"Thanking God for the humiliation": Henry Scott Holland, British idealism, and the penitential self

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Abstract: This paper provides a new reading of the theology of Lux Mundi *(1889), emphasising the creative and constructive theological leadership of Henry Scott Holland (1847-1918). A wide range of works by Holland are examined, showing his resistance to the philosophical Idealism of Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882). This usefully illustrates ways in which Holland provided inspiration for later Anglican Social Theology. Holland's influence on key trends in Anglican interpretation of doctrine, including theories of sin, penitence, forgiveness, atonement, and sacrifice are explored with reference to the moral climates of both the fin-de-siècle and the Great War (1914-1918).*

Lux Mundi: A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation (1889) holds a special place in the history of modern Anglican theology. In the fifteen years from 1889 to 1904 the volume went through no less than fifteen editions (and four mid-edition reprints), leaving a mark on a whole generation of English priests. It was a special book, and one which contemporaries perplexed by Biblical criticism and Darwinism looked to for guidance.[1] *Lux Mundi* provided a constructive Liberal Anglo-Catholic response to the intellectual challenges of the day, inaugurating an almost normative tradition of Anglican incarnationalism which was both traditional and progressive, orthodox yet modern, "prophetic of what was to follow".[2] Looking back, some estimation of the endurance of *Lux Mundi*'s influence on subsequent Anglican thought can be had from the fact that, one hundred years later, no less than three celebratory

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[1] John Fetherstonhaugh Briscoe, ed., *V. S. S. Coles: Letters, Papers, Addresses, Hymns and Verses, With a Memoir* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1930), p. 191.
[2] Arthur Michael Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple* (London: Longmans, 1960), p. 44.

volumes were written to commemorate its centenary.[3] It should be no wonder, then, thar *Lux Mundi* has been the subject of a significant amount of discussion, much of it focussed on its principal theological architects, Charles Gore (1853-1932), John Richardson Illingworth (1848-1915), Robert Campbell Moberly (1845-1903), and Henry Scott Holland (1847-1918). The purpose of this essay is to provide a new paradigm for reading the theology of the *Lux Mundi* writers. I examine the evidence that Scott Holland provided the leading intellectual influence in the group, illustrating ways in which his earlier (and later) published works and sermons helpfully illuminate key theological themes shared by the other authors. As Holland's thought has often been associated with the philosophical Idealism of his Oxford tutor, Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882), I contend that much of his theology was in fact obdurately realist. This is significant, for it usefully explains Holland's understanding of penitence, sacrifice, forgiveness, and the Christian life – insights which worked their influence on Anglican interpretations of the doctrine of the atonement and Eucharistic sacrifice, as well as on Anglican social commitments to life together for the common good.

Victorian Optimism and Pessimism

When David Newsome complained of Henry Scott Holland's optimism, he was not being cynical. He was telling us that Holland was limited by the experiences and common attitudes of his age. He felt as Victorians felt, and saw the world as they did, under the conditions and limitations of his place and time. Back in the "golden years" of the 1870s, Holland's "generation of… very favoured young men… felt no brooding sense of cosmic disaster", "had no experience… of the ugliness of war", and lived "in a country of limitless imperial pretensions and… massive… national pride". To Newsome's mind, "A sanguine mood and the sanguine philosophy of idealism" had led to a "theology expressed in equally sanguine terms".

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[3] Paul Avis, *Gore: Construction and Conflict* (Worthing: Churchman Publishing, 1988); Robert Morgan, ed., *The Religion of the Incarnation: Anglican Essays in Commemoration of Lux Mundi* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1989); Geoffrey Wainwright, ed., *Keeping the Faith: Essays to Mark the Centenary of Lux Mundi* (London: SPCK, 1989).

This, wrote Newsome, was "what the incarnationalism of Gore and Holland was all about".[4] When *Lux Mundi* (1889) was written, it seemed the world glowed with an illusory promise.

> In short, these were not the times, and this was not the world, of a theology of the Cross. When nature appears to be on our side, then God appears to work through men and through men's achievements. The theology of the *Lux Mundi* group, in so far as it expressed the mood and philosophy of its times, could hardly fail to be a demonstration of the way in which man had been elevated and ennobled by the supreme event of the Incarnation. In such a way does history shape theology.[5]

For Newsome, one senses, Holland would have benefitted from a greater sense of "pessimism and disillusionment".[6] He has not been alone in reaching such a judgment. Alasdair Heron has criticised the theology of the *Lux Mundi* writers for failing to grasp the extent of suffering and evil in a sinful world, linking this with an equal failure to wrestle with the implications of the crucifixion.[7] Likewise, Alan Sell has condemned the incarnationalism of *Lux Mundi* for not holding to a Forsythian theology of the cross.[8] For the conservative Roman Catholic Hans Urs von Balthasar, meanwhile, the problem with the Christology of Charles Gore and his group lay in the "influence of T. H. Green… Hegel, and the idea of a cosmic evolution reaching its summit in Christ".[9] In short, Anglican incarnationalism failed to live up to the needs of Christian faith because it failed grasp the tragedy implied in Christ crucified.

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[4] David Newsome, *Two Classes of Men: Platonism and English Romantic Thought* (London: John Murray, 1974), p. 88 and p. 87.

[5] Ibid., p. 88.

[6] David Newsome, *The Victorian World Picture: Perceptions and Introspections in an Age of Change* (London: John Murray, 1997), p. 229.

[7] Alasdair Heron, 'The Person of Christ' in G. Wainwright, ed., *Keeping the Faith: Essays to Mark the Centenary of Lux Mundi* (London: SPCK, 1989), pp. 99-123. See further Raymond Plant, *Politics, Theology and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 110.

[8] Alan. P. F. Sell, *Nonconformist Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2012), pp. 173-75.

[9] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*, trans. A. Nichols (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990), p. 32.

Within particular limits it ought to be conceded that such criticisms can at first sight appear fair.[10] Thus, in his Romanes Lecture, *The Optimism of Butler's Analogy*, Holland argued that "the entire Universe" was held together in "a coherent and progressive Purpose" into which "man is, in his measure, admitted".[11] "To it, individuals are but accidental", he wrote. "It holds in itself its own principle of advance, and… Our highest function is to co-operate with its movement".[12] Nature was, he said, "flushed by the influng transfiguration of a divine intention".[13] If this seems strangely pantheistic, impersonal and deterministic for Christian theology, it must needs be said that in this instance Holland's rather improbable Hegelian reading of Bishop Butler, in which idealist ideas of progress strained against the more modest limits set by Butlerian ignorance, missed its mark. The one excuse that can be made of it is that Holland was writing a philosophical defence of Butler for a philosophical audience of his day. But despite these occasional glimmers of quasi-Hegelian British idealist theorising, the picture that emerges from the wider body of his writing – and especially from his *theological* writing in particular – is without doubt much more complex, nuanced, and troubled. Holland may have had faith in providence, but he was not naïve; he understood the ambiguities and ironies of his own Christian experience in a fallen world. Dig a little deeper and things look quite different.

In contradiction of the claims of some of the critics just discussed, Scott Holland actually offered explicit warnings against what he himself elsewhere called "rosy optimism". In a telling article written for *Goodwill* magazine in 1895, he attacked the idea of an "inherent goodness of man" with particular force. His own view of humanity was unequivocal: "We are as bad as any". There was, he said, only one reason for believing in the possibility of human

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[10] It is true that when writing as a social theorist Holland would sometimes reproduce British idealist notions of social evolutionism. For a particularly clear example see Henry Scott Holland, "The Living Wage and the Kingdom of God", in *The Industrial Unrest and the Living Wage* (London: The Collegium, 1914), p. 179. For comment, see Michael Freeden, *The New Liberalism: An Ideology of Social Reform* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 98.

[11] H. S. Holland, *The Optimism of Butler's Analogy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), p. 47.

[12] Ibid., p. 4.

[13] Ibid., p. 42.

goodness: "Because we believe in the Atonement. Because we have always before our eyes the uplifted pleading of the Cross of Christ". Only "the power of the Cross" witnessed to the redemption of human wickedness. With deliberate and disturbing realism, Holland urged his readers "to face facts as they stand". Ultimately, "Our belief in man's goodness; our reliance on his high hopes; spring not from making light of his sin, but from making much of Christ's Cross". Indeed, "Without the Cross, we should not dare to hope". In sum, an ineluctable and irreducible commitment to the power of the Cross shaped and formed Holland's Anglican social thought, providing the only foundation for his belief that "human society ought to be pure, and bright, and happy". In theological terms, it was Christ crucified that created the possibility of any "efforts to bring about the new day".[14] The "possibility of goodness", argued the writers of *Lux Mundi*, depended on the "advent of the Redeemer" and the "supernatural gift… of a new capacity to fulfil the Law".[15]

Twenty years later, in a lecture delivered at St Martin-in-the-Fields in the autumn of 1915, Holland looked back at the spirit of the Victorian era. The "mind of the epoch", he acknowledged, had owed much to the "dauntless optimism of Jeremy Bentham, and the philosophy and political economy of the two Mills". But it had not lasted, and it certainly had little to do with Christian faith. Holland was adamant that he had known that the epoch of "dauntless optimism… was showing signs of coming to an end during the last ten years of the century". He was emphatic that, "By 1890 we were already aware of the mind and atmosphere in which we stand today".[16]

Turning to the essay on "Faith" in *Lux Mundi*, we see that Holland argued that the "innate sonship" of all humanity "abides in us all", "breeding confidence". Yet, at the same

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[14] H. S. Holland, "Good Friday" in *Goodwill*, 2:4 (April, 1895), p. 90.
[15] Robert Lawrence Ottley, "Christian Ethics" in C. Gore, ed., *Lux Mundi: A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation*, 10th ed. (London: John Murray, 1890), p. 481.
[16] H. S. Holland, 'The Nineteenth Century' in Arthur James Mason, Walter Howard Frere, et al, *Our Place in Christendom* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1916), pp. 144-170, here citing p 145.

time, this "sonship" was nevertheless "cumbered and clouded… by our sin". The human being was by no means perfect: God was active, "working… to recover and redeem" the fallen.[17] As such, the process of cosmic evolution there envisaged was one that had *already* been consummated in Jesus Christ, "the one centre of all possible experiences, the one focus, under which all sights must fall". The "ultimate principle, under which the final estimate of all things will be taken" was nothing less than Christ in judgment. "We have touched in Him, the 'last days,' the ultimate stage of all development". "We have [had] given us, in His sacrifice and mission, the absolute rule, standard, test, right, to the very end… His message is final".[18] If Holland held to an Idealist teleology, it was one subjected to the demands and principles of Christian eschatology, *already realised* in Christ. If this seems Christocentric, it is: Holland was adamant that "Belief can only be in Jesus Christ".[19] The "act of self-surrender… for which Christ unhesitatingly asks" was irreducible, insuperable, and "raised… to… a pitch of vital value".[20]

Holland, then, was a Christocentric theologian of an incarnationalist type. But there is more that needs to be said for his personal and spiritual views. Scratch the surface and one finds more and more evidence of those attitudes that were less sanguine, less confident, less optimistic about human progress. Holland has often been "regarded… as a 'this worldly' type", but Donald MacKinnon recognised that this was not the whole story.[21] As Paget recorded, "below the surface of his life" there was a "severity" in Holland. He used a scourge and fasted. "There was a certain sternness… a fire under that geniality".[22] For much of his life he suffered a distressing and disabling illness affecting his head and eyes. According to Edward Lyttelton, Holland's "ill-health was indeed a tragedy"; "the shadow of an uplifted hand was over him for

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[17] H. S. Holland, "Faith" in Charles Gore, ed., *Lux Mundi: A Series of Studies in the Religion of the Incarnation*, pp. 3-54, here citing p. 53.
[18] Ibid., p. 51.
[19] Ibid., p. 49.
[20] Ibid., p. 44.
[21] Donald M. MacKinnon, *Borderlands of Theology* (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1968), p. 116.
[22] Stephen Paget, *Henry Scott Holland: Memoir and Letters* (London: John Murray, 1921), pp. 134-35.

years, and nothing but a sublime trust in God enabled him to endure".[23] Lyttelton knew that there was more to Holland than met the eye: "The first impression Holland made on strangers was that of a man of exuberant vitality of joyousness" – "Yet with all this spontaneity and overflowing vitality, no one ever heard him jocose in the pulpit".[24] Albeit that the "manifestation of the joyous side of Christianity was his vocation", "Under the guise… of high spirits his friends learnt to recognize some of the austerity of the saint and some of the self-conquest of the martyr".[25]

In 1910, to mark the death of Edward VII, Scott Holland preached his much misinterpreted "King of Terrors" sermon. A particular passage from this sermon is still sometimes read at funerals and attracts criticism for apparently denying the reality and tragedy of death.[26] The sermon demands to be read in its entirety: far from suggesting that "Death is nothing at all" Holland actually set about reminding his readers just how quickly any sense that "Death is nothing at all" is dispelled by the dumb horror of death. Only Christ showed the way forward to hope beyond death.[27] This thought was reinforced in Holland's subsequent reflections on "Life and Death". He was emphatic that death could "never be a light thing". In point of fact, "Death is dreadful", and "the Christian faith has deepened its dread", for "it [death] means nothing only to those to whom life means nothing".[28] This was strong meat indeed, and not to be taken lightly.

At the end of his life, Holland had the sense to recognise what the Great War meant for liberal theology: "War is Hell", "We are eschatologists".[29] In Easter week, 1915, he visited

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[23] Edward Lyttelton, *Memories and Hopes* (London: John Murray, 1925), pp. 234-35.
[24] Edward Lyttelton, *The Mind and Character of Henry Scott Holland* (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1926), p. 8 and p. 14.
[25] Lyttelton, *Memories and Hopes*, p. 234 and p. 236.
[26] See for example Rowan Williams, *Choose Life: Christmas and Easter Sermons in Canterbury Cathedral* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 163.
[27] H. S. Holland, *Facts of the Faith* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), pp. 125-34.
[28] H. S. Holland, *So As By Fire: Notes on the War*, second series (London: Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co., 1916), pp. 75-76.
[29] Paget, *Henry Scott Holland*, p. 312 and p. 314.

British forces in Le Havre and Rouen. Two years later, in a letter to Lavinia Talbot dated September 23rd, 1917, he described his reaction to the new realities: "My eyes have been opened, in a strange way, to the amount of sin of which I never took account. It was hid from me. Now, I see. I suppose that nothing but this shock would have opened my eyes. So I am thanking God for the humiliation".[30]

Holland's late essay, "The War a Blow to Civilization" should be essential reading for anyone interested in his religious and political attitudes, for in it he repudiated the basal assumptions of the Victorian worldview. "Civilization", "education", "progress" had been revealed for what they were: "high ambitions" and "great aims", that had "landed the poor unhappy earth in a moral catastrophe". And it was "within… [the] civilizing capacity that the worst evil had lodged itself".[31] An over-confident political internationalism had its own share of responsibility for the catastrophe: Christian Socialists like himself had typically neglected to attend to the needs of more basic national instincts and impulses, and had therefore been at fault.[32] His own response to the crisis was this: "seek Jesus Christ" – "For nothing else really counts".[33] In another essay, "The Disentangling of Christianity", he declared that the "hour of challenge, of crisis, of cleavage is our only hope".[34] "European Christendom" had led to the "blood-stained fields of Flanders, where the dead lie rotting, since no man has time to bury, and men are stabbing each other to death in the dark holes they have dug underground, by the light of flaring shells".[35] The "fatal sin" – one that surely included much of his own earlier political preaching – was "the sin that ties up the cause of Christ with any political situation whatever".[36]

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[30] Paget, *Henry Scott Holland*, p. 325.
[31] H. S. Holland, *So As By Fire: Notes on the War*, Second Series, p. 6.
[32] Ibid., pp. 2-3.
[33] Ibid., p. 9.
[34] H. S. Holland, *Creeds and Critics: Being Occasional Papers on the Theology of the Christian Creed* (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., 1918), p. 149.
[35] Ibid., p. 153.
[36] Ibid., p. 150.

For our Gospel is not our own. 'We preach not ourselves, but Christ crucified.' We are

not its measure: its source: its authority. Christ, and Christ alone, is its standard: its

proof: its justification. And we have but one plain and imperative duty – to declare to

man the whole truth as it is in Him.[37]

"Back, then, to Christ".[38] It would be wrong to describe this as decisively Barthian for Holland

was dying when Barth was just beginning. One might as well claim – for all that it would be

worth – that Barth resembled Scott Holland. But it does show a certain accidental (though

suggestive) kinship, or correlation, of attitude. For the purposes of the present task, any

comparison of Holland with Barth is, perhaps, less useful than the *contrasts* that may be drawn

between his sense of war-time crisis and the views of his contemporaries in Britain: for Scott

Holland's sense of catastrophe was by no means shared by philosophers of the British Idealist

school. As his post-war book, *What Religion Is* demonstrates, Bernard Bosanquet's pantheistic

cosmic optimism survived, not shaken, not even perplexed, by the cataclysm.[39] Likewise, the

same Victorian confidence in progress endured in Henry Jones's Gifford Lectures for 1920-21,

A Faith That Enquires.[40] In contrast to Holland's denouncements of the sanguine civilization

of progressive liberalism, such works appear to have been written by men who refused to let

the tragic crisis they had lived through affect their philosophy. How was it that Holland was

led to such a different conclusion?

Reviewing Holland's earlier writing, it is noticeable that he had never been without a

sense of human sinfulness and dependence on God. From an early date it had set him apart

from his Idealist contemporaries. At the age of twenty-two he had been sharply critical of

Benjamin Jowett's liberalism: "It was", he said, "just Platonism flavoured with a little Christian

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[37] Ibid., p. 156.

[38] Ibid., p. 156.

[39] See Bernard Bosanquet, *What Religion Is* (London: Macmillan, 1920), pp. 37-63.

[40] See Henry Jones, *A Faith That Enquires* (London: Macmillan, 1922), pp. 214-34. For discussion, see David
Boucher and Andrew Vincent, *A Radical Hegelian: The Political and Social Philosophy of Henry Jones* (Cardiff:
University of Wales Press, 1993), pp. 54-6.

charity". Jowett failed to convince because he thought a human being was "perfectly self-sufficient; self-dependent, without any consciousness of anything beyond a certain human weakness in carrying out his ideal". Holland complained that in Jowett's sermons there was "not an atom of the feeling of prayer, of communication with God, of reliance on anyone but self".[41] A little later, Brooke Foss Westcott perceived the persistence of the real problem of sin in Holland's more despondent worldview. In a letter to Edward White Benson, dated February 3rd, 1876, Westcott signalled his concerns that Holland was not adopting the more optimistic, progressive approach then expected of liberal Anglicans. "I am grieved to hear that Holland follows Mylne in making sin the centre of his philosophy", he wrote.[42] He could not understand why Holland did not focus on the "true centre" of progressive theologising, the *imago dei*. There was a difference of approach between the two men: where Westcott saw continuities between God and human achievement, Holland already saw disjunction.[43] The recognition that sin broke up the worldview of the Idealists might not have been profound at this stage; nevertheless, Holland's later sense of the real crisis of sin was already present, in seed and germ, even in youth. The beginning explains the end.

Philosophical Idealism and Christian Realism

Robert Campbell Moberly once admitted, "Holland is our one theological genius".[44] Bearing this in mind, it must needs be recognised that Holland provided the leading and principal inspiration for the *Lux Mundi* group. We have been told that the editor, Charles Gore, six years his junior, still then "felt a theological dependence on Holland".[45] Something of this dependence was evidently shared by the other essayists, for a total of eight references were

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[41] Paget, *Henry Scott Holland*, pp. 33-4.

[42] Arthur Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1903), p. 433.

[43] For Holland's own reciprocal concerns over Westcott's apparent failure to reckon with the reality of human sinfulness, see the critical remarks in H. S. Holland, *Personal Studies* (London: Wells, Gardner, Darton, and Co., 1905), p. 137. For further remarks on Westcott and sin, see H. S. Holland, *Vital Values* (London: Wells, Gardner, Darton and Co., 1906), p. 107.

[44] Christopher Cheshire, 'Preface' in H. S. Holland, *Facts of the Faith* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), p. vi. See also Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1960), p. 13.

[45] George Leonard Prestige, *The Life of Charles Gore* (London: William Heinemann, 1935), p. 99.

made to Holland's earlier published works by four of the other contributors.[46] This evidence suggests that Holland's influence was pervasive: indeed, the other contributors referred to Holland's sermons in *Creed and Character* (1887) more frequently than they did to Thomas Hill Green, or Edward Caird, or any other Idealist philosopher. According to G. L. Prestige, "thoughts gushed from [Holland's] mind for Gore and the others to work up into disquisitions and treatises".[47]

Holland may have owed his Balliol tutor T. H. Green large debts as a social theorist, but not as a philosopher of religion. In actual fact, he was obdurately and actively resistant to Green's idealist and deist interpretations of Christianity, and persistently upheld a version of critically realist theological orthodoxy.[48] One looks in vain in Holland's works for anything like Jowett's idealization of Christ, or Green's reduction of Christ to a regulative idea of symbolic value.[49] His understanding of the resurrection was as "no idea, but a fact; no spiritual ideal, but an actual event… in a sense directly contrary to that of the idealists".[50] But this only begs the question: once the customary "accepted superstition" of *Lux Mundi*'s supposed debts to philosophical Idealism has been called into question, what remains of Idealist influence in the work?[51] In total, the book contains only seven references to works by British Idealists (one less than to Holland's sermons). A single author, Aubrey Moore – whose essay was by far the

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[46] In *Lux Mundi* Arthur Lyttelton's chapter on the atonement refers to Holland's *Logic and Life* as well as *Creed and Character* (p. 279, n. and p. 303, n.); Walter Lock's chapter on the church refers to both *Creed and Character* and *On Behalf of Belief* (p. 372, n. and p. 374, n.); William J. H. Campion's chapter on politics refers to *Creed and Character* (p. 439, n.); Robert Lawrence Ottley's chapter on ethics makes three references to *Creed and Character* (p. 474, n.4, p. 484, n. 1, and p. 495, n. 3).

[47] George Leonard Prestige, *St Paul's in its Glory, 1831-1911* (London: SPCK, 1955), p. 192.

[48] On Holland's theological realism in contention with Green's philosophical idealism, see Ralph Norman, 'Ascetic Co-operation: Henry Scott Holland and Gerard Manley Hopkins', in *Collingwood and British Idealism Studies*, 23:1 (2017), pp. 67-96.

[49] For Jowett's idealization of Christ, see Evelyn Abbott and Lewis Campbell, eds., *Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett*, vol. 2 (London: John Murray, 1897), p. 85; for Green's comparable reductive interpretation, see Thomas Hill Green, *Works*, vol. 3, ed. Richard Lewis Nettleship (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1888), pp. 244-45.

[50] H. S. Holland, *On Behalf of Belief* (London: Rivingtons, 1889), p. 3.

[51] See MacKinnon, *Borderlands of Theology*, p. 113. See also Bernard M. G. Reardon, 'T. H. Green as a theologian' in Andrew Vincent, ed., *The Philosophy of T. H. Green* (Aldershot: Gower, 1986), pp. 36-47, especially pp. 45-47.

most recognisably Idealist in the collection – was responsible for four of these.[52] With this in mind, it is possible to read the text in different ways: either accentuating perceived debts to Idealism or diminishing them, depending on which author is under discussion. On the one hand, Illingworth once called his fellow *Lux Mundi* writers "Greenites of the Right", the "only true interpreters" of Green, in distinction to the secularized "Greenites of the Left", Bernard Bosanquet and Francis Herbert Bradley.[53] On the other, it is hard to see how this statement applies to Arthur Lyttelton's chapter on "The Atonement", or to Walter Lock's chapter on "The Church". The true picture is, then, nuanced and complex.

In retrospect, perhaps the most striking debt the *Lux Mundi* authors owed to T. H. Green was political. This can be seen in their advocacy of an early, democratic version of common good politics. Green's 1879-1880 *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* had, after all, provided the fountainhead of a distinctively consent-based, English tradition of common good political theory.[54] It is not necessary to rehearse the direct historical connections between *Lux Mundi* (1889) and the Christian Social Union (launched in 1889) here.[55] Clearly, both owed much to Green's social theory. Theologically, Holland himself was deeply impressed with the common kinship of Christians as brothers and sisters of Christ, with whom and in whom they shared one Father. This led Holland to develop a vision of Anglican polity in which the

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[52] If analysis of the total number of references to both German and British philosophical idealists in *Lux Mundi* shows anything, it is that no one philosophical author had any special influence on the text. In Aubrey Moore's chapter on 'The Christian Doctrine of God', John Caird's *Philosophy of Religion* is referred to twice (p. 61, p. 67), Seth Pringle-Pattison's *Hegelianism and Personality* once (p. 64), Hegel's *Philosophy of History* three times (p. 77, p. 85, p. 90), and Green's *Works* once (p. 107). In Gore's chapter on 'The Holy Spirit and Inspiration', Edward Caird's *Hegel* was referred to once (p. 325), and Lotze's *Microcosmus* once (p. 338). Francis Paget likewise made one reference to Lotze's *Microcosmus* in his chapter on 'Sacraments' (p. 410), together with one reference to Green's *Prolegomena* (p. 411). Finally, in the chapter on 'Christianity and Politics', Campion made a single reference to A. C. Bradley's essay on Aristotle (p. 443). As such, only Moore's essay can be said to have displayed any sustained engagement with idealist philosophical literature.

[53] Agnes Louisa Illingworth, *The Life and Work of John Richardson Illingworth* (London: John Murray, 1917), p. 90.

[54] Green used the exact phrase "common good" seventy-eight times in the *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (on average, once every 2.8 pages in Nettleship's 1886 edition of Green's, *Works*, vol. 2). It seems incontestable that Green's work was the "language event" which initiated technical use of the phrase "common good" in English idiom. For "common good" in *Lux Mundi*, see pp. 368-369 and pp. 375-376.

[55] Peter d'Arcy Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 164-224.

Established Church of England fostered and nurtured goodwill for the national commonwealth. The Christian religion was charged with creating and sustaining a virtuous public consensus focussed on self-restraint and generosity to others. In the very first editorial for the Christian Social Union journal, *Commonwealth*, Holland set out his vision of Christian voluntary social engagement: "Nationalise yourself, your interest, your sympathies, your joys. Socialise yourself, out of sheer and free goodwill for the Common Weal… Everyone's sorrow is our sorrow, and all have a claim on our gladness… no one of us can possibly live to himself alone, even if he wished it".[56] The Church was to engage society as an organ for the promotion of unity and solidarity, preaching free goodwill for the work of the state in service of the common good.[57] While acknowledging that the secular state was merely provisional, awaiting its completion in the Kingdom of God, Holland nevertheless evidently thought the state provided the best means for promoting the common good and delivering welfare. When viewed in light of the Anglican polity, the consensual democratic state was henceforth an embodiment of the "most intimate and sacrificial obligations which can hold between citizens who consciously feel themselves to be members of one body, living a common life, holding property for a common end, seeking a common welfare".[58] In Holland's Anglican vision, then, the *state* existed for *common welfare*: we are here a breath away from William Temple's later use of the term, "welfare state".[59] In not inconsiderable part, this was both a development and an application of Green's ethical and political philosophy, which had always taken a social form in the advocacy of good citizenship. Indeed, as Alasdair MacIntyre has observed, '"Green was the apostle of state intervention in matters of social welfare and of education; he was able to be so because he could see in the state an embodiment of that higher self the realization of

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[56] H. S. Holland in *The Commonwealth: A Social Magazine*, 1 (1896), p. 4.
[57] On Holland's support for Church Establishment, see Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), p. 41.
[58] H. S. Holland, "The Obligation of Civil Law" in James Edward Hand, ed., *Good Citizenship* (London: George Allan, 1899), pp. 278-305, here citing p. 304.
[59] Matthew Grimley, *Citizenship, Community, and the Church of England*, p. 1.

which is our moral aim".[60] Returning to *Lux Mundi*, the key point to be made (and one unnoticed in much scholarship on the history of Christian ethics and the common good) is that the recurrent use of the phrase "common good" in J. H. Campion's essay on "Christianity and Politics" allows us to trace the Anglican reception of this political theme back to 1889 – i.e., *in advance* of Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (1891).

Where there is a discernible *theological* debt to Idealism, it is chiefly in what C. C. J. Webb called the "decisive adoption of the evolutionary principle as a ruling idea in theology".[61] As Talbot's biographer explained, this theme owed something to Newman's theory of doctrinal development, something to "Darwinian biology", and something to "Hegelian philosophy".[62] The influence of the idea was concentrated in those essays concerned with the unfolding revelation of God through historical processes: Moore's Hegelian-tinged essay on "The Christian Doctrine of God", Talbot's "Preparation in History for Christ", Illingworth's "Incarnation in Relation to Development", and Gore's "Holy Spirit and Inspiration". If there was a single dominant Idealist view represented in *Lux Mundi*, it was one which conceived of God's relationship to the world as a living, dynamic, historical process: the Eternal Divine purpose was progressively and providentially realising itself in time. All along, however, it was intertwined with a type of realist Logos theology, derived from Athanasius, which Holland had first developed in a series of sermons dating from the 1870s and published in *Logic and Life* (1882). In the preface to this early volume, Holland had credited Athanasius with the

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[60] Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, second ed. (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 247. For Green's arguments for state welfare provision, see his *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* § 209 and § 210, where he advocated state interference to provide education, housing, and good health in support of the common good (*Works*, vol. 2, pp. 514-515). See also his discussion of "grandmotherly government" in "Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract" (1880), which includes an argument for state intervention to secure health and schooling (*Works*, vol. 3, p. 375). For Holland's own arguments for state provision of schools as well as hospitals, see his chapter on "Church and State" in C. Gore, ed. *Essays in aid of the Reform of the Church* (London: John Murray, 1898), pp. 101-125, esp. p. 116. Since Holland was writing well in advance of the eventual arrival of state hospitals in England, his vision must be counted as being particularly advanced. For discussion, see David Nicholls, *Deity and Domination: Images of God and the State in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 56-60.

[61] Clement Charles Julian Webb, *Religious Thought in the Oxford Movement* (London: SPCK, 1928), p. 18.

[62] Gwendolen Stephenson, *Edward Stuart Talbot* (London: SPCK, 1936), p. 55.

development of a theological view of the universe created by and indwelt by the Logos.[63] It proved to be an important rediscovery of the riches of Patristic theology, for Holland's renewed Christological conception of the unity of creation was utilised by the *Lux Mundi* group as a lens for viewing the evolving history of the world as a providential process expressive of the Divine life. Athanasius (not Hegel!) was a persistent point of reference in *Lux Mundi*.[64] To take one example, Aubrey Moore argued that Athanasius's teaching that the "Word of God… contains all things" was something that should be carefully differentiated from "pantheism", and contended that "The Christian doctrine of God, in Athanasian days, triumphed where Greek philosophy failed".[65] For Moore, the Christian doctrine of the Logos, "taken up by St. John, by St. Clement, and by St. Athanasius", guaranteed that the world was imprinted with reason: "All and more than all that philosophy and science can demand, as to the immanence of reason in the universe, and the rational coherence of all its parts, is included in the Christian teaching".[66] Gore later stated that Holland's "whole soul… responded" to the theology of "Greeks like Origen and Athanasius" precisely because the tradition "insisted" on an interpretation of the person of Christ "which was nothing less than cosmic and humanitarian in the widest sense of the terms". To Holland's mind it was, wrote Gore, in line with "the large element of truth in the Hegelian interpretation of the Incarnation as a universal fact – as the incarnation of the Universal Spirit or Reason in humanity as a whole, in all its movements and aspects". The "Greeks", he continued, offered a vision of "the Word… 'in whom all things consist,' the spirit of universal order, the reason of the universe, whose disclosure of Himself is to be found centrally in the man Christ Jesus, but to be found also in all the development of the world and in all the upward movement of mankind".[67] This allowed for a correlation of Patristic theology

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[63] See H. S. Holland, *Logic and Life* (London: Rivingtons, 1882), p. vii-viii.

[64] Athanasius' name is mentioned seventeen times in the text of *Lux Mundi*. Works by Athanasius are referred to fourteen times in footnotes.

[65] Moore in *Lux Mundi*, p. 101.

[66] Ibid., p. 79.

[67] Gore, in Paget, *Henry Scott Holland*, pp. 243-44.

with contemporary philosophical and scientific thought, a way of usefully engaging and contesting both Hegel and Darwin without surrendering to either. It also explains the choice of title: *Lux Mundi* signified that the intelligible, rational order of the world was to be found in Jesus Christ, the light of the world (John 8:12).[68] From the first, then, the overall intellectual strategy of *Lux Mundi* was a development of the Athanasian Logos Christology of Holland's early sermons in *Logic and Life*.

Scott Holland's own *Lux Mundi* essay, "Faith", has sometimes been written about as though it was just an adaptation of contemporary philosophical themes from the British Idealists. Melvin Richter, for instance, thought Holland's discussion of faith was derived from Green's perfectionist concept of the ideal self.[69] If that were the case, faith would be the outworking of an entirely immanent teleological process: the self-realisation of an Eternal principle in and through human selves; a journey towards an ideal human self, which Green called God.[70] This interpretation does not fit with what is found in the text of *Lux Mundi*. In actual fact, Scott Holland's essay made no reference to the philosophical Idealists, though it did engage with the "process of Evolution" and "progressive… history of… gradual disclosure".[71] Faith was defined as "an apprehensive motion of the living spirit, by which it intensifies its touch on God"; it was "an active principle, a source of energy, a spring of movement: and, as such, its verification can never take place through passive introspection. It verifies itself only in actions: its reality can only be made evidence through experience of its

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[68] Comparison may be drawn with Nettleship's reference to the Johannine "light of world" in his lecture on "The Good as the Supreme Object of Knowledge" [*Republic*, VI, 502 C to 509 C.], where Plato's Form of the Good is described as the intelligible, rational order of the world in which the blissful and perfected end of humanity is to be found. See Richard Lewis Nettleship, *Philosophical Lectures and Remains*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1897), p. 233. Nettleship's lectures on Plato's *Republic* were delivered 1885-1888 and therefore predate *Lux Mundi* while showing some affinity with Holland's earlier Logos Christology.

[69] Melvin Richter, *The Politics of Conscience* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p. 126.

[70] For an early critical discussion, see Otto Pfleiderer, *The Development of Theology in Germany since Kant, and its Progress in Great Britain since 1825* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1890), pp. 344-46.

[71] Holland in *Lux Mundi*, p. 16.

living work".[72] Faith was also – crucially – an "instinct of surrender, by which it gives itself to a fuller handling of God".[73] God was not an ideal version of the self. Far from it, "Faith is the sense in us that we are Another's creature, Another's making… we hang on Another's will; we are alive in Another's life".[74] This surrendering of self to Another was one of the pre-eminent theological themes of *Lux Mundi*. In Christ's "sacrifice and mission", wrote Holland, "We have given us… the absolute rule", the "ultimate principle".[75] This had been one of his favourite themes in his earlier sermons dating from the mid-1870s: the "law of sacrifice" had been a key element in *Logic and Life*. In "Christ the Justification of a Suffering World" (a sermon which Michael Ramsey judged to be 'among the greatest of all time')[76] Holland had asserted that "the primary plan of God… in Nature… the plan that Christ had come to fulfil" was "the law of surrender, of self-sacrifice".[77] The uncreated Logos had intended the world of creation to reflect his own originary intra-Trinitarian sacrifice before the Father, and whenever one of God's creatures surrendered itself and gave way to another, nature fulfilled its divinely-ordered purpose. Holland could therefore claim that "all unselfishness, all self-sacrifice – all this… is the work, the secret work of the Son".[78] In some of his later lectures at Oxford dateable to 1912, he argued that "The degree of the self-surrender, self-nothingness, is the measure of the active efficiency [of the faith of Christ]: the more empty of self, the more filled with God".[79] Faith in the objectively self-humbled Christ was made available only to the self-emptied subject, the humble believer: "only selflessness can recognise the supreme instance of

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[72] Ibid., p. 17 and p. 11. It should be acknowledged that this reflects one of the concerns of Balliol Idealism. According to Henry Jones, "Nettleship… persistently accentuated" the philosophical idea "that the reality is the process, and that there is no other reality except the reality which is active as the process… a thing is what it does… A thing that does nothing *is* nothing". Henry Jones, *A Faith That Enquires* (London: Macmillan, 1922), p. 242.

[73] Holland in *Lux Mundi*., p. 17.

[74] Ibid., p. 14.

[75] Ibid., p. 51.

[76] Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, p. 45.

[77] H. S. Holland, *Logic and Life*, p. 94 and p. 83.

[78] Ibid., p. 218.

[79] H. S. Holland, *The Philosophy of Faith and the Fourth Gospel* (London: John Murray, 1920), p. 224.

selflessness, i.e., can believe. Apart from such a temper, no faith can enter into the secret".[80]

One could say that in its subjective element in the believer, faith was a form of epistemological humility: not the certainty of knowledge, but an ethically virtuous and free trust in Christ. "Faith is the recognition that the extreme and absolute claim of the Son is the sign of his utter humility. This ethical affinity is already in existence, in order to account for belief".[81] Faith was the living kenosis of knowledge. It must needs be realised that Holland was giving expression to a fundamental ontology and epistemology of selflessness and sacrifice, i.e., what Ramsey once called "a comprehensive doctrine of sacrifice… hinting at a Christocentric philosophy of the universe with the Cross as the key".[82] In other words, Holland provided just that "exposition of the Christian idea of God, life and the world" which William Temple was later to advocate: a "Christo-centric metaphysics".[83] All the evidence suggests that the other *Lux Mundi* writers followed Holland's lead. For Illingworth, "the root of sacrifice is self-sacrifice"; God drew all people to himself "through the instrumentality of His own great law of sacrifice".[84] According to Lyttelton's essay, sacrifice was "the recognition of God's sovereignty", and "in its highest, original meaning" the expression of love for God.[85] In Lock's essay, the Church was described as a "family" defined by "self-sacrifice for the good of others".[86] Where Lyttelton and Lock made these statements on sacrifice, they referred back to Holland's earlier sermons: these were the points where Holland's influence pressed itself on the other authors. What this means is this: Scott Holland's contribution to the theology of *Lux*

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[80] Ibid., p. 219.
[81] Ibid., p. 219.
[82] Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, pp. 12-13.
[83] William Temple, *Christus Veritas* (London: Macmillan, 1949), ix. On this, see MacKinnon, *Borderlands of Theology*, p. 116. Importantly, Temple acknowledged Holland's influence in the preface to his Henry Scott Holland Memorial Lectures for 1928, referring to Holland's "massive and coherent philosophical theology". See William Temple, *Christianity and the State* (London: Macmillan, 1928), pp. vii-viii.
[84] Illingworth in *Lux Mundi*, p. 122 and p. 125.
[85] Arthur Lyttelton in *Lux Mundi*, p. 279.
[86] Walter Lock in *Lux Mundi*, p. 374.

Mundi was a profound sense of the principle, or law, of sacrifice, as the heart of Christian faith and practice. It was the focal point on which much of the argument in *Lux Mundi* was centred.

A comparison may be drawn here with what one recent writer has described as the "perhaps… clichéd… idealist notions of sacrifice and dying to live" that once provided a stock ingredient of late Victorian British philosophy.[87] In 1883 Edward Caird had used the phrase "dying to live" to describe what he took to be the core of Hegel's ethical philosophy.[88] Three years later Nettleship argued that the "true law of sacrifice" was the ontological principle that "in order that anything should come into being, something else should cease to be". Love, he contended, "lives only by dying".[89] Further examples of such language recur throughout the philosophical literature of the period.[90] One should not, however, be misled into thinking that Scott Holland's theological "law of sacrifice" therefore simply reproduced a contemporary philosophical trend. For one thing, his own sermons on the theme pre-dated Caird's book on Hegel. For another, as Caird himself admitted, the basic ideas for "dying to live" were originally drawn from theological sources, and specifically from the writings of F. D. Maurice and John McLeod Campbell.[91] As such, the evidence demonstrates that philosophical writing was here being led by theology, not the other way round, and that the ideas of sacrifice

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[87] William Mander, *British Idealism: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 471.

[88] Edward Caird, *Hegel* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1883), p. 211.

[89] Richard Lewis Nettleship, *Philosophical Lectures and Remains*, vol. 1, ed. A. C. Bradley and G. R. Benson (London: Macmillan, 1897), p. 85 and p. 41. Nettleship's notes on "The Atonement" became a standard reference point in the writings of William Temple, and seem to have provided him a means of expressing a philosophical equivalent to the theological ideas originally expressed in Holland's sermons. See William Temple, *The Nature of Personality* (London: Macmillan, 1911), pp. 76-7 and pp. 90-3; see also W. Temple, *Mens Creatrix* (London: Macmillan, 1917), p. 286 and p. 350; see also Walter Hamilton Moberly in Burnett Hillman Streeter, ed., *Foundations* (London: Macmillan, 1918), p. 311, p. 321, p. 327, and p. 501.

[90] Other principle examples include E. Caird *Lay Sermons* (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1907), p. 48; B. Bosanquet, *Some Suggestions in Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1918), p. 7 and p. 161.

[91] Caird, *Hegel*, p. 211. The phrase "dying to live" appears in John McLeod Campbell's *The Nature of the Atonement* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1856), p. 296. Meanwhile, the phrase "law of sacrifice" appears in Frederick Denison Maurice, *The Doctrine of Sacrifice* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1854), p. 112. Maurice acknowledged that he derived the "law of sacrifice" from his brother-in-law, Julius Hare, whose 1829 sermon, "The Law of Self-Sacrifice" provides an early starting point for Anglican reflection on metaphysical dimensions of kenosis, understood with reference to each Person of the Trinity and consummated in the kenotic hymn of Philippians 2. See Julius Hare, *The Victory of Faith* (London: Griffin, Farran, Okeden, and Welsh, n. d.), pp. 173-204.

presented in *Lux Mundi* were intrinsically expressions of Christian doctrine. Behind all this lay the Biblical witness to the religious truth that "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it to eternal life" (John 12:25).[92] As Gore was later to explain, the "law of sacrifice" was, quite simply, "the law of living through dying" found in the life and teaching Christ'.[93]

Lux Mundi, then, should be described as "Idealist" only within certain limits: it was "Idealist" inasmuch as it was concerned with the revelation of God through history, and occasionally drew on contemporary Idealist literature to explain this process; it was not convincingly "Idealist" in any further sense. And the central point of its theology – the "law of sacrifice" – was essentially an expression of core Christian doctrine applied as an interpretive key to existence in a post-Darwinian world: "as dying, and, behold, we live" (2 Corinthians 3:9). And as Holland had explained some eight years earlier in the preface to *Logic and Life*, the inspiration for his preaching had actually been Athanasius and the Greek Fathers – i.e., those who had taught a message combining "Creation and Regeneration" and "Incarnation and Sacrifice", with the "unity of all creation", the "evolution of history", and "the universality of the Divine action through the Word".[94] This is something that Donald MacKinnon recognised when he explained that the Christology of the "*Lux Mundi* school… rests on a surer foundation than philosophical confusion… what matters in the end is that we should see the power, the wisdom, the presence of God in terms of his love and compassion: something that we could never have so seen apart from the Incarnation".[95]

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[92] Cf. B. F. Westcott's commentary on the text: "fuller life comes through death, glory through sacrifice… [there is a] law of higher life through death… Sacrifice, self-surrender, death, is the condition of the highest life: selfishness is the destruction of life". Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Gospel According to St John* (London: John Murray, 1896), p. 181.

[93] Gore in William Sanday, ed., *Conceptions of Priesthood and Sacrifice* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1900), p. 112.

[94] Holland, *Logic and Life*, vii-viii.

[95] MacKinnon, *Borderlands of Theology*, p. 116. For Holland's own explicit (and critically realistic) rejection of idealist interpretations of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, see *Logic and Life*, p. 138, and *On Behalf of Belief*, p. 3.

Philosophical Idealism and Perfectionism

To further clarify the issues at hand it is useful to draw out the chief points of contrast between the Christological "law of sacrifice" of Scott Holland and the other theologians of the *Lux Mundi* school, and the doctrine of the ideal self found in the philosophical teaching of the British Idealists. For the latter, the dictum "die to live" expressed an ethical principle that the "better" or "higher" or "true" self was realised only and exclusively through overcoming self-centredness. The higher self – the self as it *ought* to be if only it achieved its full moral potential – was outward-facing, setting others before itself, and serving the common good: dying to selfishness to live for others. The "true" self was, therefore, a social self. For broadly Kantian reasons, it was also held to be the truly "rational" self, dutifully beholden to the universalizing formulations of the categorial imperative. Moreover, the rational, ideal, or true self, was a metaphysical self. As Edward Caird's pupil and assistant, John Stuart Mackenzie, observed, the true home of the ideal self was "a higher universe within which we ought to be living".[96] In his view, "The true self is what is perhaps best described as the rational self. It is the universe that we occupy in our moments of deepest wisdom and insight".[97] The Idealists typically interpreted this in religious terms: the "true self" was, ultimately, Divine. According to Arthur Cecil Bradley's Gifford Lectures of 1907, "the stirring of religion is the feeling that my only true self in the end is God, to be a pulse-beat of his infinite life".[98] Or, as John Watson put it, "only in unity with the Infinite can man realize himself… [and] come to an ever clearer comprehension of [his] true self".[99] Earlier, Green made this much clear in his undated lay address on Romans 10:8, "The Word is Nigh Thee":

> Our formula then is that God is identical with the self of every man in the sense of being
> the realisation of its determinate possibilities, the completion of that which, as merely

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[96] John Stuart Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, 4th ed. (New York: Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, 1901), p. 251.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Arthur Cecil Bradley, *Ideals of Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1940), p. 242.
[99] John Watson, *The Philosophical Basis of Religion* (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1907), p. 14.

in it, is incomplete and therefore unreal; that in being conscious of himself man is conscious of God, and thus knows that God is, but knows what he is only so far as he knows what he himself really is.[100]

In his *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Green proposed that God "is a Being in whom we exist; with whom we are in principle one; with whom the human spirit is identical, in the sense that He *is* all which the human spirit is capable of becoming".[101] God was the ideal goal of human self-realisation, the Divine end of human positive freedom, the ultimate actualisation of the common good.

The moral conception of the "better", "higher", or "true" self was, argued Green, "the only source of a true theology".[102] He held that "the 'possible self,' the realisation of which is the source of all action that can properly be called moral or immoral, is God, and… in our identity with it lies the true unity with God".[103] Likewise, Francis Herbert Bradley held that the religion was "the ideal self considered as realized and real. The ideal self, which in morality is to be, is here the real ideal which truly is".[104] For Bradley, the ultimate object of Christian religion was an "inseparable unity of human and divine". This Ideal would not be known, "in its truth… until it is apprehended as an organic human-divine totality; as one body with diverse members, as one self which, in many selves, realizes, wills, and loves itself, as they do themselves in it".[105] He added that in this life this final end could only be anticipated through dying to self, and, alluding to 1 Corinthians 15:31, associated self-sacrifice with the realization of the ideal: "I am justified solely and entirely by ideal identification".[106] While Bradley focussed on justification by identification with the ideal alone, Green and Edward Caird

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[100] Green, "The Word is Nigh Thee" in *Works*, vol. 3, pp. 221-229, here citing p. 227.
[101] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 187.
[102] Green, "The Word is Nigh Thee", p. 223.
[103] Green, "The Word is Nigh Thee", p. 224
[104] Francis Herbert Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 319.
[105] Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, pp. 330-331.
[106] Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, p. 330.

provided an Idealist interpretation of Christology. Christ, wrote Green, was "the 'ideal man,' man as an object to the mind of God, and thus already, from eternity, for God, what we are becoming through that change 'from glory into glory,' which Paul considers to be going on in believers through the operation of the spirit of God (2 Cor. iii. 18)".[107] For Caird, meanwhile, "Christ is divine *just because* he is the most human of men, the man in whom the universal spirit of humanity has found its fullest expression; and that, on the other hand, he is the ideal or typical man, the Son of Man who reveals what is in humanity, *just because* he is the purest revelation of God in man".[108]

The problem was that, being human, the actual lived experience of an individual person typically fell somewhere short of this ideal. The familiar empirical self was partially alienated from the ideal or metaphysical self. While in some sense potentially capable of a vision of what it ought to be, the mundane self nevertheless had earth-bound feet of clay. How could the actual, imperfect self, with its vision dimmed and sight besmirched by the surd realities of life, recognise its own ideal and, despite its own tangled appetites and conflicting desires, find the motivation to realise it? How does one move from imperfection to perfection? Green addressed himself to such problems in his 1879 lectures "On the Different Senses of 'Freedom'", drawing on Paul's teaching in Romans 7:22-23 as well as Kant and Hegel.[109] The empirical human self, wrote Green, "at best only tends to reconciliation" with its rational ideal.[110] For Paul, any such reconciliation was the work "not of nature, but of grace".[111] For Kant, following the dictates of duty rather than the motives of pleasure, the reconciliation was "to be done painfully".[112] Green himself suggested that the transition to the ideal self could only be realised from the far side of

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[107] Green, "The Incarnation" in *Works*, vol. 3, pp. 208-209.
[108] Edward Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*, vol. 2, (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1893), p. 233.
[109] Green, "On the Different Senses of 'Freedom' as Applied to Will and to the Moral Progress of Man" in *Works*, vol. 2, pp. 307-333. For further discussion relevant to the theme, see Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 173ff and § 196.
[110] Green, "On the Different Senses of 'Freedom'", p. 327.
[111] Ibid, p. 329
[112] Ibid., 333.

the transition to perfection, i.e., by some facility of the *already perfected*, transcendent and ideal self to effect change in the old, imperfect and empirical self. The rational self was therefore a final cause which created the conditions of its own realisation. Or, as Green himself had it, the "idea itself in some form or other" had to contain the "principle of conformity" of the empirical with the ideal.[113] Since the Idealists held that God was the ideal goal of human self-realisation (i.e., the actualisation of Kant's Kingdom of Ends and Divine end of human positive freedom in the perfected common good), Green provided a metaphysical account of the self-realisation of the Divine in human history. The ideal "Eternal Principle" reproduced itself under the limits of temporal life, gathering up the fragments into itself. Green, at base, was a monist. Just as knowledge presupposed the existence of one connected universe, determined through "the action of one self-conditioning and self-determining mind", so moral activity presupposed "a certain reproduction of itself, on the part of this eternal mind, as the self of man", i.e., "a reproduction of the one supreme subject, implied in the existence of the world, that the product carries with it under all its limitations".[114]

Meanwhile, from the perspective of the imperfect self, the ultimate end (though proved by rational, transcendental deduction to be a necessary condition of the possibility of true ethical life) still yet remained at least partially, and perhaps substantially, unknown. The true Good lay over the horizon. The imperfect self, through dissatisfaction with its own imperfection, nevertheless aspired towards the Good as it sought "an abiding satisfaction of an abiding self".[115] The ideal was to be found in the questing. Some Idealists appeared quite optimistic that the rational self could reach its goal. For Nettleship the gap between the two selves was apparently narrow enough to be bridgeable by reason: "The rationality of man means that he is a creature who has ideals, and who cannot help having them"; "An ideal is something which is not fully present at this particular moment in this particular thing, but is

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[113] Ibid., p. 333.
[114] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 174 and § 99.
[115] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 234.

yet partly attained in it".[116] For others, the transition between the actual self and the ideal self was more profoundly problematic. L. T. Hobhouse had his targets on Bernard Bosanquet's account of the transition to the higher self when he pointed out that "the deepest passions and sometimes the most fervid conscience" had a stronger hold on personal commitments than Idealist metaphysics. The realities of human moral experience were more complex, more heartfelt, and perhaps more mysterious that the Idealists were prepared to admit. As Hobhouse explained, "If the real self means that which goes deep, we cannot deny that it contains possibilities of contradiction far more serious than the collision between permanent interest and passing desire".[117]

The British Idealist's account of the "higher" or "ideal" self was the subject of substantial criticism in the Twentieth Century. In the long term, Isaiah Berlin's discussion of Green's notion of positive freedom in "Two Concepts of Liberty" has proved the most significant and lasting critique: "Green was a genuine liberal: but many a tyrant could use [Green's] formula [of 'true' freedom] to justify his worst acts of oppression".[118] Notwithstanding such criticism, recent writers have sought to defend Green and offer more nuanced interpretations of his ethical and political philosophy.[119] Should one really suggest that the British Idealists imagined that the continuous self-abnegation of dying-to-live ought to lead to an individual's subjugation under a statist tyranny of a fascist or communist type? By no means. Politically, they were social democrats, and they encouraged voluntary service for the good of society. In his *Prolegomena to Ethics* and *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* Green laid the foundations of the British tradition of common good thought and suggested positive goals for individuals and society in accordance with a doctrine of rational

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[116] Nettleship, *Remains*, vol. 2, p. 220.
[117] Leonard Trelawny Hobhouse, *The Metaphysical Theory of the State* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1918), p. 48.
[118] Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" in Isaiah Berlin, *Liberty*, ed. Henry Hardy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 180n.
[119] See for example Avital Simhony, "On Forcing Individuals to be Free: T. H. Green's Liberal Theory of Positive Freedom", *Political Studies* 29 (1991), pp. 303-320.

freedom – including the freedom to dissent. This was decidedly *not* some kind of irrational populism or tyranny of the majority. Although Green's thought represented a middle way between liberalism and communitarianism, was democratic, and promoted allegiance to a shared body politic, it nevertheless projected a limited and cautious vision of the ultimate end which was still yet in the process of realisation.[120] He did not set himself up as a political visionary, but kept himself within his proper limits. But that does not mean that others could not twist aspects of his philosophy to some other end. That is why Berlin's worry that Green's positive freedom could potentially be used and abused to serve the ends of tyranny remains a point of concern. Simply, the individual cannot be absorbed into a greater whole without risking some threat to personal freedom. And yet one sometimes sees hints of this submersion in the works of the Idealists, not least when they described the self-realisation of the world-process as an irresistible force. Edward Caird, for example, divined a spirit *he thought* was Christian "slowly and gradually but inevitably overcoming and transforming the life of men", absorbing individual lives into its own "great process".[121] His theologically orthodox critics viewed this deterministic idea of history as alien to Christianity precisely because it neglected the realities of freewill, personal responsibility, and sin.[122] The Idealist's God, in the eyes of some, ran the risk of becoming a sub-Christian overriding and overwhelming force, apparently quite different in spirit to the gentle and patient Spirit of Christ. A seemingly *abstract* respect for the rational individual supplanted interest in any individual's concrete specificity, be it in terms of gender, of culture, or of religion.

At the same time, transcendence was reduced to a kind of self-completing immanence of the human self: the Divinity of perfected humanity. Was there anything to check the process?

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[120] For a positive account of Green's political philosophy, see Avital Simhony, 'T. H. Green's complex common good: between liberalism and communitarianism' in Avital Simhony and David Weinstein, eds., *The New Liberalism: Reconciling Liberty and Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 69-91.
[121] E. Caird, *Lay Sermons and Addresses* (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1907), pp. 192-193.
[122] John Sandwith Boys Smith, "The Interpretation of Christianity in Idealistic Philosophy in Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century", *Modern Churchman*, 21, (1941), pp. 251-73.

A contrast may be drawn here between the common good in Green and the common good in Jacques Maritain. For Green, the end was a totality of immanence. For Maritain, the "immanent common good of the universe" was related to an "infinitely greater good – the separated common Good, the divine, transcendent Whole", i.e., "God in the transcendence of his own mystery… conceptually ineffable, expressible only in the Uncreated Word".[123] This sense of a greater, super-eminent Good meant that Maritain's ethics and politics were not self-completing, but relative and provisional. This is illuminating, and it allows one a different perspective on the problematic immanence of Green's thought. To borrow and adapt William Desmond's Thomistic criticisms of Hegel to the present topic of discussion, one may ask whether Green thought there was "something *more* to transcendence than our own self-transcendence", whether Green allowed for any "otherness not reducible to our self-determining", or whether Green sensed any "metaphysical astonishment" at the "original source of creation" other to and beyond the human?[124] The point is that a vision of "deeper" or "higher" transcendence may helpfully enable one to see the political state as merely provisional, allow for a plenitude of questions around the state's limits, and inspire wonder at what lies beyond. A conception of Divine transcendence allows one scope to relativize humanity's self-completion, lessen its all-absorbing self-importance. In contrast, if self-transcendence without remainder is the *only* form of transcendence allowed – if ultimately there is nothing but the human community's self-perfection – then Berlin's worries that the doctrine of positive freedom leads to tyranny persists as a point of concern. For then, at the end, there could be nothing but the *totalising* development of an irresistible human political community – the *Leviathan*. If the end were to be the humanistic political totality, closed off from the infinity of transcendence, then Idealist dying-to-live perhaps only serves to mask a dying-for-the-State. It would have to, for the State would be the final good, and to be moral one would be expected to sacrifice oneself for it. When one

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[123] Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), pp. 17-18 and p. 23.
[124] William Desmond, *Hegel's God: A Counterfeit Double?* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 3-5.

starts to think along this line the conclusion to the *Prolegomena to Ethics* becomes particularly problematic, for Green there set about providing "direction… for the individual in making his sacrifices". The criterion he set allowed for sacrifices to be made in service to the "whole human society".[125] If the good life indeed rests on the actions of a "self-sacrificing will", as a "constituent to a whole which it helps to form", then one ought to sacrifice oneself for the sake of sacrifice, as "itself already in some measure an attainment of a higher good".[126] Green's end was crucifixion in service of the secular state *without the grace of resurrection*. Following John Milbank, one wonders whether "the exaltation of pure self-sacrifice for the other… [here] secretly [masks] the sacrifice of all individuals to the impersonality of the formal procedural law of state and marketplace"?[127]

The Perfect Penitent

Here we move to a theological critique of Idealist philosophy. For the purposes of this essay it is important to engage with a set of questions typically unasked in scholarly literature on Green's concepts of positive freedom and the higher self. As a way into this discussion a good first question to ask concerns how Green's teaching on self-perfection was received by contemporary Anglican theologians? As we have already seen, Paul's teaching in Romans 7:22-23 helped inspire Green's thought, and Green's concept of the ideal self was frequently represented by him in religious or mystical terms. It was originally an adaptation of Christian thought for secular ends. On standard accounts of the Idealist influence on Scott Holland, Gore, Moberly, and Illingworth, one might be led to expect that Green's ideas were taken up with enthusiasm by the *Lux Mundi* school, for Green would surely have provided the philosophical mediation of augmented theological ideas with which they would have been all too familiar. But if, as this essay has been arguing, the writers of *Lux Mundi* often resisted and reacted

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[125] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 377.
[126] Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 376.
[127] John Milbank, "The Ethics of Self-Sacrifice", *First Things*, vol. 91, March 1999, pp. 33-38.

against Green's influence, then their opposition or cautiousness concerning Idealism ought to be discernible in their accounts of the Christian doctrine of the atonement. So, let us pose the question, did they conceive of redemption of the sinner, salvation, and sanctification, in line with Green's conception of the empirical self's transition to the higher self? It is a question that arguably goes right to the heart of the matter, and it raises again some of the major themes outlined above: the tension between *Lux Mundi* and Victorian optimism, the meaning of dying to live, and the means of transition from an old to new self.

The first edition of R. C. Moberly's classic work, *Atonement and Personality*, was published twelve years after *Lux Mundi*. It provides the most extensive (and influential) account of the doctrine of the atonement from the *Lux Mundi* school. Moberly approached the question of Christian forgiveness from the perspective of a professional pastoral theologian concerned with human experiences of guilt. He argued that Christ, the "Man of Sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3) was the representative before the Father of human regret and penitence for sin, "doing something which we ourselves, in Him, at once must do, and did".[128] God the Son himself behaved as the one human person who *deserved* to be forgiven by the Father. He "voluntarily stood in the place of the utterly contrite", and revealed sorrow, contrition, and penitence, in their fullness.[129] By descending into the depths of penitential sorrow for sin, Christ revealed how the sinner could acquire the moral characteristic of "forgiveableness", i.e., become deserving of forgiveness in the Father's sight.[130] Moberly was less concerned with an abstract transition from imperfection to perfection than he was with a concrete transition from fallibility to "forgiveableness", *in Jesus Christ*. Christ became the great example of – a sinner. He showed what a sinner *truly* ought to feel: completely God-forsaken, absolutely horrified at oneself, full of guilt, remorse, and penitence.[131] Rather than seeking to glory in his ontological perfection, Christ emptied

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[128] Robert Campbell Moberly, *Atonement and Personality* (London: John Murray, 1902), p. 334.
[129] *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[130] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[131] Aspects of this position are recognisable in John Henry Newman's sermon on the "Mental Sufferings of Our Lord in His Passion" from *Discourses Addressed to Mixed Congregations* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and

himself (Philippians 2:8). He embraced human limits, and showed others how to embrace theirs.[132] He *perfected obedience* in human nature.[133] As Westcott explained, the use of the word τελειωθεὶς in Hebrews 5.9 signified Christ's "having been made perfect", *et consummatus*, and "This perfection was seen… [*in part*] in the complete fulfilment of man's destiny by Christ through absolute self-sacrifice".[134] Leaning on and learning from the penitential example of Christ, fellow sinners could henceforth acknowledge the justice of the punishment they themselves rightly deserved, and, through proper acceptance of guilt and repentance, be restored to a right relationship with God. Michael Ramsey's memorable summary of Moberly's argument remains useful and clear: "we cannot sorrow for our sins as we should: there is only Christ's perfect sorrow for them, and our sorrow is learnt from Him and received by us as a tiny fragment of His".[135] In Moberly's argument, the Church was formed as a community of Christ's sorrow, penitence and forgiveness: through participating in Christ's penitential "forgiveableness", the Church was henceforward constituted as a community of reconciliation.[136] Sinful Christian is reconciled to sinful Christian through

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Longmans, 1849), pp. 312-361. According to Newman's sermon, "Christ cries to his Father as if he were the criminal, not the victim; His agony takes the form of guilt and compunction". Yet the reality of his "penance", "confession" and "contrition" is "infinitely greater than that of all Saints and penitents together". Christ is "the real Penitent, all but the real sinner" (p. 359). A comparison can be made here with Karl Barth, who goes further than Newman when he emphatically declares that the penitent Christ is indeed "The one great sinner" (Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV.1, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), p. 259.

[132] Cf. Edward Caird's remarks on the freedom to embrace limits in his *Ethical Philosophy* (Glasgow: James Maclehose, 1866), p. 22: "He is free, who knows that his limits are not mere external barriers to his progress, but means of his self-development. He is free who can welcome the hindrances of his will and the disappointments of his desires as points of vantage for the conquest of self, and who can see that he has never so truly saved his soul, as when he has lost it".

[133] See the discussion the perfection of obedience by Jesus in Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 113.

[134] Brooke Foss Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (London: Macmillan, 1889), p. 129. See also Brooke Foss Westcott, *Christus Consummator: Some Aspects of the Work and Person of Christ in Relation to Modern Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1887).

[135] Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, p. 49.

[136] For John Milbank – a defender of Moberly's doctrine of the vicarious penitence of Christ – the basic position can be summarised thus: "there is a perfect suffering of guilt made by the guiltless Jesus, impossible for those whose sin must distort even their awareness and endurance of their own actions" (John Milbank, *The Word Made Strange* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 163). Jesus, in his infinite holiness, is the one who truly understands guilt and contrition. In contrast, sinners do not see their sins for what they are; they have a distorted vision of their sin and are imperfectly penitent. This leads to the paradox that "only the guiltless one can be authentically 'guilty', or suffer sin for what it is, despite the fact that he is not in sin but has only 'assumed' it" (*ibid*., 164). In more recent writing, Milbank has extended this line of theological reflection: "an eternal divine gift only becomes forgiveness when in Christ it is *not* God forgiving us (since he has no need to)

receiving and passing on the (horizontal) gift of penitence, forgiveness, and reconciliation given in Christ.

From the perspective of modern moral philosophy, the nearest analogue to Moberly's doctrine of the atonement is to be found in Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason.* The key question of morality and religion is *not* "how we are to *make* ourselves happy but how we are to become *worthy* of happiness" (5:130).[137] How does make oneself deserving of Divine forgiveness? At the same time, it is also possible to discern here analogues to dying-to-live, the self-restrictions of positive freedom, and the realisation of the Eternal Principle familiar from the British Idealists. This should not be surprising, for as we have seen Idealist notions of self-sacrifice in order to realise the better self in common (in communion) with others in the Kingdom of Ends owed much to Christian doctrine. But one should also notice that the description here is much thicker where it engages with the thornier questions of how the imperfect self transitions towards, or is converted to, its ideal. The realisation of the ideal self is enabled from above: the example of the true penitent came down from heaven to earth. The Ideal self, in Jesus Christ, is already-realised-in-history, providing an example for others to follow as they become imitators of Christ, and, ultimately, brothers and sisters in his Kingdom. Crucially, however, in distinction to the Idealist accounts of the realisation of perfection, the "old self" is here addressed in its selfish, self-righteous, sinful state. The empirical self, which must die-to-live, is not left behind, but embraced in its limitation. Let me explain how with reference to Holland's previous sermons on this theme.

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but humanity forgiving humanity. Therefore divine redemption is not God's forgiving us, but rather his giving us the capacity for forgiveness. And this can only be given in the first instance by the Trinity to Christ's humanity, because, first of all, only his victimage will be sovereign, and second, only he will be able to absolutely and entirely break with that rancour which normally must precede forgiveness and continue to contaminate it. Usually, forgiveness is occasioned by resentment and so remains somewhat grudging; with Christ's humanity alone there arises a pure forgiveness, since this really *surpasses* forgiveness, and is rather the unbroken continued giving of the divine gift as also the offering of a suffering actively undergone". John Milbank *Being Reconciled* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 62.

[137] Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, trans. M. J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) p. 244.

Moberly's own discussion of Christ as a universal representative of the whole human race – "He was not generically, but inclusively, man" – has sometimes been criticised for being overly Hegelian.[138] Robert S. Franks, for example, objected that Moberly conceived of Christ more as an inclusive and pervasive Spirit than as an individual human being, and contended that the Christology of Atonement and Personality was ultimately idealist, and specifically Hegelian.[139]   But once Moberly's work is read with reference to the rather obstinate Christological realism – indeed, obdurate anti-idealism – of Holland's earlier sermons, a rather different interpretation of the doctrine of vicarious penitence begins to suggest itself. Moberly's interpretation of the doctrine of the atonement was, as Holland's had been, an extension of Athanasius' realistic Logos Christology. Attentive readers, at least, should have been aware that his theology was grounded, ontologically, in the Christocentric metaphysic. After all, Moberly had been clear that the penitence of Christ was made available to believers, not by Hegelian idealism, but by grace of the Spirit: "The very spirit of the Crucified becomes out spirit – ourselves translated into the spirit of the Crucified. The spirit of the Crucified may be, and please God shall be, the very constituting reality of ourselves".[140] The process of inclusion in Christ's reality was only through the Spirit, through grace, and, as the later chapters of Atonement and Personality made clear, through the Church and sacraments.[141]

Earlier, we encountered Michael Ramsey's judgment that Scott Holland's sermons provided "a comprehensive doctrine of sacrifice… hinting at a Christocentric philosophy of

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[138] Moberly, *Atonement and* Personality, p. 86.

[139] Robert S. Franks, *The Work of Christ* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), pp. 694-701. For similar criticism of the "idealistic basis" of Moberly's theory, see John Stewart Lawton, *Conflict in Christology* (London: SPCK, 1947), p. 265.

[140] Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 151

[141] This offering of the sinful self to God was *in Christ*. For an account of this, see the report of the conference held at Oxford in 1899 attended by Holland, Moberly and Gore (together with Peter Taylor Forsyth) in William Sanday, ed. *Different Conceptions of Priesthood and Sacrifice* (London: Longmans, Green, and co., 1900). As Gore explained, "Paul… represents Christ not only as offering Himself for us, but as offering us in Himself [Col 1:22, 28; Rom 15:16]" (p. 133). According to Gore, "the eucharist realizes the ideal of sacrifice, because (according to… Augustine [*e.g., City of God 10.20*]…) it culminates in the corporate offering of the worshippers, all together in one body offering themselves, their souls and bodies, in union with the offering of the perfect Person to whom they have been afresh united in the communion of His body and blood" (pp. 82-3).

the universe with the Cross as the key".[142] The full significance of this only becomes apparent when we begin to see that Holland's divine "law of sacrifice" provided the basis for subsequent Anglican accounts of the atonement as the vicarious penitence of Christ. For, as Ramsey also observed, Holland's early ideas of Christ as "the one forgiven Man",[143] anticipated in a "lightning-flash" the dominant theme of Moberly's later *Atonement and Personality*.[144] In Holland's *Logic and Life* (1882), the sermon which introduced the "law of sacrifice" theme – i.e., "Christ, the Justification of a Suffering World", of 1876 – was followed immediately by four addresses on sacrifice dating from 1879.[145] These were complemented in *Creed and Character* (1887) by a sequence of three sermons dateable to 1885 on "The Law of Forgiveness". When the sermons on the "law of sacrifice" and "law of forgiveness" are read as a single, prolonged meditation on sacrifice, suffering and redemption, a coherent and consistent argument emerges that shows Holland setting the atonement within a broader understanding of the evolving history of the world as a providential process expressive of the Divine life. Throughout, Holland remained focussed on the centrality of the sacrifice of Christ. If there had been no sin, the sacrifice of Christ would still have been the primary plan of God in nature, a great oblation of self-abandonment before the Father which was itself a joyous recognition of the "glad lordship of God".[146] But once sin had entered the world, the sacrifice also became expiatory.[147] Holland introduced his own account of vicarious penitence in miniature, speaking of the "overwhelming contrition" with which Christ pleaded before the Father when he "made the one offering of His death, in which the sense of penitence found adequate expression".[148] The sacrifice of the cross restored the archetypal "law of sacrifice" which sin-selfishness had

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[142] Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, pp. 12-13.
[143] Holland, *Creed and Character*, pp. 224-25.
[144] Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple*, p. 46.
[145] Holland's four addresses on sacrifice were first published under the title, *The Sacrifice of the Cross* (London: Rivingtons, 1879).
[146] Holland, *Logic and Life*, p. 107.
[147] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[148] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

obscured, allowing the true sacrifice of religion to be recovered.[149] The sense of guilt "which had been our condemnation" was henceforth transformed "into the instruments of a higher allegiance".[150] Holland was emphatic that Christ enfolded the sinner's sorrow within "His own larger sorrow".[151] At the end of the 1876 sermon, we see him already pleading and imploring Christ, "Fill us with thy sorrow, if so only thou can fill us with thyself".[152]

Later, in the "Law of Forgiveness" sermons, he deepened his reflections on vicarious penitence by arguing that "God's forgiveness goes out from Him in such a form that it makes us, enables us, it obliges us, to become that which we should be if we deserved to be forgiven".[153] With remarkable and daring insight, he argued that "Christ, the Forgiveness, becomes the one forgiven Man".[154]

Christ crucified, Holland proclaimed, "co-operated" with the guilt and suffering of sinners, and "instead of sweeping away the suffering and the death which to us seemed the supreme evils, adopted them for his own portion, and left them, in their violence and their shame, for us to endure".[155] Christ showed Christians how they should suffer for their sins, learning obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8). Such shame, guilt and suffering expressed, one senses, Holland's own wrestling with the mystery of evil, providing a way for "fellowship" with Christ's sufferings and conformity with his death (Philippians 3:10). Human suffering and despair were no longer dead ends, but trials by which the soul might be purged and redeemed, a way of winning salvation. Obedient suffering became an oblation acceptable to God, and when Christ authorised sinners to offer their very selves to God, that included their remorse, and disappointment, and despair, and dereliction, and even their honestly-felt sense

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[149] *Ibid.*, p. 122.
[150] *Ibid.*, 133.
[151] Holland, *Good Friday*, p. 46.
[152] Holland, *Logic and Life*, p. 98.
[153] Holland, *Creed and Character*, p. 222.
[154] Holland, *Creed and Character*, pp. 225.
[155] Holland, *Creed and Character*, p. 198.

that life was unjust, meaningless and absurd. "All this is the very offering… by which I can… become, in Christ, well pleasing to God". The "shadow of despair" might finally prove to be "the moment of my priestly service within the holy places".[156]

Holland was wrestling with the paradox that the Christian should give thanks for feeling Godforsaken – for feeling disowned by God – and offer that very thing to God. The suffering and condemnation that seemed so unmerciful was, "after all, no horrible accident, no pitiless blunder, no victory of some dark and monstrous law of fruitless pain".[157] The mystery of suffering was itself – somehow – an obscured trace or corrupted and distorted reflection of God's own "law of sacrifice", there being nothing in pain "essentially abhorrent… to God, except the misdirection which produced it".[158] As Holland had put it in his *Good Friday* addresses, "a growth in holiness involves a growth in the sense of sin".[159] His theology transformed Christian guilt into a fitting oblation offered to God, made genuine shame and sorrow feelings that could, God willing, be enfolded within the sorrows of Christ, and, thus restored, offered up in the "law of sacrifice". Similarly, Moberly's later account of Christ as the perfect penitent allowed him to address an insuperable reality of Christian experience: true human holiness is proportionate to consciousness of sin, and the true Christian is the one who feels "his unholiness, his incapacity, his remoteness from God".[160]

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[156] Holland, *Logic and Life,* pp. 140-141.
[157] *Ibid.*
[158] Holland, *Creed and Character*., p. 199.
[159] Holland, *Good Friday*, p. 107.
[160] Moberly, *Atonement and Personality*, p. 317. It should be recalled that in his *Discourses Addressed to Mixed Congregations* (op. cit.), Newman had already ascribed such feelings of unholiness and guilt primarily and finally to the Crucified Christ in his Godforsakeness. From the cross Christ "looked, and did not know Himself, and felt as a foul and loathsome sinner" (pp. 356-357). Newman emphasised the feelings of unworthiness Christ suffered on the cross, arguing that this, not his bodily death, set the guilty free: "His passion had begun with His soul, and with the soul did it end. He did not die of bodily exhaustion, or of bodily pain; His tormented Heart broke" (p. 361).

Christ did not offer a way out of historical human existence, but a way of *healing* historical human existence. When the new self rose to its ideal, the old self was not left behind.[161] In the embrace of eternity, the old self was not forgotten, but forgiven.

> But if only I could be as if nothing had been; if only I were given 'a clean canvas;' if only the old horrid memories did not haunt me still… Yes, if only facts were not facts; if only the past was not the past… God indeed offers a new beginning; Christ indeed makes all things new; but it is you, yourself, as you are, which He asks for. It is this that He would redeem and recover – you, the very self in you, which is now sick, and wounded, and loaded, and broken. This is what He wants; not some imaginary self dropped out of the skies, without a past, without a story.[162]

What this shows, again, is that Holland was less interested in a Greenian transition from the empirical self into a perfected, ideal self. That would be too profoundly Pelagian for him. What was needed was something more genuinely therapeutic, a way of redeeming the souls of the fallen, embittered and confused. Christ offered *more* than the mere perfection of humanity, for *more than that* he was also the redeemer of sinners. To the gift of perfect life was joined the superadded gift of forgiveness of the fallen: to the Good was added mercy and love. And this allowed for real engagement with the lives of sinners, working not for their own perfection, but sharing the gift of forgiveness one for another. Christ was not "merely and solely… the highest and most perfect moment in a process determined from within humanity itself… All this He was; but not in being this lies the secret of His spiritual authority over us". More than that, Christ is "Redeemer and Lord".[163]

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161 See Westcott, *Christus Consummator*, p. 47.
162 Holland, *On Behalf of Belief*, 208-09.
163 Holland, *Creeds and Critics* (London: Mowbray, 1918), p. 111.

The gift of forgiveness, like the gift of life, came from above. Its source was in the transcendent mystery of God: not the self-transcendence of humanity, but in the sheerly gratuitous original source of creation, astonishing and wondrous.

> When you have come to the end of all that you can know about the divine immanence in man, you will still be in need of the word that will tell you why the divine immanence is so precious and effectual. The divine immanence points away beyond itself. Its religious value lies in its perpetual witness to the divine transcendence. Out of the play of the one into the other springs the eternal significance of the Incarnation.[164]

This, then, was no humanistic political totality, closed off from the infinity of transcendence. The end was not, as for Green, a totality of immanence. Rather, the immanent common good of creation was related to an infinitely greater and transcendent source of grace upon grace *without end*: the limitless fullness of the divine life (John 1:16). As Holland observed in his lecture on eschatology, "You cannot explain, and still less redeem, this human life of ours out of itself, out of its own resources, by its own perspectives, from within its own horizons". Rather, "The one way in which to raise this life to its highest power is to act upon it from beyond its own frontiers". "Start from Heaven, and earth becomes sacred".[165]

Eucharistic Sacrifice

Late in life, Scott Holland completed his reflections with reference to the sacrificial pouring forth of the blood of the new covenant in the Eucharist. That he should do so should be no surprise: the Anglican idea of the Eucharistic sacrifice was at that time coming into full flower, providing a basic concept for English theology during the War. As Jürgen Moltmann once observed, Anglicans then typically viewed "the eucharistic sacrifice, the cross on Golgotha and the heart of the triune God together, in a single perspective".[166] (What Moltmann did not see

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[164] Holland, *Creeds and Critics*, pp. 111-112.
[165] Holland, *The Real Problem of Eschatology* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1916), p. 26-27.
[166] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* (London: SCM Press, 1981), p. 31.

was how much this owed to Holland's theology).[167] What Holland recognised was this: that the mystery of forgiveness was made effective through the Christian sacraments. The sacrifice of God, revealed in the world, was "an arrival here from above, not an upgrowth from below".[168] There was, wrote Holland, "one vital sacrifice in which God and men commingle".[169]

> There, at the heart of all things, at the point where the transfiguring grace of God makes for ever its entry upon the arena of earth the mighty act of intercession proceeds, the priestly prayer avails, the invocation ascends, the Gift arrives, heaven and earth are one, in Him Who stands in the midst of the throne, as a Lamb that had been slain. Here is the one identical offering which knits all generations together into one body. The centuries pass, and it abides. The congregation of all faithful people adheres together by adhering to it… the high and faithful action unceasingly permits and proceeds: the one absolute and sufficient Sacrifice reiterates its perpetual validity. For ever the New Adam presents before God, for man, that new Man, which pledges to the entire human race, throughout all time, the honour of that full final consummation, in the light of which it is even now seen and forgiven, not as what it pitiably is, but as what it shall be, in glory.[170]

It was not in the political order, not in Idealism, but in Christ that mercy was given. The sacrifice of Christ, the sacrifice of thanksgiving from before the foundation of the world, constituted a community of mercy and reconciliation in which fallen human beings could work out their salvation, dying to live for the transcendent common good. The fulfilment of the world

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[167] Perhaps owing to an over-dependency on John Kenneth Mozley, Moltmann fails to trace Holland's influence on Geoffrey A. Studdert Kennedy and Vernon Faithfull Storr. Note that Storr was explicit that he was indebted to Holland's "fresh and living" account of the "doctrine of suffering". See Storr, *The Problem of the Cross* (London: John Murray, 1919), p. 135 n. It is my view that a new account of passibilism, informed by Holland's transcendent eschatology, is now required.

[168] Holland, *Creeds and Critics*, p. 68.

[169] Holland, *Creeds and Critics*, p. 70.

[170] Holland, *Creeds and Critics*, pp. 70-71.

was the inclusion of humanity in the eternal sacrifice of thanksgiving offered by the Son to the Father: therein human beings become sons and daughters of God. "For the central fact of Christianity is not the Divinity of a man, but the Humanity of a God; not life out of life, so much as life out of death; and its power to salvation must be sought after, not only in the Light unquenchable, but in the dark desolation of the Body broken and the Blood shed".[171]

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[171] An Oxonian [H. S. Holland], *Impressions of the Ammergau Passion-Play* (London: J. T. Hayes, 1870), p. 18. A portion of this sentence was selected for the epigraph on the title page of Paget's biography of Holland. It is taken from the very first of his published works.