possible, each as he understood this. Both were trying to revitalize, preserve and renew the Society of Friends by the 'promotion of...truth and righteousness', as indicated in the conclusion of Elias Hicks's journal (EHJ, p. 438). Both bent every effort to remain pure, to be faithful to their testimony against 'the world',³ and to follow divine leadings in every aspect of their daily lives, as well as staying close to their Guide—not running ahead or holding back—in their spoken ministry. Both valued the direct experience of God's guidance over scholarship or advanced learning. Prayers for strength, humility and divine wisdom, as well as to be kept from murmuring or complaining in times of adversity, were common to both.

The two shared many concerns. In their lives and public messages they were strong supporters of simplicity, shunning wealth and ostentation. To this stand they added rejection of violence, opposition to slavery and to Friends' involvement in politics, and high valuation of manual labor (Hicks was a farmer, Shillitoe a shoemaker).⁴ Both cast their

3. The qualities listed in this paragraph were defined by Rufus Jones as those of Quaker Quietists (Jones 1921: Ch. 3), among whom he includes prominently Thomas Shillitoe and Elias Hicks. The 'world' meant the activities and motivations of business, society, and politics, which Hicks in a 1798 sermon contrasted with the ideal state of original Christianity (EHJ, p. 66).

4. Hicks sought many times in ministry 'to arouse friends from their bed of ease and carnal security' in which they were 'loving the gifts and forgetting the Giver' (e.g. EHJ, pp. 145-46). He protested against war taxes; one of his many statements on peace was 'one that fights, cannot be a subject of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the prince of peace' (Q4, p. 246).

Shillitoe, at 51, sold his shoemaking business to spend full time in the traveling ministry, believing he and his wife could live frugally on what he had, and his five children would be better off making their own way than given an inheritance (TSJ1, p. 39). He printed and twice distributed a long article exhorting all Friends or all Christians to reject luxuries, societies, politics, and dependence on arms, and be 'redeemed from the world's pleasures and treasures', relying on the Lord alone (TSJ1, pp. 207-25).

Hicks worked most of his life, by advocacy, example, and printed argument (publishing a powerful pamphlet in 1811, included in Hicks 1861: 5-20), on behalf of freeing and providing means of living for the slaves (Forbush 1956: 53-54, 145-50). Shillitoe did not actively enlist in this concern, but rejoiced when the slave trade was

nets broadly, including prisoners, the poor, and Native American villages in their ministry (Forbush 1956: 150; TSJ2, pp. 179, 185, 424). Reaching out to other outsiders, Shillitoe sought out drinkers (TSJ1, pp. 90-91, 130-160) and gang members (TSJ1, pp. 171-77); Hicks often called meetings of 'the black/coloured people' and of non-Friends (e.g. EHJ, pp. 66-67, 393). Not surprisingly, there were also many similarities in their preaching. They knew well and referred frequently to the Bible, continually expressing their praise to God and gratitude for his goodness.

Thus their differences were not in their general goals, but in the spirit of their compliance and their images of God: their basic theology. They diverged not in the language, intensity, or power of their preaching, but in their priorities, the content of their messages and the direction of their communications, reflecting their basic images of humanity and society.

Theology and the Way to Salvation

Shillitoe followed God's will in constant fear of a misstep which, if uncorrected in time, would bring eternal torment. According to his biographer William Tallack, he saw the Christian life

as a race for a prize, to be won with difficulty...the prize of eternal life...precious and costly...purchased only by the blood and sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and only to be qualified for by the gifts of the Holy Spirit which His death procured for men (Tallack 1867: 5).

In his view, God acts through nature and society and can preserve us from harm (in a storm at sea, for instance) if we place our full trust in him (TSJ1, p. 42); but he can and will destroy us if we offend him. A reiterated theme in his preaching to potentates was the threat of God's judgment if they did not control the sins of their people (TSJ1, pp. 77, 121-22). Frequently he referred to 'a jealous God' (e.g. TSJ1, pp. 269, 417; TSJ2, p. 192). He saw natural disasters, such as the immense flood in Petersburg when he was there in 1824, as 'the action of the great and terrible one' (TSJ2, p. 93). He also believed that Satan was actively operating and ready to mislead us at any time.⁵

On the other hand, for Shillitoe, if we devote ourselves to God, 'he abolished in England (TSJ1, p. 77), and sought out and challenged some slave-owners and dealers during his visit to America (TSJ2, pp. 256-58, 265-67, 354-56). An account of one of his many prison visits is in TSJ2, pp. 386-90.

5. One reference among many: 'we have to contend with an unwearied adversary, ever on the alert, seeking whom he may devour' (TSJ2, p. 99).

fails not to make the hard things easy, and sweetens the bitter cup of self-denial' (TSJ1, p. 230). Divine mercy is still available even to backsliders—up until the moment of death: 'As death leaves us, so judgment will find us: and from the decision of our all-merciful, all-wise, and all-just judge, there is no appeal' (TSJ2, p. 99).

Hicks felt the 'yoke was easy and the burden was light' (EHJ, p. 300): he followed God's will in gratitude for all God's blessings and to enjoy every day the peace and harmony God intended for us all (ED, pp. 74-76, 88; EHJ, p. 173).

He conceived God as creator and sustainer of the universe; he 'fills all things' (Q1, pp. 65, 263)—worlds beyond worlds, far beyond what our senses can grasp. God is the 'only decisive power' upholding all living things, animal and vegetable (Q1, p. 39). This power can be called by many names, 'the name of Jesus...the holy Ghost, the spirit of God, the spirit of truth, the life of God in the soul...the light' (Q1, p. 139). And since this power is shown everywhere in loving-kindness, Hicks declared that only people of an angry disposition could consider God an angry God (Q4, p. 251). Rather, 'the soul...draws all its support from the breast of its beloved' as it loves God above all else (Q4, p. 176). Love for God can give us 'greater joy than husbands, wives, houses, or lands' (Q4, p. 106).

Both agreed that everyone has access to God's guidance, a divine principle in each of us that teaches us how to behave. Shillitoe saw this principle as a controlling power, and submission to it the only way for 'Satan's bond-slaves' to escape the labyrinth of 'the enemy', pass through temptations and cross the 'impassable gulf' between us and heaven (TSJ1, p. 213). In addition, for salvation one has to accept the atonement of Christ's sacrifice (TSJ1, p. 199). Shillitoe's time-orientation was toward the future, the state of the soul in eternity. The crucial moment is the moment of death. The Testimony from Shillitoe's meeting reports his saying just before he died that 'all his own righteousness was but as filthy rags' and his hope was only in 'the love and mercy of that Saviour, who shed his precious blood for him' (TSJ1, p. xii).

Hicks, on the other hand, saw life as a 'probationary state' (EHJ, p. 7) in which we are to learn to love and obey God. The important time is the present (ED, p. 39). What the Lord opens in the soul is just what that soul needs, custom-ordered as it were: God designs a law suited to each individual (Q1, p. 94). Still, all who obey God act in unity since they act in love (Q1, p. 190). No one gets to heaven through fear of

punishment, he said: that dread itself is hell—but hell and heaven are only similes, not *places* but only states of mind:

He prepares no place of torment for us, but has ordered in wisdom and power that every act shall have its consequent reward...because he has made us free agents (Q1, p. 45).

We must know a being born again...heaven and Paradise here, before we die, or we shall never know them (Q4, p. 43; see also Q1, pp. 37, 111-12).

Hicks many times attacked what he saw as bigotry. He opposed the Presbyterians on their doctrine of election, insisting, 'Those who choose the Lord for their portion...these are the elect. And nothing ever did or can elect a soul to God, but in this choice' (Q1, p. 63). He argued against the Atonement, believing that not in Jesus' material blood but in the model of his obedience to God's spirit lies our salvation (Q1, pp. 16-18). There is danger in depending on 'the *imputative righteousness of Christ which he performed without [us]*'; we have to work out our own salvation by submitting our minds to God's spirit (EHJ, p. 168; italics in original). And he denied that the Scriptures were necessary or sufficient for salvation. We must 'turn from the books, and wait in silence upon God' to be led by the Spirit (ED, p. 316).

Many of his messages contrast the 'shadow' (God's covenant with the Jews) and 'gospel' dispensations (e.g. EHJ, pp. 206, 333, 345). Hicks concluded that Paul's epistle to the Galatians fully shows 'the final end and abolishment of all outward ordinances and observations in matters of religion' (EHJ, p. 134). With Jesus' life, death and resurrection, the outward or law observances were brought to an end and replaced with inward spiritual ordinances, the 'gospel dispensation' (EHJ, p. 263). He uses this point to argue against special observance of the Sabbath, as well as other outward ordinances (EHJ, p. 353).

On almost all these latter points Thomas Shillitoe disagreed. The message he emphasized the most in all his preaching and some direct action (passing out handbills, writing letters to officials, and visiting people involved) was to deplore the abuse of the Sabbath or First-day.⁶

6. Examples of his actions about the Sabbath: in 1808 and 1811 he spoke to mayors, sheriffs, and Protestant and Catholic bishops in Ireland (TSJ1, pp. 89, 133-34, 161-62). He was arrested and imprisoned overnight in 1821 for writing and having flyers printed and distributed (TSJ1, pp. 255-72); he argued with professors and students of theology (TSJ1, pp. 316-17); he wrote to a prince, officials in

His problem with it was that the things that went on were causes of 'degeneracy and irreligion' and 'obstruct our being found in the discharge of our duty to our Maker' (TSJ1, pp. 78-79). Practices he objected to were open shops, 'barrel-organs or other music, boys flying kites, shows or games, waggons or carts, or carriers of burdens in the streets' (TSJ1, p. 275), Sabbath bull-baiting (TSJ1, pp. 89, 422), stage-coaches unnecessarily traveling, and the publication of Sunday newspapers (TSJ1, p. 79).

In brief, Thomas Shillitoe's major message was to decry the wholesale sins that he found everywhere he went. These largely centered on the abuse of the Sabbath and the use of strong drink. He attacked these practices because he believed they would bring the people who participated and the rulers of church and state who countenanced them to eternal torment, and also bring God's vengeance in the form of wars or pestilence to the countries where they were tolerated.⁷ When he came to America the sins he attacked were the beliefs of Friends, but his reasons (to save the souls of the 'solid' Friends by removing them from contamination by those with 'unsoundness of principle') (TSJ2, p. 162) were essentially the same.

Elias Hicks's major message was that God has given every human being a way of knowing right from wrong and the ability to act on this knowledge (Q4, pp. 29, 270-71; ED, p. 207). Our duty and highest joy, in his view, is to subdue our human inclinations and follow this divine guidance (Q4, p. 54; EHJ, p. 173), rather than being misled by inherited

Geneva, and several times to the English king or the Prince Regent (TSJ1, pp. 381-82, 413, 75-79, 192-93). He conducted handbill campaigns against two theaters (TSJ1, p. 202; TSJ2, pp. 368-69) and met with news-room subscribers to try to stop publication of Sunday papers (TSJ1, p. 203).

7. See, e.g., his address to the Prince of Waldeck (TSJ1, pp. 381-82) deploring 'the abominable neglect of the day of the week called Sunday' for its threat to the souls of the people and ruler, who 'are thus advancing in the direct road to destruction; seeing that, according to the general tenor of the Holy Scriptures, not only the desperately wicked, but all those who forget God, shall be turned into hell... [A]s Divine Providence has placed thee...as ruler over many people, if thou shouldst suffer these things to continue without control, there will be a danger of thy incurring the Divine displeasure'. Other good examples are the essay on the Sabbath he had printed and sent 'to the king, bishops, and each of the members of both houses of parliament' in 1808 (TSJ1, pp. 75-79), his 1813 message to the Prince Regent on intemperance (TSJ1, pp. 197-200), or TSJ1, pp. 121-22; TSJ2, pp. 7, 58.

and warped traditions (ED, p. 224). The more fully we do this, the more our communities will be havens of justice and peace (EHJ, p. 440). He carried this message within and beyond Friends meetings, from Long Island up to Canada, down to Virginia, and into the Middle West.

And what were their images of the nature of humanity? Both believed we are made up of two parts, the mortal natural man (the 'creature') and the immortal soul or spirit which gives us access to God (ED, p. 164; TSJ1, p. 22). Shillitoe's was the orthodox Christian position: all have a corrupt nature, sharing Adam's sin (TSJ1, p. 219). On the contrary, according to Hicks: we are all born innocent, 'every child must come clean out of the hands of God' (Q1, p. 54); children cannot sin until they have enough knowledge to make choices (Q4, p. 111). We are fallen, but not because of Adam and Eve—they are to be understood only symbolically (Q4, p. 136), and a just God could never lay on us the sins of our forefathers (Q1, p. 255)—but because of our own disobedience (EHJ, p. 260). Our bodies are not sinful (Q4, p. 209), but to over-indulge their cravings, to choose our own will, rather than following God's will, is to separate ourselves from righteousness (EHJ, p. 151).

It is easy to see that on the central issues of the nature of people, what God is like and how to attain salvation, there was almost no meeting of minds between the two.

Nature of Society

It may help our understanding of these positions if we explore the way each man visualized the organization of society, the location of authority. As has been shown, it is clear that Shillitoe was usually working from the top. He went to the kings, the bishops, the mayors, and expected them to legislate and enforce morality. Breaking off the sins and iniquities of a nation 'must become a government work' (TSJ2, p. 416) by removing temptations to evil (also TSJ2, pp. 58-59). He placed a strong reliance on order and discipline from above in the Society of Friends (TSJ1, pp. 211-12; TSJ2, p. 167). He appealed to the higher classes in England to set an example for the poor and middle class (TSJ2, p. 407), and was very conscious of class distinctions even as he worked with the poor.⁸ When he was struggling to become a Friend, the plain

8. See, for instance, TSJ1, pp. 91-92, as he considers the 'humiliating engagement' of visiting the drinking-houses in Waterford, Ireland, where he believes 'I

language (connoting as it did the refusal to show honor to those of higher status or authority) appears to have been his greatest stumbling block (TSJ1, p. 4). The Scriptures, by themselves, carried great moral authority in his eyes; he believed that the distribution and reading of them would be helpful to everyone (TSJ1, p. 338). In short, for him the world was hierarchical and one looked to the heads of society's recognized institutions for power and validation.

This view extended directly to a prejudice against a country where government is trusted to the masses, as illustrated in his comment about a meeting in northern New York State:

That spirit of insubordination, liberty and equality so pervades religious, as well as civil society in some places in this land, that all prospect of applying a remedy to this [young men coming in after business was begun], as well as other evil practices amongst our youth, appears hopeless (TSJ2, p. 221).

Hicks, in contrast, believed everyone capable of discerning good and evil for themselves with the help of God's ever-available guidance: we are all brothers and equal, none better than another (black or white) (ED, p. 79). His preaching was not to the rulers but to the multitudes. He distrusted organizations outside of the Society of Friends.⁹ Even

must submit to make a visit to the people in the market', a 'class of the people, mostly bigoted Roman Catholics'. Later he spoke to the Chancellor of the Exchequer about 'the intemperance that so generally pervaded the lower class of society' in Ireland (TSJ1, p. 193).

9. This objection was related to his belief in separation from the world so as not to absorb the world's values, but also in the conviction that these groups could do no good, since they were 'set up...in the will and wisdom of man, which never did, nor ever can, produce the righteousness of God' (EHJ, p. 412). Even more sharply, attacking the 'great number of Bible and Missionary societies, and mercenary ministers', he described them as 'men in the midst of pride, wantonness, and cruelty, uniting themselves and engaging to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ' (ED, p. 24). Even agricultural societies, he declared, were more a curse than a blessing because they led people to grow more than they needed (Q4, p. 131). As for politics, he felt that doing our part in our heavenly Father's kingdom would 'do more good to this nation, than all we can do by filling posts of office' (Q1, p. 182).

Shillitoe did not so totally rule out working with non-Friends but did caution Friends against being 'assimilated to the world' in benevolent societies—largely because of the fear of God's judgment: 'so far as we join ourselves to the world, we shall be condemned with the world' (TSJ1, p. 222). He asked Friends to 'retire to our tents' (the safety of dependence on the Lord alone), and 'dare not meddle with

within the Society he was wary of authority from above. A journal entry in 1793 deplors the case in a particular meeting of 'a very small number taking upon them the whole management of the business, and thereby shutting up the way to others' (EHJ, p. 40). He fought the heavy hand of tradition, believing it to be the cause of all wars and disturbances in human history (Q1, pp. 164-65; Q4, p. 202), and the authority of books, science and human learning, particularly in relation to religious matters (Q4, pp. 170-73). The Scriptures, he felt, could not in themselves serve as authority; they could do more harm than good unless they were interpreted with the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Q4, pp. 220-21). He totally rejected appointment of ministers by human selection and training, believing only God could rightly anoint those who were to preach the gospel (ED, p. 42; Q4, p. 259). (Shillitoe did not believe in the 'hireling ministry' either [TSJ1, pp. 401-402], but dealt on a friendly basis with ministers of other denominations when he perceived them as being able to exercise power.)

Hicks valued young people wherever he met them, referring to them as 'hopeful young people' (EHS, p. 44), appealing to them to throw off tradition and think for themselves (Q1, p. 74; Q4, p. 237), granting the older no higher status than the younger (Q1, pp. 70-71; Q4, p. 142). Shillitoe, though he sometimes took an opportunity to meet with young people, more often saw the young as a source of disorder.¹⁰ In short, directly opposite to Shillitoe, Hicks valued the power of the individual over that of the elite, rejecting any authority except God's.

Hicks, then, saw the world through a democratic lens, authority resting in the individual under gospel order. He had a vision, set out in an 1826 sermon, of world peace and justice spreading out from his own country if it could follow Penn's example of dealing fairly with different groups (Q4, pp. 68-71). His view of the American Eden matched his cousin Edward Hicks's depiction of the 'Peaceable Kingdom'.

Each of these sets of ideas makes a coherent package. If people are

political matters', including reading newspapers (TSJ1, p. 223-24). This hardly squares with his own actions in appealing to the powerful at home and abroad.

10. During his American visit, he was often distressed by the casual attitude or 'rude and idle manner of sitting of some of the men and lads' (TSJ2, p. 156) in meeting for worship. He called on all his 'patience and forbearance' to get through meetings where 'a great train of children' were brought in (TSJ2, p. 206). Once when a child came up to him as he was speaking in meeting, he stopped and asked the mother to take it away, and she left (TJS2, p. 223).

innately evil, their salvation has to be purchased at great cost and can come only through some outside agency—nor can they be trusted with the reins of government, but need to be controlled by an authority from above. On the contrary, if people have within them a principle of goodness which can bring them to an order better than any that human control can impose, they should be left free to follow that principle.

Personality Orientations

A search of their journals to try to understand these differences reveals some clues to their attitudes through noting the two men's general orientations, or consistent ways of responding to experiences.

In their response to trouble and suffering, both placed religious devotion over personal interests and comfort. Shillitoe went ahead with his mission to Ireland with his daughter and son-in-law very ill; after his son-in-law died, he wrote he was thankful 'that parental affection did not turn me aside from the path of religious duty' (TSJ1, p. 136). The consequences of unfaithfulness to this duty were more fearful to him than any bodily suffering (TSJ1, p. 266).

Hicks lost all four of his sons before they were 20; after recounting their deaths in his journal, he concludes, 'I trust we were preserved from murmuring or repining, believing the dispensation to be in wisdom, and according to the will and gracious disposing of an all-wise providence' (EHJ, p. 14).

The response of the two to order and discipline was somewhat complex. Both believed in order, but may have seen it a little differently. Order in the universe and in society was very basic to Hicks: 'God is a God of order' and if we were all subject to his will, all creation would sing (EHJ, p. 202; ED, pp. 186-93). In relation to the Society of Friends, he was early (at about the age of 30) 'deeply engaged for the right administration of discipline and order in the church...that truth's testimony might be exalted' (EHJ, p. 16). He felt, however, that often those administering the discipline 'had too much departed from the meek spirit of Jesus' (EHJ, p. 46). He wrote in 1823, 'The limiting power, given to, or taken by our meetings for suffering in this country, is inconsistent with the true liberty of the gospel state' (Hicks 1861: 137), and in 1824 criticized a quarterly meeting which presumed 'to intermeddle with the local concerns of a monthly meeting' (Hicks 1861: 147). Here his views about the location of authority led him to define 'right discipline' as working from the bottom up, not the top down as did the

soon-to-be Orthodox wing of the Society (Hicks 1861: 137).

Shillitoe, while he also insisted 'God is a God of order' (TSJ2, p. 201), favored rigorous enforcement of the discipline of the Society—but only according to his own selective interpretation. In the final controversy, he applied small details of the discipline against Hicks but considerably twisted its application for his own advantage.¹¹

Cleanliness and pollution drew attention from both. Both indicated they believed cleanliness, inner and outer, to be important to a godly life. Shillitoe in 1822 declared that Truth and cleanliness are related, 'in our persons and our houses, as well as in our hearts' (TSJ1, p. 391), and criticized people he felt did not measure up. But his greatest horror at pollution was directed at those among American Friends who shared the views of Elias Hicks (TSJ2, pp. 154-61).

Hicks also declared the need for greater purification in body, soul, and spirit (EHJ, p. 172). But pollution for Hicks, as indicated in a sermon of 1798, was represented by 'the world', from which we should separate ourselves, 'its spirit, manners, maxims, governments, honours and customs; all of which are polluted, and arising from the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life' (EHJ, p. 78).

The next orientation noticeable in these two men is the quality of rigidity versus flexibility in thinking, or readiness to receive new information. Milton Rokeach in his study on the 'open and closed mind' (which explored individuals' tendencies toward rigid, authoritarian moralism, black-white thinking, as contrasted with open, socially conscious optimism) defines open-mindedness as having 'the capacity to distinguish information from source of information and evaluate each on its own merits' (Rokeach 1960: 396).

The following examples illustrate exactly this contrast in attitudes. Before Shillitoe left England he was convinced of the 'unsoundness' of

11. Some details he held against Hicks were the fact that the clerk of the women's meeting, a known Orthodox sympathizer, had not signed Hicks's travel certificate (TSJ2, p. 330), and that when he was charged with breaking the discipline by contradicting Hicks in a meeting for worship, he had not actually interrupted him (TSJ2, pp. 331-32). The most obvious examples of twisting the discipline were his claiming to be a member of New York Yearly Meeting because they had read his certificate the year before (TSJ2, p. 311), and circulating a document attacking Hicks, actually produced by a segment of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, implying it was issued officially by the whole Society of Friends (TSJ2, pp. 324, 331; Ingle 1998: 124-25).

Hicks's doctrines, using the terms 'infidel principles' (TSJ2, p. 177) and 'unchristian cause' (TSJ2, p. 151). When he passed Hicks's door and Hicks invited him to visit and even to stay with him, Shillitoe felt to do this would be a major danger (TSJ2, p. 154). He insisted on making sure the companions appointed for him 'were such as were sound in the faith once delivered to the saints' (TSJ2, p. 152).

Shortly after he arrived in America in 1826, he was in a meeting where someone with whom he was not familiar presented a message. He agreed with the speaker, but was afraid to support that position publicly because he did not know with which party he was aligned (TSJ2, p. 170). The first time he attended Hicks's home meeting in Jericho, Shillitoe spoke first. Then Hicks rose to say he was grateful to be 'edified and instructed' by the message from a 'dear friend from a distant land', who had preached 'the same doctrine, that ye have heard these many years past' (TSJ2, pp. 154-55). Shillitoe in recording this incident called Hicks's response disgusting, and 'a snare' (TSJ2, p. 156).

Hicks's behavior in the incidents just mentioned shows an opposite orientation. Several of his statements underline it: 'truth never loses by close investigation, but rises thereby more bright and clear' (Hicks 1861: 51), and 'I stand always open to conviction; and if any person, even a child, should convince me of any error [my message] contains, I shall cheerfully yield it up, and acknowledge myself wiser than when I wrote it' (Hicks 1861: 174). In fact he even declared, 'It is no matter whether we see everything alike... We may have different views and all be right' (ED, pp. 228-29).

Comparing the two men's reaction to friends and enemies, their closeness or distance in personal interaction, can shed further light on their personalities. His 'natural disposition being very open and communicative' (TSJ2, p. 157), as Shillitoe wrote, it was hard for him on arrival in America to combine this with his fears of being tainted. His biographer William Tallack confirms that he was normally sociable and even humorous (Tallack 1867: 60-61). On the other hand, he describes him as a loner,

not formed for easy co-operation with fellow-workers... His individuality was so strongly marked, his opinions so decided, and his constitutional temperament so sensitive, and at times even morbidly nervous, that he found the greater freedom and success in a large measure of lonely effort (Tallack 1867: 3).

What of Shillitoe when he was not among friends? Just before he

died, he is said to have said, 'My love is to everybody, the wicked and all; I love *them*, but not their *ways*' (Tallack 1867: 161; italics in original). In several passages Shillitoe reports allowing hostile people to have their say while he listened quietly (TSJ1, pp. 156, 202). However, when it came to differences in theological beliefs, his response was different. By the time he came to America, he had come to think of the Hicksite position as a contagious disease, and at one point even called it 'leprosy' (TSJ2, p. 327), and treated its proponents accordingly. He also seems to have become convinced of a plot against him, saying in early 1828, 'I found it hard work to obtain relief for my mind amidst so many evil spies as this meeting was composed of' (TSJ2, p. 278).

And Hicks? Toward his good friends he was especially tender (Q1, p. 135). But he looked on all he spoke to as his friends. Often repeated in his recorded sermons to many who opposed him during the controversy are such phrases as 'Dearly beloved friends...you feel all alike to me; for I am no sectarian' (ED, p. 75); 'I look upon you with great love' (ED, p. 146). He wanted to gather all 'inward to the one light and life and spirit; and as that operates on our souls, it will unite us together in love' (Q1, p. 96)—whereas, he argued, if we cling to our own notions and judge others, anarchy ensues (Q1, p. 121).

The last personality orientation to be considered may be denoted as the scale from confidence to anxiety, optimism to suspicion, welcoming to fearing the experiences the world brings.

The characteristic of Thomas Shillitoe most immediately outstanding when one reads his journal is his timorousness. He confesses, in fact, to the quality of fearfulness, referring to his 'over-anxious disposition of mind' (TSJ2, p. 138), and explaining it by a fright as a child which left him with a 'very severe nervous complaint', to alleviate which a doctor prescribed a diet of meat, strong drink, and constantly increasing doses of laudanum (opium). Eventually, growing constantly worse, he gave up liquor, meat, and drugs, and claimed this cured him. (TSJ2, pp. 410-11) This experience may have contributed to his impassioned campaign for temperance.

Even as we consider Shillitoe's constant fear, we must remember the complementary bravery he exhibited in following his divine leadings. His religious service was beset by fear, as he underwent much suffering if he felt himself unfaithful to the smallest of God's calls,¹² and after

12. A few examples: during his visit to Ireland, he found himself 'labouring... under as great a load of depression...as human nature could well bear' until he

undergoing a difficult interview reported his thankfulness that he had 'been preserved from becoming a coward' (TSJ1, p. 64). He was also sensitive to humiliation and embarrassment. For instance, visiting Meeting families seemed to him not only arduous but humiliating (TSJ1, pp. 54, 65), and in his speaking he feared what people would think of him if his words did not correspond to the states of his hearers (TSJ1, p. 60), or if he did or did not do what they expected (TSJ1, pp. 229-30).

His faith was both a source of fear and a source of reassurance. As he faced the unknown dangers of his first trip to the Continent, he feared he would not have strength to fulfill expectations, but was then assured that

if I remained willing to become like a cork on the mighty ocean of service, which my great Master should require of me...free from the lead of human reason...willing to be wafted hither and thither, as the Spirit of the Lord my God should blow upon me, he would care for me every day and every way; so that there should be no lack of strength to encounter all my difficulties (TSJ1, p. 230; italics in the original).

Over and over he drew on this conviction to be able to continue.

His obedience to a leading, rewarded by relief and in most cases better results than he expected, was couched in terms of choosing *safety* (e.g. TSJ1, p. 275), as he kept in mind the scriptural passage, 'I will punish you for all your transgressions' (TSJ1, p. 124). Indeed, the foundation of Shillitoe's theology, as we have seen, was fear. For him, the reward for a lifetime of faithful obedience to God's commands and belief in Christ's atoning sacrifice would be the avoidance of eternal torment after death.

Shillitoe's whole trip to America was bathed in an aura of anxiety. He had a stronger aversion to the idea of this visit than to any of his earlier trips. On shipboard, he was so afraid of sinking that he could not sleep—but was afraid of being seen awake at night after he had told the captain and other passengers the Divine power would preserve them (TSJ2, pp. 142-43). After he arrived, he had continuing doubts and fears about whether he should have come (TSJ2, p. 173). But his worst fear

completed his 'apprehended duty' of speaking in the markets; afterwards he 'returned home rejoicing' (TSJ1, p. 92). On another occasion of cutting a message short from fear of embarrassment, he remarked, 'unfaithfulness in not keeping to the right time in my religious movements, causes weakness and dismay... I returned home, which to me was an abode of suffering' (TSJ1, p. 206). Again, 'Before I could make my escape to my own home, I was again arrested by an apprehension of duty... I feared to proceed any way but to [my assigned destination]' (TSJ1, p. 34).

was that he would be contaminated by association with those he thought of as the Antichrist (TSJ2, pp. 160-61).

Shillitoe also makes frequent reference to states of depression, sometimes extensive, for instance 'the pit of horrors in which I had taken up my abode' (TSJ1, p. 51). Tallack declares, 'He was subject throughout life to visitations of very severe nervous depression and anxiety, alternating at other times with much cheerfulness' (Tallack 1867: 129); and Shillitoe describes himself early as 'being naturally a child of a volatile disposition' (TSJ1, p. 1). Depression, suspicion and fear were a major part of his outlook on life—sort of a 'default position' of the spirit.

Hicks makes a few references to being depressed, sometimes but not always with a clear cause. But generally a meeting for worship acted as a restorative (EHJ, pp. 45-46). All through his life he regarded any action arising in fear as a defeatist tactic and contrary to God's will (EHJ, p. 45), and spoke frequently on the fact that if we love and obey God, there is nothing to fear (Q1, p. 115)—and that obedience to God is exactly expressed by loving all people and creatures in God's creation (ED, p. 5; Q1, p. 168). In both words and action, his 'default position' on life clearly falls on the opposite end of the scale.

The roots of values, attitudes, and ideas may be obscure, but not totally untraceable. Every person growing up is embedded in a web of concentric circles of culture, from family to neighborhood to educational institution and religious exposure, to the larger community, nation, and perhaps beyond. Each of these levels has its physical aspects, set in the natural world, a range of emotional connections, and a history of traditions and expectations with manifold intellectual contents. No person can escape being affected by the elements of this pattern, although one may absorb, reject, or reshape various parts of it. Everyone's attitudes toward other people and the world, and the packages of ideas they make their own, are rooted in this complex web. As Rufus Jones observed, 'Spiritual movements, like life itself, are subject to the shaping forces of an ever-shifting environment' (Jones 1921: 32). Ideas are thus not an independent mental construct but set in a matrix of experience.¹³

13. Sociologists, social psychologists, and specialists in culture and personality have explored and tested these connections between backgrounds and attitudes. Among them, ground-breaking work was done by Edward Sapir, Clyde Kluckhohn, Henry A. Murray, and A. Irving Hallowell. Historians of Quakerism using these tools include Richard Bauman, Robert Doherty, and Frederick Tolles.

The writers of these two journals have opened to inspection their experiences, goals, beliefs, and behaviors, from which we have distilled the contradictory positions on theology and the organization of society that led them into open conflict. It remains to ask whether we can identify differing elements in their two environmental settings that may have pointed them along different paths.

Family and Early Environment

The two lives began in quite different places. Hicks was born 19 March 1748, the fourth of six sons, on Long Island. When he was 8, the family moved to a farm near the shore, and until he was 13 he spent much time in the open land near his home, fishing and hunting 'wild fowl' (EHJ, pp. 7-8). His was an open, welcoming environment, a whole outdoor and inner world to explore, holding nothing threatening. Shillitoe, on the other hand, born in February 1754, and lived his first 12 years in the rough and unpoliced city of London.¹⁴ He had reason to be convinced that his world was full of dangers, for he was 'kept close in doors, seldom being suffered to go into the company of other children, except at school' (TSJ1, p. 1).

Both fathers evidently tried in the early years to see that their children were properly cared for, but this broke down when their own circumstances pressed them. Hicks's mother died when he was 11, and two years later his father sent him to live with one of his older brothers, where he was exposed to 'gay associates' and took up singing 'vain songs' and running horses. At 17 he was apprenticed to a carpenter who was 'in an eager pursuit after temporal riches'; he learned to dance and 'pursue other frivolous and vain amusements', continuing for some time with companions who encouraged such amusements (EHJ, pp. 8-10). When Shillitoe was 12, his father, unable to continue in his job, took over an inn or public house at the fringes of the city, where his son

was exposed to all sorts of company, and allowed to ramble the village unprotected, both by day and late of an evening, carrying out beer to the customers, and gathering in the pots...open to almost every vice, and the artifices of such evil-disposed persons as I had at times to do with (TSJ1, p. 1).

At 16, his father losing the business, Shillitoe was apprenticed to a

14. For conditions in England in the eighteenth century, see Jones 1921: 244-46.

grocer 'given to much liquor and company', in a neighborhood filled with 'examples of wickedness' (TSJ1, p. 2).

The openness and freedom of Hicks's early environment, and the independence he had, could well have contributed to his self-confidence and sense of the goodness of the world and the people in it, as well as to his belief that final responsibility rests on the individual. Conversely, an environment could hardly be more closed and forbidding than Shillitoe's, full of vague threats and people who seemed evil, ruled by arbitrary authority, where even the family support system brought mostly trouble. It is not surprising that he was given to depression, suspicion, and anxiety, and that he felt some higher authority was needed to control people's behavior.

Religious Influences

Both young men, in unsavory surroundings and without support from their families, kept getting intimations that there were better ways to live. Although with their shift in circumstances and busy operation on Sundays, religion had dropped out of their lives, Shillitoe's family had earlier been church-goers: 'My parents were members of the national church, and zealously engaged to bring up their children in the due observance of its religious rites and ceremonies, and every moral duty' (TSJ1, pp. 1). During his apprenticeship, he began to have leadings away from 'folly and dissipation' (TSJ1, p. 2). He sought out sober acquaintances and attended services with them when he could, attending chapel on Sunday mornings and listening to popular preachers in the afternoons (TSJ1, pp. 2-3). Thus he had positive experiences with both the Anglican Church and its rites and the evangelical, low church chapel movement.

Eventually, he met a distant relation who came from a Friends family, and began attending Friends meetings with him on First-day mornings—but also going with him to places of entertainment the rest of the day (TSJ1, p. 3). Divine reminders kept him moving deeper into commitment to a religiously pure life as a Friend and separating him from lukewarm Friends, his employer, and most particularly his family—his father turning him out of the house and telling him 'he would rather have followed me to my grave, than I should have gone amongst the Quakers' (TSJ1, pp. 4-5).

When he became uncomfortable about having to sell lottery tickets in his banking job, he determined through difficult prayer to be a shoe-

maker. In spite of the opposition of his employers, his parents, and even his meeting, he persisted in this leading. Eventually he set up business, soon prospering, in a Friends community in Tottenham, and married there in 1778 (TSJ1, pp. 6-9). By 1790 he felt called to travel in the ministry. Struggling with the potential dangers to his business and family if he left them, he heard one day an inward voice: 'I will be more than bolts and bars to thy outward habitation—more than a master to thy servants...more than a husband to thy wife, and a parent to thy infant children' (TSJ1, p. 10). In faith (fulfilled in experience) that God would take care of his business and home, he then began a lifetime of public dedication to God's calls.

Young Hicks enjoyed reading the Bible, and devoured borrowed books on Quaker history and early journals of Friends (Forbush 1956: 11-12).¹⁵ When alone, he meditated on the Scriptures. Sometimes he felt guilty for his 'lightness and vanity', but still continued 'sinning and repenting' until one day at a dance he became convinced that 'if I now gave way after forming so many resolutions, and should again rebel against the light, I might...never have another offer of pardon'. He was then given strength to quit the dance and the companions who coaxed him there (EHJ, p. 10-11). His father had become a Quaker shortly before Elias's birth, but was not active in any meeting (EHJ, p. 7), and Hicks only gradually began attending Friends meeting after he left his apprenticeship and earlier companions. It was his own reading and meditation and the 'rising intimations and reproofs of divine grace in my heart' which were leading him (EHJ, p. 12).

The elements of religious training which both young men absorbed were clearly very important to the way their lives developed. For Hicks, the outward guidance was not strong, but it was based in Quakerism and the Bible. He would have found a pattern of principles and behavior in the journals of Fox and Ellwood and in Sewel's *History*; basic morality, resting on his own responsibility, not original sin, was no doubt inculcated early by his family.¹⁶ But by his own account, 'the Lord was graciously near to my poor soul in my tender years' (EHJ, p. 8), and it was only these inner reproofs, 'the merciful interposition of divine love',

15. As an adult, he owned copies of Fox's and Woolman's *Journals* (Forbush 1950: 18 n. 4).

16. Eighteenth-century Friends considered children innocent until they were old enough to tell right from wrong (Frost 1973: 67).

which made him able to turn away from the temptations of his peers to a covenant to follow the Lord's will (EHJ, p. 11).

Religious influences on Shillitoe were more complicated. He was grounded in childhood in the hierarchic organization of the Anglican Church and in understanding grace as channeled through sacred ceremonies, and also given basic morality training and the practice of faithfully attending church. The negative impact of exposure to 'vice' and 'wickedness' in the absence of church connection was probably a factor in his again seeking religious affiliation. His years of attendance at a non-conformist chapel in the early decades of the Wesleyan revival may have contributed to the 'missionary zeal' Rufus Jones attributes to him (Jones 1921: 281)¹⁷ and strengthened his orthodox Christian theology, conviction of sin, and sense of need for purity of life.

Even in Quakerism it was hard for him to find a match for the growing depth of his devotion. Perhaps it seemed a more secure haven than anything else in his environment. But, as it did for Hicks, the inner voice took first place. Shillitoe's movements from the time of late adolescence relied heavily on the divine intimations he experienced: 'adorable Mercy met with me, and awakened in my mind a degree of serious religious thoughtfulness' (TSJ1, p. 2). His struggle for full resignation 'to yield to the purifying operation of the Holy Ghost and fire' (TSJ1, p. 4) led him through the trials that beset him and perhaps were in large measure what brought him to Friends, since Quakers provided opportunity and validation for such seeking. He believed in his missions that he was following in the footsteps of the first Publishers of Truth (TSJ2, p. 158).

Community

In terms of economic position and community support as they matured, Hicks's route was relatively smooth, Shillitoe's a very bumpy road. Hicks did some surveying and taught school (Forbush 1956: 12), and when almost 23, married Jemima Seaman, a Quaker, under the care of Westbury meeting (EHJ, p. 14). They moved into her parents' home, where Elias was to manage and eventually inherit their substantial farm. In these choices he had no opposition from parents or friends. Economically, too, he had no problems; his apprenticeship was a positive experi-

17. Rufus Jones cites Shillitoe as one of the few Quaker ministers who 'went forth to preach the gospel as a message of salvation to the unchurched, without much thought of bringing their converts into the Society' (Jones 1921: 235-36).

ence; then he moved smoothly into a familiar calling that posed no religious difficulty or role conflict; he did not even have to buy a farm. Securely supported in a Quaker community, with 'several worthy Friends' as neighbors, Hicks a few years later, 'by the operative influence of divine grace', was made aware of some failings that he had not yet corrected, and felt he was given pardon and guidance to walk humbly so that he 'had many deep openings in the visions of light' and began to feel called to the ministry (EHJ, p. 15).

Shillitoe, in a different pattern, was essentially plunged into a threatening community from the age of 12, and sought a supportive framework, first in choosing companions and then in religious groups. He suffered several negative apprentice and employment experiences, unemployment and poverty; even Friends at first misled him into frivolity and did not support his religiously based choice of a trade (TSJ1, pp. 5-8). It was not until he moved to the Quaker community of Tottenham, where Friends favored him with their business and supported his growth in Quakerism, that he seemed to be economically, physically (his health there improved) and socially, secure (TSJ1, p. 9).¹⁸ It is not surprising that he saw the world as he grew up as an unfriendly place, accepted a theology based on fear, and suffered from repeated anxiety.

The issues of role, status, wealth and rural-urban tension which most analysts have found divided the Orthodox and Hicksite factions do not really explain the gap between Hicks and Shillitoe. While Hicks was rural, Shillitoe did not thrive in a city or accept its financial and social allures, being as totally dedicated to simplicity as Hicks. Both were of relatively equivalent economic levels, equally eschewing wealth. Their sense of security with their communities was perhaps a more important difference, as Shillitoe was very sensitive to what other people thought of him and to the ladder of authority within society, while Hicks was more confident or impervious to these secular controls.

National Setting

His English citizenship made Shillitoe a member of a larger group and plunged him into enduring British traditions of monarchy, titles denot-

18. While English Friends were gradually moving toward evangelicalism around this time, different meetings moved at different speeds and intensities. Whether Tottenham influenced Shillitoe on this, or he influenced them, is an interesting question.

ing rank, primogeniture and a strongly entrenched class system, which may have been factors in his hierarchic world-view. That the monarchy was important to him is evident in his several communications with the reigning king or regent. His faith in the utility of the class system is demonstrated in his view that the upper classes should set an example to the lower (TSJ2, p. 407).

For Hicks, the French and Indian Wars, the American Revolution and the War of 1812 made his experience with the nation largely negative. And yet the way local communities governed themselves on Long Island may have made a more positive impression. Contributing to his democratic orientation, the foundation of the faith of Friends was anti-hierarchical; Penn built on this in America with his strong defense of civil liberties (Tolles 1960: 239). And although Hicks, like most other Quakers, refused to have anything to do with the Revolution except to cross the lines on Quaker missions (EHJ, pp. 16, 18; Forbush 1956: 41-44), he must in some measure have breathed the air of the national struggle for liberty. The message of the Enlightenment was circulating in the country, and although Hicks vigorously rejected Deism, calling Paine's *Age of Reason* a 'dark, insinuating address' (EHJ, p. 70), he demonstrated a faith in the dependability of reason (though always subordinate to revelation) in the service of ascertaining truth (EHJ, p. 48; ED, p. 180).

Theological Milieu

Rarely if ever does anyone create a set of theological beliefs *de novo*. Rather they are adopted, critically or uncritically, from the accessible religious environment, and may later undergo individual shifts or alterations. The questions then are, to what doctrines was each man exposed, and what did he take from them?

The cultural impact on Hicks of the larger Quaker community was no doubt considerable. Richard Bauman has shown that the essentially Quietist orientation of the 'reformers', for whom God was the source of all direction (Bauman 1971: 52), became the accepted stance of the majority of Pennsylvania Quakers by the end of the American Revolution (Bauman 1971: 179).¹⁹ He observes that members of the generation

19. Principles of the 'reformers', following John Churchman: (1) concern for strict upholding of Quaker testimonies, especially peace; (2) full reliance on God,

of the age of Hicks 'were socialized during a period in which the spirit of reformation pervaded Quaker education, and in which the influence and efforts of the Society were devoted to effecting a withdrawal by Quakers from worldly politics' (Bauman 1971: 177). This movement in an influential state next door would surely have penetrated to Long Island Quakers. Hicks's own experience with the Revolution and the War of 1812 would have strengthened his linking of politics with war (EHJ, pp. 168, 190). Rufus Jones also reported from his analysis that 'the Society of Friends found itself at the end of the eighteenth century a body penetrated and possessed with the ideals of Quietism' (Jones 1921: 103).

On comparison, for almost every point of Hicks's theology, parallels can be found in Robert Barclay.²⁰ The Light within (the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of God) is central and conclusive (Barclay 1991: 43, Prop. II, 16); it will not contradict reason or Scripture but is not to be judged by either (Barclay 1991: 40 and 42, Prop. II, 13 and 15); it teaches us whatever we need to know, and is accessible to all, at any time (Barclay 1991: 30, 36, 39, Prop. II, 10, 11); the Scriptures are not a primary but secondary rule (Barclay 1991: 46, 50, 58, Prop. III, 2, 5). Children do not sin by inheritance but only by action (Barclay 1991: 70-71, Prop. IV, 4); there is a seed of grace available to all, regardless of their knowledge of Christ (Barclay 1991: 106, Props. V and VI, 14). The doctrine of predestination cannot be valid because it 'makes God the author of sin' (Barclay 1991: 75, 76, Props. V and VI, 2). Imputed righteousness through Jesus' death is a false doctrine, but what Christ gave us was the *capacity* to be saved by following his light in our hearts (Barclay 1991: 140, Prop. VII, 6). Man has a dual nature and the 'natural man' can do good only through the seed of God in him (Barclay 1991: 66-68, Prop. IV, 2). Worship under the gospel is different from that under the law (Barclay 1991: 241-43, Prop. XI, 2), and is a silent waiting upon God, setting aside one's own wisdom and will (Barclay 1991: 248-51, Prop. XI, 6, 7); to try to force another's beliefs is contrary to the Christian religion (Barclay 1991: 372, Prop. XIV, 4); knowledge and learning without God's spirit are worthless (Barclay 1991: 206-207, Prop. X, 23). Hicks

rejecting 'human prudence' and 'cumbers of the world'; (3) direct inward experience of divine presence, reached through humble silent waiting; (4) belief that God's behavior may be influenced by what man does (Bauman 1971: 16-17).

20. References to Barclay will be abbreviated as R.B. (Barclay 1991). Proposition identifications are included as a guide for any edition.

expanded on Barclay in the matter of symbolic interpretation of Scripture, but the kernel was there in Prop. IV, 2: 'Whatever literal significance [the story of Eden] may have, we may safely ascribe a mystical significance to the paradise it describes' (Barclay 1991: 67).

As has been indicated, Shillitoe was directly exposed through his Anglican membership to orthodox Christian theology, and through his chapel attendance to the wave of evangelical enthusiasm set in motion by Wesley and Whitefield. Rufus Jones observed that Shillitoe 'joined to [his] strong mystical disposition an equally pronounced strand of evangelical faith' (Jones 1921: 281), but he seems rather to have joined to his orthodox-evangelical grounding a strong strain of Quakerism. What is expected of a child leaves a deep and lasting impression, and his conviction of sin was ingrained, while Hicks was free of this burden. Judging from his journal, Shillitoe's theology from the beginning included the basic points of original sin, a vengeful/merciful God, required gratitude for the Atonement, anxiety about final salvation, and the acceptance of the Bible as a major authority. Of the eight English ministers who came to America from 1818 to 1828, Rufus Jones names as most important 'the quietist-Quaker, Thomas Shillitoe' and describes them all as 'intensely evangelical in their theological sympathies' (Jones 1921: 460). Jones also noted that on both sides of the Atlantic, the ministers most prominent in spreading the evangelical position came into Quakerism from other denominations (Jones 1921: 277).

But Shillitoe embodied Quakerism in a number of ways. He added outward observances: he used the plain language, even when it meant addressing his monarch as 'thee' (TSJ1, pp. 197-200); he kept his hat on for visits to civil and ecclesiastical royalty (but apologized for it if it had not already been removed by an attendant on the way in). On his European trips he gave away copies of Barclay's *Apology*, Sewel's *History* (TSJ1, p. 249) and 'Henry Tuke's work on faith' (TSJ1, p. 287). He did not argue for the Trinity, or for outward observance of sacraments except for the Sabbath. Though he emphasized the importance of reading the Bible, he conceded on several occasions—one a visit to a Native American tribe—that salvation was available to those who had never read the Bible or heard of Christ (TSJ2, pp. 213-14; TSJ1, pp. 140-41, 281, 287). More important, he kept inner attention to the Spirit of God as the central focus of his life, resting all decisions in prayer and starting every religious encounter, whether with one person or a raucous crowd, with reverent silence, always waiting to speak until the words were

given him. A consistent element of his preaching was to call on his hearers to 'pay due attention to that law written by the finger of the Almighty God on each of their hearts' (TSJ1, p. 246).

He thus combined parts of three heritages—Anglican, incipient Methodism, and Quaker—but certainly made the necessity of correct belief in the evangelical doctrines of original sin, the Atonement, the divinity of Christ, and the authority of Scripture his central allegiance in the final struggle.

Contacts and Conflicts

How did the personality dimensions of these two men play out in the conflict between them from 1826 to 1829? Shillitoe did not want to come to America at all, and Hicks hated to be involved in controversy. What drove these two, old and tired as they were, to make these difficult final journeys of their ministry? Certainly, they both perceived themselves as following divine leading, but I would suggest they must have sensed grave danger to what each cared most about—his fundamental theology, values, and way of organizing the world.

Shillitoe must have perceived Hicks as a major representative and spokesman for views that he believed would undermine, if allowed to spread, the spiritual welfare of the whole Society and bring many souls to perdition: divergent images of Jesus' divinity, the function of the crucifixion, the interpretation of Scripture, the nature of the afterlife, even the nature of God. Hicks was also challenging the rigid authority of the elders in the way they were applying the discipline, threatening Shillitoe's image of the authoritative organization of society.²¹ He may well also have shared the parental attitude English Friends had taken toward American Friends from the beginning, nurturing and correcting their spiritual offspring in the colonies (e.g. see Holden 1988: 45).

Though both men had praised unity, this was less important to Shilli-

21. The 'Declaration' he distributed in Indiana and Ohio, published in 1828 by the Orthodox segment of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, illustrates this reading of the problem in terms of authority. It placed the total blame for the schism on the principles 'of unbelief and insubordination' (Evans and Evans 1839: 431) of the so-called Separatists, as represented by Elias Hicks, emphasizing their tendency 'to destroy all faith in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and to break asunder the bonds of civil and religious society' (Evans and Evans 1839: 444). The full text may be found in Evans and Evans 1839: 431-44, and a discussion of it in Ingle 1998: 25-26.

toe than uniformity of belief and strict enforcement of discipline, and his fear and suspicion kept him from the kinds of friendly contact that were offered him; he was unable to hear any ideas different from his own. His horror of spiritual contamination was extreme, since he believed it could bring God's judgment against the whole group, and he managed to spread this horror like an epidemic among people who had some leanings toward evangelical doctrine. Therefore he went wherever Hicks had made his mark, preaching his conception of theology and salvation, giving dire warnings about falling into Hicks's trap, and above all urging those he considered 'sound' in meetings that held those of both views (who in many places were still meeting for worship together) to separate themselves from the others (e.g. TSJ2, pp. 333-34). Hicks, too, wanted purity (of a different kind) and called Friends away from their errors as he saw them, but continued to have faith in their perfectibility.

Hicks, from his point of view, saw Shillitoe as perhaps the prime leader among the evangelicals who, in an arbitrary use of power by an unshakable elite, were taking the Society of Friends down what he saw as the mistaken road that had led the Christian church in the past to establish tests of belief, rites and rituals, hierarchic authorities, and mediators between human beings and the God whose desire is to be ever-present within us all. The kind of rigid tradition that Shillitoe stressed was what Hicks was convinced had led to all the wars and upheavals in human society—and he could see it now leading to similar conflicts in his beloved Society of Friends. It was *his community* breaking apart, not Shillitoe's; these were his people.²² If even the beloved and divinely favored Society of Friends could not keep together, this would strike at the heart of his vision of the American Eden. His was thus a defensive action, hoping to alert Friends to their danger and remind them of the source of love and unity that should be the basis for all their acts. Both actions were mixtures of religious convictions and life-developed personality orientations.

22. The yearly meetings with the largest proportion of Hicksites after the split were those where Hicks had visited the most: New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore. Ohio was badly split; most Friends there had come from Maryland or Virginia, where Hicks had been, and North Carolina, where he had not; he had made one visit to Ohio in 1819. Thomas Hamm reports, 'The surviving records of Hicksite meetings in Indiana suggest that a disproportionate number of Hicksites there had Pennsylvania, New Jersey, or Maryland roots' (Hamm 1992: 184 n. 14). Ingle supports this correlation (Ingle 1998: 242).

Conclusion

We come back to the question implicit in the introduction: how could two people sincerely trying to follow the guidance of the divine spirit publicly oppose each other to the point, perhaps, of sealing the destruction of their religious community?

In the case of both these men, as we have shown, direct experience of God's leading was the central element of their religious growth. Yet they evidently received sharply differing messages about the Truth. Their exposure to different traditions, combined with all the other levels of cultural and personal experiences, led them to different allegiances and, essentially, to praying to different gods. Here was the parting of the ways, the answer to the question posed at the beginning of this paper. From here on, it was actually their similarities that made them bitter opponents in the service of God. Their dedication to God and to the Society of Friends, and their conviction that they were following God's leading, drove them to defend against each other the conflicting theological choices they had made. The differences between Friends today, which some hold tenaciously, may also be better understood by considering the variety of cultural and personal filters through which these beliefs have come.

For those who hope for a divine guidance that will bring unity (which is indeed the faith on which Friends have based their worship and business processes from the beginning), it would be well humbly to consider in any conflict the admixture of sources from which our firmly held beliefs come. If we recognize that others' beliefs have been adopted through a different set of filters, we may find it easier to seek the pure message often clouded by these human factors.

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AUTHOR DETAILS

Cynthia Earl Kerman has a PhD in American Culture from the University of Michigan, and taught English at Villa Julie College for 14 years. Her biography *Creative Tension: The Life and Thought of Kenneth Boulding* was published by the University of Michigan Press in 1974, and she co-authored with Richard Eldridge *The Lives of Jean Toomer: A Hunger for Wholeness*, published by Louisiana State University Press in 1987. A number of her published articles have also dealt with Quakers and Quaker themes.

Mailing address:

11630 Glen Arm Road, # U-46 Glen Arm, Maryland 21057, USA.