

## Matthew Arnold's Christ and the Unity of Culture and Religion<sup>1</sup>

CATHERINE A. RUNCIE

The latter years of Matthew Arnold's life, W. H. Auden writes of as years of self-betrayal, self-imprisonment. Arnold, says Auden, 'Thrust his gift in prison till it died', leaving 'nothing but a jailor's voice and face.'<sup>2</sup> This view has wide acceptance among those who regret that Arnold turned to writing criticism and theology when as late as 1866 he could write poetry as well as he had ever done, 'Thyrsis' being proof of that.

But can one regret that Arnold's final years are a culmination and a unity not given to many to achieve? The years of writing poems that Arnold said were fragments just as he was fragments<sup>3</sup> gave way in the end to works of theology and criticism that signify a triumphant unity, the end of a life-long search. Arnold refused the provisionalism, the relativism of most of the liberal thought of his era and without any of the consolations of Romanticism, he pressed on to find certitude and unity. That certitude comes ultimately from Arnold's own particular notions of Christ.

Arnold's deep interest in things religious is life-long and a glance at his reading lists at any time in his life from the 1840s<sup>4</sup> on shows its continuity. The editors of his note-books, so moved by the quantity of religious reading and the excerpts he wrote down, declare that the note-books are 'among the best books of devotion' and 'mark Arnold's consecration to a life larger than that of the poet and essayist'.<sup>5</sup> Against the background of yearning and sadness and the intellectual conflict evident in the poetry, Arnold's reading lists of devotional, religious, theological and philosophical works are poignant and significant. For all along, throughout this vast reading, Arnold was working out for himself a viable Christianity. Not any Christianity would do. Not the religion of Dr Arnold, no matter how strongly he appreciated his father's views and no matter how deeply he probed them;<sup>6</sup> and although he attended Newman's sermons at Oxford and continued to read and appreciate Newman all his life, Newman's Christianity would not do.<sup>7</sup> Nor that of the Evangelicals, the so-called 'muscular Christianity' associated with Charles Kingsley or Thomas Hughes of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* fame.<sup>8</sup> Nor could Arnold assent to Dissent. Probably the least theological and the least affected by the assaults of science,

Dissenting Christianity was also the least likely to claim Arnold. He spent decades excoriating Dissent as unthinking, unlovely obscurantism and one of the main things holding England back from greatness. No Christianity ready-to-hand suited Arnold. He had to work out his own special accommodation to Christianity and his own view of Christ.

By way of introduction to his Christ, one can say that the Christianity that emerged for Arnold in the 1860s is so-called 'natural' Christianity, 'basic' or 'non-credal' Christianity. It is a liberal humanist effort and as such is not what so rigorous a philosopher as F. H. Bradley could see as anything but 'clap trap',<sup>9</sup> to use Bradley's own word; and it was not what any theologian of his times could even see as religion. Although today, Arnold's biographer, Park Honan, can claim that Arnold's 'natural Christianity' looks forward to Bultmann or Tillich,<sup>10</sup> Newman did not think it religion at all.<sup>11</sup> Liberal Catholic theologian, George Tyrrell, although much influenced by Arnold, rejected his work as only 'higher ethics'<sup>12</sup> and F. J. A. Hort, liberal Protestant theologian (and admirer of Arnold's poetry) claimed that 'natural Christianity' — Arnold's or anyone's — was a fraud, a 'baseless contrivance for generating results of conduct as would please God and make men happy'.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever its flaws — Arnold was no metaphysician — his 'natural Christianity' is no mere 'contrivance' for 'generating results', no mere moral deterrent. Focussing specifically on Arnold's Christ shows that. Arnold's Christology is mainly in *Literature and Dogma*, a work that Tolstoy admired<sup>14</sup> and which Arnold felt was his most important prose work.<sup>15</sup> The preface to its popular edition is what Professor William Robbins calls the 'final expression'<sup>16</sup> of Arnold's Christ.

Arnold's demythologized Christianity may lead one to expect a simple humanistic Christ, a verbal equivalent of the 'real' or 'historical' Christ of, say, Ford Madox Brown's *Christ Washing Peter's Feet* or Holman Hunt's *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple*, or a redaction in little of the numerous lives of Jesus that flourished as rebuttals to Strauss's *Life of Jesus* and which stressed historicity.<sup>17</sup> But Arnold's Christ is not just history's model of virtue, or just another model of virtue in a humanist pantheon of moral models that might include Socrates or Marcus Aurelius or St Francis and perhaps Dr Arnold too. Arnold's Christ is not a moral rule-of-thumb and, although his critics take convincing on this point, his Christ is not a rule-of-thumb for a cultured élite. It is true

Arnold's Christ is available in a text that must be read, but Arnold struggled for greater literacy in society and in fact avowed that he wrote his theological books for 'mankind'<sup>18</sup> as a whole, and he re-wrote them for 'the people' in popular editions. Far from being an *aide-mémoire* for an élite or an *aide-mémoire* for anyone, the Christ Arnold perceived was the very centre, perennially present, of one's spiritual life.

How can this be so? After all Arnold's Christ is a Christ without the other members of the Holy Trinity, without an Incarnation, without miracles, with no eschatology and with the Passion and resurrection almost unrecognizably reinterpreted. It is a Christ whose ontology is uncertain and seemingly shorn of everything but what Arnold insists is the 'natural truth' of Christianity. With daring succinctness such 'natural truth' is put into a paragraph:

The command of the Old Testament, 'Fear God and keep his commandments' put into other words, what is it but this: 'Reverently obey the eternal power moving us to fulfil the true law of our being;' — and when shall that command be done away? The command of the New Testament: 'Watch that ye may be counted worthy to stand before the Son of Man', put into other words, what is it? It is this: 'So live, as to be worthy of that high and true ideal of man and of man's life, which shall be at last victorious.' All the future is there. (VI, pp. 144-5).

Now within religion conceived as defining 'that high and true ideal of man and man's life' — a view that has its provenance in Arnold's ideas about culture and one's best self — Arnold calls Christ an '*absolute*' (VI, p. 145). 'Absolute' is Arnold's own word and a very significant word it is, for he reluctantly uses it, calling it the 'jargon of modern philosophy' (VI, p. 145). Nevertheless Christ is an absolute: 'we cannot explain him, cannot get behind him and above him, cannot command him. He is therefore the perfection of an ideal', says Arnold and then he adds a stunning rider: 'and it is as an ideal that the divine has its best worth and reality' (VI, p. 145). This notion of the divine as an ideal, this notion of divinity without 'personality' (to use Coleridge's word), however radical, is central to Arnold's religion, but in itself it clearly cannot make that religion Christian. Arnold's Christology can and it does. Christ is an absolute according to Arnold and Christ relates to the 'ideal' in that he is the perfection of that ideal — which is 'divine', certainly non-material, transcendent. He is, as it were, history's instantiation of perfection, the realization within history (and ever present in a text) of the entelechy of human life — or to use Arnold's much beleaguered phrase for God that he says will be the God of *future*

religion, 'the Eternal Power, not ourselves, by which all things fulfil the law of their being" ' (VI, p. 145). (This definition of God supersedes Arnold's previous linking of God and righteousness.)

What is the nature of this perfection? Arnold feels we can only arrive at an understanding of this through a reading of the Bible — and that reading of a text whose Jesus is perpetually present as meaning, requires not unsurprisingly, 'culture', says Arnold, 'knowing the best that has been thought and known in the world; which turns out to be, in another shape, and in particular relation to the Bible, *getting the power, through reading, to estimate the proportion and relation in what we read*. If we read but a very little, we naturally want to press it all; if we read a great deal, we are willing not to press the whole of what we read, and we learn what ought to be pressed and what not' (VI, p. 153. Cf. pp. 276-7). What ought not to be pressed is, apparently, a Christ that is harsh or angry, the so-called activist or political Christ, who threw the money-changers out of the temple and who vilified the Pharisees and who is the divinity of Dissent. Arnold makes a considerable effort in arguing that Christ's invective against the Scribes and Pharisees is not Christ's usual way and must not be made a moral tradition within Christianity as the Dissenters have made it, so he thinks (VI, pp. 153-4). Arnold ignores Renan's contention that Jesus later became harsh and strident.<sup>19</sup> Like Hazlitt, he emphasizes Christ's sweetness and mildness.

Reading the Bible (especially the book of *John* that Arnold defends from the historicists) with 'discriminative tact' (VI, p. 157) or 'justness of perception' (VI, p. 158) gives us a Christ that Arnold considers perfection, a Christ pre-eminent in 'sweet reasonableness' (IV, p. 300). In other words, Christ is a harmony of the famous 'sweetness' and 'light' found so necessary to perfection in *Culture and Anarchy*. Whatever Jesus does is through his 'temper' of mildness or sweet reasonableness. 'We may think of [this] as perfectly illustrated and exemplified in his answer to the foolish question, *Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?* — when, taking a little child and setting him in the midst, he said: "Whosoever receives the kingdom of God as a little child, the same is greatest in it" ' (VI, p. 300). Here Arnold says is Christ's 'exquisite, mild, winning felicity' (VI, p. 300).

This is the medium, this exquisite, mild and winning felicity, this sweet reasonableness, through which what Arnold calls Christ's 'method' and his 'secret' work. Christ's secret, Arnold's

interpretation of Pauline necrosis, is self-renouncement, dying unto oneself to be reborn. No notion, says Arnold, is so characteristic of Jesus as the notion of self-renouncement. This is the message of the Cross: “*He that will save his life shall lose it; he that will lose his life shall save it . . . . Whosoever will come after me, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me*” (VI, p. 291).

Self-renouncement does not contradict sweet reasonableness. All that Christ does is through sweet reasonableness. Christ’s unique deep moral and spiritual meaning in the Passion is in harmony with sweet reasonableness for Arnold.

Now if Christ’s ‘secret’ is self-renouncement, Christ’s ‘method’ is inwardness. Christ was pre-eminent, says Arnold, in bringing into the world a ‘new covenant’, the reign of conscience, ‘that inward world of feelings and dispositions which Judaism had too much neglected’ (VI, p. 218), a view Arnold shared with Renan. The essence of this inwardness is Christ’s commendation to the Pharisee. Arnold sees this as the great achievement of Christianity: “Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the *inside* of the cup, that the outside may be clean also!” (VI, p. 218). This is the ‘very ground-principle in Jesus Christ’s teaching’ (VI, p. 218. Cf. pp. 288-9).

Jesus makes his call to conscience in unique language that Arnold perhaps inadequately describes as ‘prepossessing’. Jesus was able — dare one say, like a poet? — to ‘put things in such a way that his hearer was led to take each rule or fact of conduct by its inward side, its effect on the heart and character; then the reason of the thing, the meaning of what had been more matter of blind rule, flashed upon him’ (VI, p. 219). Or, as Arnold says elsewhere in *Literature and Dogma*, Jesus was able to make a ‘passage’ for his doctrine into the ‘hearts’ of his disciples. He did so through arousing love, ‘ardent affection and gratitude’ (VI, p. 229).

In a section that is rather arresting as Arnold changes his rhetorical strategy and so changes his point of view, he tries to capture Christ’s working in his disciples. Christ’s effect is what gives the method and secret their power. Without this ‘power’ Arnold’s Christianity can claim no future. This is of great importance — Arnold’s Christ, existing not just as an actual perfect man, but also as a presence in a text, has transfiguring power. This is virtually a test that a liberal humanist notion of Christ has to pass, for the usual complaint of the more orthodox theologian is that humanist Christianity is powerless. It is just this lack of power to transfigure sinful man that R. H. Hutton, Arnold’s contemporary, criticizes.<sup>20</sup>

But for Arnold, Christ is transfiguring. His deeds, his words, his very being, his method and secret, are enthralling. Jesus produced 'a total impression ineffable and indescribable for the disciples, as also it was irresistible for them' (VI, p. 300). His message, his meaning is, as it were, 'carried alive into the heart' — by love.

Christ, in deed, word, attitude, in his very being is an aesthetic harmony, an aesthetic balance — an 'exquisite conjunction and balance' (VI, p. 300). In all aspects of his being, even in self-renouncement, Christ is harmonious. Arnold's Christ is a morally beautiful Christ, a Platonized Christ in whom wisdom and beauty coincide. As an historical person, a presence in a text, and the entelechy of human life, Arnold's Christ is the identity of '*grace and truth*' (VI, p. 145) to use Arnold's own words and those of *John*, I, xvii. Arnold's notion of grace may seem to border on graciousness and gracefulness, but this does not necessarily eliminate or contradict the Johannine meaning of grace.

This enthralling Christ can transfigure. But what is the nature of the transfiguration? What is the result of 'believing in Jesus Christ, following him, and loving him?' In a word, it is 'happiness', (VI, p. 229) and the condition of this happiness is the finding of one's own soul. Using the Platonic vocabulary<sup>21</sup> of the 'real' and the 'apparent', Arnold says Christ leads us to our real self, our permanent self, our *soul* — beneath the apparent.

Jesus made his followers first look within and examine themselves; he made them feel that they had a best and real self as opposed to their ordinary and apparent one, and that their happiness depended on saving this best self from being overborne. Then *to find his own soul*, his true and permanent self, became set up in man's view as his chief concern, as the secret of happiness; and so it really is. . . . By recommending, . . . by showing active in himself, with the most prepossessing pureness, clearness, and beauty, the two qualities by which our ordinary self is indeed most essentially counteracted, *self-renouncement* and *mildness*, he made his followers feel that in these qualities lay the secret of their best self; that to attain them was in the highest degree requisite and natural, and that a man's whole happiness depended on it.' (VI, p. 220).

The word 'natural' should be stressed here. Christ in his 'moral beauty' wins man to self-renouncement and mildness, wins man to seek his real self as both 'requisite' and 'natural'. No violent conversions here. Christ brings men to happiness and his authentic self through his 'prepossessing pureness, clearness, and beauty'.

This is a Christ that Arnold feels he can truly place in the *centre* of one's life. This Christ is not a moral deity alone, overseeing three-fourths of life that Arnold says is conduct and inconsistently turning

over the other one-fourth of life, our desire for beauty and for knowledge, to Apollo. Christ is a harmony and following Christ produces harmony — at that profound point of the 'real' self. To suggest the depth at which this 'real' self exists Arnold uses such a phrase as '*to find [one's] own soul*' (VI, p. 220) from *Matthew* xvi, 25 and he italicizes it. When in the startling 'Conclusion' to *Literature and Dogma* Arnold makes the momentous statement 'Conduct comes to have relations of a very close kind with culture' (VI, p. 407), he can say so because he sees conduct and culture harmonized in Christ — in the inwardness, the mildness, the self-renouncement, the beautifulness.<sup>22</sup> The 'real' or 'true' self that Christ leads one to is not an ugly or angry or dissenting self. Rather it is a beautiful, a serene self. Its grace-note is joy.

In this conclusion that is really a prolegomena to *Literature and Dogma*, Arnold suggests a future definition of God: 'For the total man, therefore, the truer conception of God is as "the Eternal Power, not ourselves, by which all things fulfil the law of their being;" . . . so far as our being is *aesthetic* and *intellective*, as well as so far as it is *moral*' (VI, p. 409. *My italics*). This Platonized notion of God is consistent with Arnold's Platonized notion of Christ, and Arnold's Platonized notion of Christ, that is Christ as the hypostatization of the ultimate harmony of the *moral, aesthetic* and *intellective*, must surely mean William Madden is not right when he takes the final phase of Arnold's religious thinking to be supremely aesthetic<sup>23</sup> and its ultimate goal 'a disinterested contemplation of the spectacle of life characteristic of aesthetic consciousness in its most sophisticated state'.<sup>24</sup> To imply that culture and aesthetic contemplation are a goal that negates the notion of the 'true' self,

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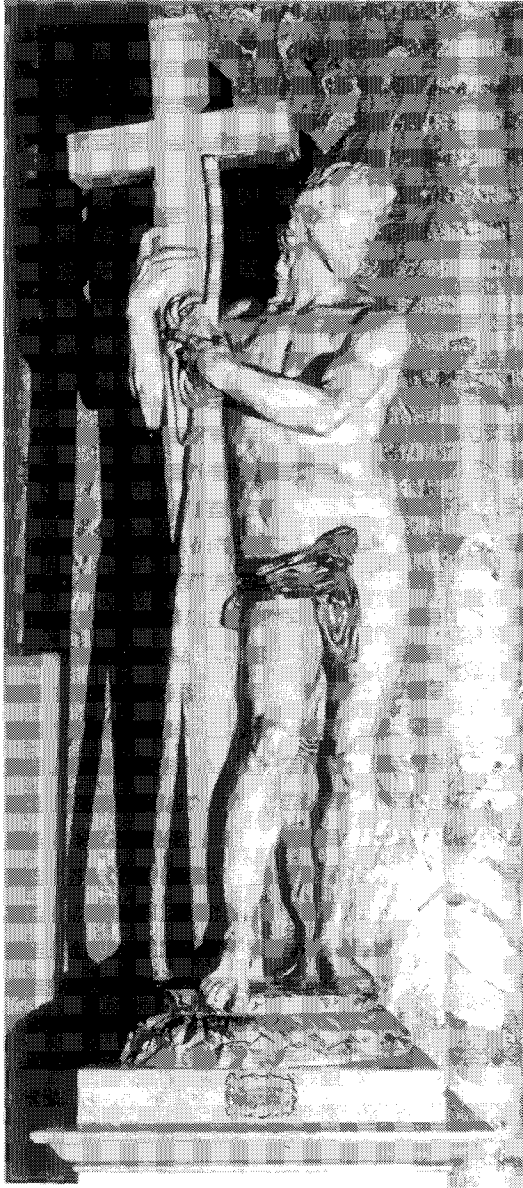
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THE RISEN CHRIST (1519-1520)

by

Michaelangelo

According to Park Honan in *Matthew Arnold: A Life* (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1981) p. 373, Michaelangelo's 'The Risen Christ' was 'one of the few images of Jesus [Arnold] really liked'. Although the face was tampered with by Michaelangelo's pupil, Pietro Urbano, and may not be strictly what Michaelangelo intended, the sculpture nevertheless shows a 'beautiful' Christ, which, if it does not represent all the qualities that Arnold interpreted as Christ's meaning, does show the serenity, the 'sweet reasonableness', combining harmoniously with strength, physical and spiritual, as the figure looks outward in peace and to the future, while clutching the rope, sponge, reed and cross of past suffering. The gilt drapery is not Michaelangelo's, but was added in the seventeenth century. In the Santa Maria Sopra Minerva Church, Rome. (Foto Soprintendenza Beni Artistici e Storici di Roma)





the 'real' self that Arnold says Christ leads one to, through renunciation and mildness, is to deny the various planes of experience or to feel that Arnold does, and is also to ignore the harmony Arnold assumes of the aesthetic, the moral and the intellective — or Truth and Beauty and Goodness. And Lionel Trilling, still one of Arnold's most profound and sympathetic scholars, is not taking sufficiently into account Arnold's Christology when he says: 'We may understand how truly portentous the idea of culture was for Arnold since, profoundly as he admired religion, he yet insisted that culture went beyond it. Culture goes beyond religion in this: that it conceives perfection as the harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature; whereas religion . . . puts an exclusive emphasis on merely a few powers or even on only one — the moral.'<sup>25</sup> And T. S. Eliot is surely unfair to Arnold's Christ when he says: 'When we take *Culture and Anarchy* in one hand, and *Literature and Dogma* in the other, our minds are gradually darkened by the suspicion that Arnold's objection to Dissenters is partly that they do hold strongly to that which they believe, and partly that they are not Masters of Arts of Oxford. . . . The total effect of Arnold's philosophy is to set up Culture in the place of Religion, and to leave Religion to be laid waste by the anarchy of feeling.'<sup>26</sup>

The views of Madden or Trilling or Eliot do take into account Arnold's alarming and radical change in the ontology and personicity of God, which might seem to leave religion bereft of anything important. But their views do not fully take into account Arnold's Christ — the Christ he says is *absolute*, that is total perfection, that is the transcendent identity of grace and truth, the Christ that leads man, beyond the 'apparent' to the 'real', the authentic, to the fulfilling of his entelechy. It is this Christ that Arnold meant to be the centre of future religion.

It is perfectly true that had Arnold not conceived of Christ as sweetly reasonable, as mild and loving, as beautiful, there would have been a conflict between following Christ and total perfection — and perhaps the Christ of the Decadence would have been different. But, rightly or wrongly Arnold sheds the activist Christ and so can harmonize or Platonize Christ and his meaning. It cannot be denied that Christ for Arnold remains an absolute, as he himself says, a perfect, beautiful, moral harmony at the very centre of spiritual life and not hindered but enriched by the claims of culture, and giving culture a profounder purpose and a surer direction than ever before in his thought.

It is on this point of 'culture' that we must turn back to Arnold's critical endeavours. After nearly a decade of religious writing, Arnold returned to 'culture' in his last works of literary criticism. He did so with a strong sense of mission — in a new, urgent, authoritative and 'authoritarian' style of writing so different from the urbane ironies of *Culture and Anarchy*. This is the period of the 'jailor's voice', one might say. In the preface to *Last Essays* of 1876, Arnold says: 'in returning to devote to literature, more strictly so-called, what remains to me of life and strength and leisure, I am returning, after all, to a field where the work of the most important kind has now to be done, though indirectly, for religion'.<sup>27</sup> And so 'indirectly for religion' he writes the 'The Study of Poetry' of 1880. In this famous essay, Arnold takes a long view of the future — concerned now as he is with what will 'transform the world'<sup>28</sup> or what will bring about 'the ideal future society on earth'<sup>29</sup> (to use Arnold's very own words that recur portentously in his later writings). In the 'Study of Poetry' Arnold considers poetry's role in the future. The 'race', he says at the beginning of his essay, 'as time goes on' will find its 'ever surer and surer stay'<sup>30</sup> in poetry and he declares at the end of his essay that the 'very instinct of self-preservation in humanity' will ensure poetry 'currency and supremacy' (IX, p. 188).

These are rather large claims and they are quite unabashed. But Arnold's declarative confidence comes from the fact that in 'perfect' poetry, he has found an absolute. He analyses this perfection for the student of poetry, this 'supreme poetical success' (IX, p. 184), and he offers touchstones or samples of such perfection. To be brief and take only one touchstone that Arnold calls a 'simple, but perfect, single line', a line from Dante's *Paradise*, (iii, 85), '“In la sua volontade è nostra pace”,' (IX, p. 169), it is clear that Arnold considers Dante has achieved a total unity or harmony — born of 'high seriousness' and 'absolute sincerity' (IX, p. 184) yielding a powerful moral vision, yet also a *beautiful moral vision*. Or to use Arnold's own more analytic words: 'a powerful application of ideas to life . . . under the conditions fixed by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty' (IX, p. 184). When Arnold says 'laws' he means 'laws'. He speaks in the essay on Wordsworth of the 'conditions immutably fixed by the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth' (IX, p. 44). Arnold finds perfection at the point where beauty and truth, beauty and wisdom harmoniously and not accidentally coincide — or where 'poetic truth', 'poetic beauty', and the 'powerful application of ideas to life'

(IX, p. 184) coincide. It is because this perfection is an absolute that poetry, when it is the greatest poetry, will sustain mankind and continue to sustain mankind, while other knowledges, provisional and tentative or lacking in transfiguring power, fail.

'We should conceive of poetry worthily, and more highly than it has been the custom to conceive of it. We should conceive of it as capable of higher uses, and called to higher destinies, than those which in general men have assigned to it hitherto. More and more mankind will discover that we have to turn to poetry to interpret life for us, to console us, to sustain us' (IX, p. 161). Arnold's tone<sup>31</sup> and his very sentence structure are of a pronouncement of something final and unchallengeable, and the touchstones are meant to be just that, final and unchallengeable. Arnold's touchstones — from Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton — all exhibit what for Arnold is a *hamonious unity* of emotional power, moral vision and beauty.

I must stress that beauty does not mean mere prettiness nor morality mere prudence. In his essay on Wordsworth — written mid-1879 when he was also thinking of 'The Study of Poetry' which finally went to proof February 1880 — Arnold tries to demonstrate poetry's moral idea and its function as a 'criticism of life'. He says that he means the word 'moral' broadly; it has to do with 'life', with '“*how to live*”' (IX, p. 45). One might say Arnold also meant it deeply. Because of his unrestrictive definition of 'moral', Arnold's views suffer even from sympathetic scholars who see the 'moral' as the prudent or merely pertaining to behaviour.<sup>32</sup> Arnold includes as moral ideas Keats's lines 'For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair —' and Shakespeare's 'We are such stuff / As dreams are made of' (IX, p. 45). This is enough to signify that Arnold's use of 'moral' is somewhat akin to 'existential'. In *God and The Bible* Arnold actually tries to analyse the verb 'to be'<sup>33</sup> — in an awkward way when one compares his effort to Heidegger's in *Sein und Zeit* — but so-called 'existential' experience was an important concept to Arnold, admirer after all of Greek tragedy, and the fact that he called it the 'moral' should not now continue to belittle or obscure his meaning. The touchstones are not samples of moral prudence; they are born of profound existential experience or 'wisdom', as any glance at their substance shows. It is beyond the scope of this paper to analyse the touchstones individually, nor is it necessary, for not one of the touchstones can be trivialised into mere moral prudence. They ought to be used to illustrate and define Arnold's broad meaning of 'moral'. When perfect, poetry is the identity and unity

not of prudence and prettiness, but beauty and wisdom. As such, poetry is 'secular scripture' to borrow from Northrop Frye, and can stand in the future beside that other great work of literature — that is Arnold's word for it — the Bible, in whose text is ever present the 'absolute' identity of beauty and wisdom, Christ.

What Arnold does in 'The Study of Poetry' is complementary to his religious works. In both culture and religion, he perceives the transcendent harmonious unity of truth and beauty and this he sees as absolute, and Christ its hypostasization. This is Arnold's resting place. He achieves a unity in his own thought, stemming from what he came to apprehend with certainty as the 'eternal order' or 'the law' of things. He says of Keats in 1880, the same year as 'The Study of Poetry': 'It is no small thing to have so loved the principle of beauty as to perceive the necessary relation of beauty with truth, and of both with joy' (IX, p. 214). Arnold came finally to do the same.

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#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 The initial version of this paper was given at the XVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religion, 20 August 1985. My special thanks go Associate Professor J. Gribble, Dr W. Jobling, Professor S. Prickett, Professor E. Sharpe and Associate Professor J. Tulip.
- 2 W. H. Auden, *Collected Shorter Poems* (London, 1959), p. 73, ll. 12-13.
- 3 *Unpublished Letters of Matthew Arnold*, ed. Arnold Whitridge (New Haven, 1923), p. 18.
- 4 See K. Allott, 'Matthew Arnold's Reading-Lists in Three Early Diaries', *Victorian Studies*, II (March 1959), p. 254-66, which deals with the reading of 1845-47.
- 5 *The Note-books of Matthew Arnold*, ed. H. G. Lowry, K. Young and W. H. Dunn (London, 1952), p. xiii. See also Ruth apRobert's fine study, *Arnold and God* (Berkeley, 1983), pp. 104-105. Professor apRobert's study is based on the continuity of Arnold's interest in religion with his notion of cultural *Bildung*. Hereafter referred to as apRoberts, *AG*.
- 6 See Eugene L. Williamson, Jr., 'Significant Points of Comparison between the Biblical Criticism of Thomas and Matthew Arnold', *PMLA*, LXXVI (1961), 539-43, and the chapter, 'The Higher Criticism in the Home' in apRoberts, *AG*, pp. 56-79.
- 7 D. J. DeLaura, *Hebrew and Hellene in Victorian England* (Austin, 1969), p. 27.
- 8 F. E. Kingsley, *Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of His Life* (London, 1885), p. 213. See also Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot* (New Haven and London, 1981), pp. 142-4.
- 9 *Ethical Studies* [1876] (London, 1952), p. 285.
- 10 Park Honan, *Matthew Arnold: A Life* (London, 1981), p. 361. Cf. Erec Trethewey, 'The "Method of Jesus": Experience and the Moral Life in Matthew Arnold's Poetic Theory of Interpretation', *The Arnoldian*, IX (Spring 1982), p.

- 6: '[Arnold's] work on religion deserves to be seen in the context of the existential and demythologizing hermeneutics of such nineteenth-century thinkers as Ludwig Feuerbach and Ernest Renan, and of such modern Christian thinkers as Karl Jaspers, Paul Tillich, and Rudolf Bultmann.' So important are Arnold's theological works considered that there has been an *MLA Special Session on Arnold's Literature and Dogma and God and the Bible*, the papers of which are reprinted in *The Arnoldian*, V (Winter 1978) No. 2.
- 11 See David J. DeLaura's discussion in 'Arnold, Newman, and T. S. Eliot: A Note on the Disappearance of God', *The Arnoldian*, IV (Winter 1977) No. 2, pp. 2-7.
- 12 *The Faith of Millions* (London, 1901), p. 194. For a study of Arnold's influence on Tyrrell and Tyrrell's running battle with Arnold, see Nicholas Sagovsky, *Between Two Worlds* (Cambridge, 1983).
- 13 F. J. A. Hort, *The Way, The Truth, The Life* (London, 1908), p. 45, quoted in L. E. Elliott-Binns, *English Thought 1860-1900: The Theological Aspect* (London, 1956), p. 226.
- 14 *The Last Word in The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1978), XI, p. 467.
- 15 Preface to [The Popular] Edition [1883] of *Literature and Dogma in Dissent and Dogma, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1968), VI, p. 141, hereafter referred to in the text as VI.
- 16 William Robbins, *The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold* (London, 1959), p. 137.
- 17 See Daniel L. Pals, *The Victorian 'Lives' of Jesus* (San Antonio, Texas, 1982), a fine study of the major lives of Christ.
- 18 In a letter to his sister in November 1874, Arnold, discussing *Literature and Dogma*, says: 'When I see the conviction of the ablest and most serious men round me that a great challenge must come, a great plunge must be taken, I think it well, I must say, . . . to show mankind that it need not be in terror and despair, that everything essential to its progress stands firm and unchanged.' *Letters of Matthew Arnold, 1848-1888*, ed. G. W. E. Russell (London, 1895), II, p. 139.
- 19 Ernest Renan, *Life of Jesus*, ed. C. Gore (No. 805 of Everyman's Library, London, n.d.), pp. 174-5.
- 20 *Essays on Some of the Modern Guides of English Thought in Matters of Faith* (London, 1887), p. 122.
- 21 At this point the possible influence of Buddhism and Arnold's reading of Eugene Burnouf's work on Indian Buddhism is relevant. James Whitlock in 'Matthew Arnold and Buddhism', *The Arnoldian*, XI (Winter 1981) No. 1, pp. 5-16, tracks the notion of the two selves back to *Empedocles on Etna* and shows its constancy in Arnold's thought. The pervasive influence of Plato on *Culture and Anarchy* and specifically his notion of two selves are explored by R. Peter Burnham in 'Culture and Anarchy As A Platonic Solution To A Victorian Dilemma', *The Arnoldian*, VIII (Spring 1981) No. 2, pp. 6-19. The notion of the two selves, although not in relation to the Platonic 'real' and 'apparent', is developed in apRoberts, *AG*, pp. 206-8. See also *Literature and Dogma in Dissent and Dogma, The Complete Prose Works*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1968), VI, pp. 292-4.
- 22 Although Arnold stresses the 'grace and truth' of Christ, his 'moral beauty', as it were, he does not dwell on Christ's physical appearance as, say Ernest Renan does in *The Life of Jesus*, ed. C. Gore (London, n.d.), p. 71; or Stopford Brooke in *Christ in Modern Life* (London, 1880) pp. 92-93; or, most famously of all, Gerard Manley Hopkins in his sermon on 'Christ Our Hero' of 1879: 'There met

- in Jesus Christ all things that can make man lovely and loveable. In his body he was most beautiful . . . he was moderately tall, well built and slender in frame, his features straight and beautiful, his hair inclining to auburn, parted in the midst, curling and clustering about the ears and neck' (*A Hopkins Reader*, ed. John Pick (London, 1953), pp. 271-2). Perhaps because his is a biblicist Christ, so centred in a reading and existing as a presence of meaning, Arnold did not even care for the representations of Christ in art — with the exception of Michaelangelo's 'The Risen Christ' in the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome (Park Honan, *Matthew Arnold: A Life* (London, 1981), p. 373).
- 23 Arnold does say: '[God] is displeased and disserved by men uttering such doggerel hymns as: *Sing glory, glory, glory to the Great God Triune!*' (VI, pp. 409-410), but it has to be remembered that Arnold interprets such an aesthetic lapse as a lapse in worship, a lapse in *wisdom*, inextricably related to beauty.
  - 24 William Madden, *Matthew Arnold. A Study of the Aesthetic Temperament* (Bloomington, 1967), p. 165.
  - 25 *Matthew Arnold* (Cleveland and New York, 1963), pp. 243-4.
  - 26 *Selected Essays* (London, 1950), pp. 386-7.
  - 27 *Last Essays in Essays Religious and Mixed, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1972), VIII, p. 148.
  - 28 'A Persian Passion Play', in *God and The Bible, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1970), VII, p. 39.
  - 29 *The Last Word, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1977), XI, p. 187.
  - 30 'The Study of Poetry', in *English Literature and Irish Politics, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R. H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1973), IX, p. 161, hereafter referred to in the text as IX.
  - 31 Arnold's tone in this essay, that of a sage looking deeply into the future, continues to offend our age. So sympathetic a reader as George Levine has recently restated this sense of repulsion: "To be sure [in Arnold's criticism], there are solemn times (in that unfortunate "Study of Poetry", for example) when, straining to something like a prophetic voice, Arnold seems perhaps drab, earnest, prosaic, practical' ('The Function of Matthew Arnold. II: Matthew Arnold: The Artist In The Wilderness', *Critical Inquiry*, IX (March 1983), p. 475).
  - 32 See Buckley's ambivalent defence of Arnold — ambivalent because he takes morality in the customary and unArnoldian way in 'Matthew Arnold: Poetry as Religion', *Matthew Arnold, A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. D. J. DeLaura (Englewood Cliffs, 1973). Hilary Fraser in *Beauty and Belief* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 182, concludes that Arnold's attempt to mediate between a 'faith in morality' and a 'faith in art' ends in contradiction.
  - 33 See the whole chapter, 'The God of Metaphysics' in *God and The Bible, The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold*, ed. R.H. Super (Ann Arbor, 1970), VII, but especially Section 5.