

# ***TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS: DISCOVERING A VICTORIAN HEADMASTER IN RUGBY PUBLIC SCHOOL***

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**Título:** *Los días de escuela de Tom Brown*: Descubriendo a un director victoriano en la Escuela Pública Rugby

**Resumen:** Este artículo presenta la hipótesis que Thomas Arnold (1795-1842) mejoró y modeló al niño inglés medio para el Imperio Británico mientras que desempeñaba la función de director en la escuela pública Rugby (1828-1842). El estudio comienza por la introducción de la escuela pública en cuanto a su evolución y causas, además del nacimiento del mito de Arnold. La novela *Tom Brown's Schooldays* de Thomas Hughes sirve para desarrollar nuestro entendimiento de lo genuino inglés a través del examen de una escuela pública modelo y sus constituyentes. Hemos realizado un análisis del personaje de Thomas Arnold mediante la comparación de un estudio de caso a partir de la novela de Hughes y dos películas adaptadas por Robert Stevenson (1940) y David Moore (2005). En las conclusiones ofrecemos la tesis que Thomas Arnold sólo pudo inculcar sus ideas por medio del antiguo sistema de los prefectos.

**Palabras clave:** escuela pública, Rugby, Thomas Arnold, Thomas Hughes, inglés, prefecto.

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**Abstract:** This article offers the hypothesis that Thomas Arnold (1795-1842) refined and formed the average English boy for the British Empire while he carried out his duties as headmaster in Rugby Public School (1828-1842). This study starts with an introduction of the public school in terms of evolution and causes, as well as the birth of Arnold's myth. On the basis of Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), the process advances our understanding of Englishness through 'a white public school upon a hill' and its constituents. I analyse the character of Thomas Arnold through a comparative case study of Hughes' novel and two films adapted by Robert Stevenson (1940) and David Moore (2005). I conclude that Thomas Arnold could only instil his ideas through the ancient system of praeceptors.

**Keywords:** public school, Rugby, Thomas Arnold, Thomas Hughes, Englishness, praeceptor.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The changes experienced by public schools from their start until Victorian times remain unprecedented. The schools evolved from a humble grammar school to gain the prestige of being the cradle of English gentlemen. Dr Thomas Arnold (1795-1842) was one of the headmasters who turned classical education upside down and the old unwritten system in Rugby Public School to instil his own pedagogy. My hypothesis is that Arnold's improvements adjusted perfectly with the Victorian values to shape the ideal boys for the Empire. Thomas Hughes (1822-1896), an ex-Rugby student, immortalised Dr Arnold with his novel *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857). In the light of this novel, I examine the image of both Rugby school and its Headmaster. The aim of this article is to determine how the process of developing boys to men for the Empire is carried out through Dr Arnold's ideas.

### 1.1. THE MEANING AND HISTORY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

This article takes as its starting point that the compound 'public school' does not stand for the meaning of its constituents. Although the first recording of 'public school' in 1580 was opposed to private houses, its significance has noticeably changed in the following centuries:

Originally, in Britain and Ireland: any of a class of grammar schools founded or endowed for public use and subject to public management or control. Later, chiefly from the 19th cent. and also in some other countries of the former British Empire: a fee-paying secondary school which developed from former endowed grammar schools, or was modelled on similar lines, and which takes pupils from beyond the local constituency and usually offers boarding facilities. (OED, public school n. and adj.)

In addition to the above *OED* entry, Benson's BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English, states that 'public school' has no World English meaning since, in American English, it refers to «a free school financed by the state, whereas in BrE it is a fee-paying private educational establishment» (JACKSON 2001: 123). There are two different connotations which presumably stem from the fact that the term 'public school' was recycled in the nineteenth century in Britain to represent a new meaning.

The process of recycling an existing word such as 'public school' would be the result of a process of semantic narrowing, since the connotation of the adjective 'public' remains in a more restrictive significance (KATAMBA 2005: 174-5). To be precise, the scope for this adjective conveys the idea of high or upper-middle class population. At

present the so-called 'state schools' stand for non fee-paying schools, which are funded from taxes and, similarly, organized by local authorities.

It is worth recalling the initial foundation of Rugby Public School to understand the process of evolution above mentioned regarding the term 'public school'. *The National Archives* and *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* provide the first record in 1567 when Lawrence Sheriff, in his will, endowed a certain amount of money to build «a free grammar school .... to serve chiefly for the children of Rugby and ... to be called the free schoole of Lawrence Sheriffe» (FLETCHER 2008), likely aimed at the perpetuation of his name. The crucial question may therefore be how the Rugby charity became a school for the upper-middle class in Victorian times as it is demonstrated in Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857).

First, in a historical context, the action of Lawrence Sheriff was widespread. Henry VIII's statutes in the years 1531-2 introduced a law prohibiting conveyances to superstitious uses, that is to say, it was not allowed to make bequests of land for chantries or other ecclesiastic institutions (SHELFORD 1836: 813-815). Bequests of this kind were henceforth not uncommon among wealthy yeoman like Sheriff Lawrence (FLETCHER 2008). The Reform of the Church conducted by Henry VIII dissolved and suppressed «all the monasteries, priories, nunneries, colleges, hospitals, houses of friars and other religious and ecclesiastical houses and places» (EVANS 1836: 257-258). Consequently, Henry VIII and the Parliament assumed the responsibility of education. While Protestantism enhanced the value of education, the government encouraged English citizens to give to charities or other non superstitious uses. As an example, the Preamble of Statute of Charitable Uses in 1601, under the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), «promised to convert the endowments to good and godlie uses, as in erecting of Gramer Scoles to the education of Youthe ...» (ELY 2006: 4).

Second, there was a tendency in the sixteenth century which is summarised in this concise observation «there is a schoole in Harow, as yet not a free schoole, but intended to be, and one Iohn Lyons Gent. hath given (after his deceafe to be employed towards the erection and founding thereof) ...». (NORDEN 1596: 23). The local students were gradually mixed up with boys from other counties who paid fees for the admission and became boarding students. Even though their presence implied a contradiction of the foundational statutes, these arrangements were carried out to the benefit of headmasters and ushers (TYERMAN 2000: 45-59). This 'black economy' presumably triggered the headmaster's preference towards boarders and new rules such as an entrance test or the banning of clogs in school to select the most profitable pupils (SHROSBREE 1988: 41). In the light of this information, it may be stated that public schools also relied heavily on

commercial funding rather than solely on the task of providing free education for local boys.

Third, for Victorians, childhood and the importance of education became an obsession. By the same token, teaching was seen as a «matter for specialists» either by governesses at home or public schools (NELSON 2007: 70). As a rule of thumb, the aristocracy had educated their children at home through governesses since the Middle Ages; however, middle-class groups began to hire them around the end of the eighteenth century. At that time, boys were sent to public schools and girls were generally educated at home by middle-class governesses (HUGHES 1993: 11)<sup>1</sup>. Also, the government helped to propel a special concern regarding educational issues. For example in 1839, only two years after the coronation of Queen Victoria, the government began to provide money for elementary schools and in 1870 William Edward Forster's Act made elementary education available to all children in England and Wales (MITCHELL 1996: 170). That was a flourishing era for landed middle-class or gentry who endeavoured to achieve higher positions for their children through education.

Criticism and indignation arose in the form of articles in magazines and periodicals condemning the scandal of misappropriation and financial greed in public schools. In response to this, voices raised for necessary reform. A commission was appointed in 1861, the Clarendon Commission<sup>2</sup>, to inquire into the finances and methods of teaching in a selection of nine public schools: Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, St Paul's, Merchant Taylors', Harrow, Rugby and Shrewsbury. In fact, it was not until 1864 that they reported their recommendations. Not only did the subsequent Public Schools Act regulate their fundamental objectives, but also proposed «the gradual elimination of local foundation rights in favour of scholarships» (SHROSBREE 1988: 9). This must be interpreted with caution because unless the pupils passed an exam on classics they could not apply for the scholarships. In simpler terms, whoever could afford preparatory courses to pass the exam had a much higher likelihood to register in the public schools. The reform enacted many points of change to better the curriculum

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<sup>1</sup> It is worthwhile to comment on Richard Redgrave's painting called *The Governess* (1845) where three female pupils and a young lonely governess are portrayed (REDGRAVE 1845). The figure of the governess is intentionally detached, perhaps to depict her in-between social status. She was a middle-class young woman who was seen as a servant by their employers but as a higher class employee by the other servants. See «HOME SWEET HOME: THE NANNY».

<sup>2</sup> Seven commissioners: Earl of Clarendon, Earl of Devon, Lord Lyttelton, Hon. E. T. Twisleton, Sir S. H. Northcote, W. H. Thompson and H. H. Vaughan (COLLINGE 1984).

and finances; nevertheless, it also implied the birth of first-rate schools in secondary studies for the wealthiest classes. Furthermore, the Public Schools Act (1864) finally legalized the misleading term of ‘public school’ to designate the aforementioned nine schools along with their distinction of a superior status (SHROSBREE 1988: 9-89).

After tracing the historical origin of ‘public school’ and its evolution over time, the next step will be the analysis of the headmaster since education and finance fell mainly upon his shoulders. It is surely true to say that the headmaster entirely defined the spirit and tenets of his jurisdiction. The focus of this article deals with Rugby public school and Hughes’ headmaster, Dr Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), who carried out the duties of headmaster from 1828 until his death in 1842. He was not the only one who accommodated the demands of the nineteenth century by applying a serious reform in curriculum and existing structures. Yet, Arnold’s ex-pupils merely scattered his achievements leaving out any negative aspect.

## 1.2. THOMAS ARNOLD’S MYTH VS THOMAS HUGHES’ CONTRIBUTION

It can be argued that Arthur Penrhyn Stanley’s *Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold* (1844) and Thomas Hughes’ *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* (1857) contributed to shape Thomas Arnold’s idealised picture which finally ended in a myth. However, there were also many works from students and ex-students (WEAVER 2004: 455-487), like Hughes, who helped to idealize the image of a Rugby schoolboy and his headmaster not only after Arnold’s death but also in the years before<sup>3</sup>. Articles, essays and poems in magazines written by schoolboys and collections of memoirs from old boys left detailed evidence of this educational system. Clough, a Rugby student who went by the initials T.Y.C., stated in the *Rugby Magazine* that they were absolutely conscious of the relevance of their boyhood, their transition from feeling to thought, and maintained that their motive for writing was their love and gratitude for their Alma Mater, «a defence for the means employed» (COUGH 1835: 9-20). Whether we consider that his thought was the typical or not, the fact is that the stream of writings to praise and to credit their beloved public school was increasing in number for the good of itself and for the students themselves. Weaver’s suggestion is that the *Rugby Magazine* was partially

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<sup>3</sup> These works were published in schoolboy magazines in Rugby while Dr Arnold was the headmaster: the *Rugby Magazine*, the *Rugby Miscellany*, *Rugbaean* and a weekly newspaper by «Arnoldian acolytes like Clough, Stanley, Charles John Vaughan and W.C. Lake». The titles of some of these works are: «A School-Boy’s Story», Coleridge’s «Kubla Khan», «Imagination», «George Esling», «Henry Sinclair, or, Tis Six Years Ago», «View of School Government», «Emulation» and «School Society» (WEAVER 2004: 455-487).

based on Arnoldian ideas which were expressed with images much more intense than in other public school's magazines such as *Eton School Magazine*.

There are two different motivations for writing about Dr Thomas Arnold. Stanley focuses on the figure of the headmaster whereas Hughes depicts the schooldays of a middle-class teenager called Tom Brown and places Dr Arnold in a second foreground. These two approaches to Dr Arnold were dramatically distinct although similar in essence, yet Hughes' novel may well have turned out to be the forerunner of the schoolboy novel becoming a best-seller of the time. Hughes made up a complete story from the breed-to-wean of a public schoolboy called Tom Brown<sup>4</sup>. This over-indulged «good English boy» (HUGHES 1857: 63), keen of fights and games, makes a journey through the painful process of growing up. The target of Tom's journey ends up being a man who symbolises manliness and thoughtfulness. Indeed, Tom represents the model citizen while the craftsman responsible for the whole transformation is clearly identified as Dr Thomas Arnold or the Doctor. Even if Tom Brown is introduced as an innately great boy, Hughes proves that the Doctor influenced Tom to be even greater. What could be a better business card for Arnold than to exemplify Tom's long journey into adulthood through his guidance?

Hughes' novel caused a deeper impact in English society most notably for his wit and ability to address everyone and handle several points of view. While Arthur Penrhyn Stanley inserted some bits of narrative among Thomas Arnold's letters for «a correct understanding of their writer» (STANLEY 1868: vi)<sup>5</sup>, Hughes genuinely contrived a close-up of Rugby school taken from the eyes of an old boy aimed at boys. Keeping things in perspective, the experiences discussed in Hughes' book were basically his brother's and his own experiences from their stay in Rugby from when they attended at the age of thirteen and twelve, respectively (MITCHELL 2004). Interestingly enough, Hughes' eldest son, Maurice, was eight years old at the time, as was the fictional

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<sup>4</sup> Tom, diminutive of Thomas, was a popular name. Like the main character of the novel, the writer Hughes and Dr Arnold were bearers of the same first name. This gives an idea of the widespread use of the first name Thomas. It is likely that Hughes wished to highlight with this common name the image of an average boy in England.

<sup>5</sup> Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815–1881) studied in Rugby Public School from 1829 to 1834. He was one of the students greatly influenced by Arnold's doctrine. Their relationship as student and headmaster developed into a close friendship. After Arnold's death (1842), his widow asked Stanley to write her husband's biography which he did with a tendency to gloss over Arnold's defects (HAMMOND 2004).

character Tom Brown —also firstborn— when he was going to enter Rugby. This coincidence could imply that Hughes perhaps meant to create a sort of broad hint for his own son (MITCHELL 2004).

At this point, Hughes tried to embody the image of a good English boy, or Englishness, by holding Arnold's idea of a good Englishman. One of Arnold's main tenets consisted in the construction of strong bonds between the headmaster and schoolboys. The Doctor emphasized a chain of male-to-male identification through the mentoring from older students towards younger ones. In fact, it was an existing prefect disciplinary system established a long time ago. Within this hierarchy, the top was the headmaster, then the sixth-form students and finally the lower-school students. Given that Thomas Arnold was the first male model, he could spread his pastoral doctrine to the entire school.

## 2. A WHITE PUBLIC SCHOOL UPON A HILL

As on the one hand it should ever be remembered that we are boys, and boys at school, so on the other hand we must bear in mind that we form a complete social body, —a society not only of scholars, but of human beings— not only of individuals, but of citizens— a society in which, by the nature of the case, we must not only learn but act and live: and act and live not only as boys, but as boys who will be men («School a Little World», *Rugby Magazine* 1835: 105).

The quotation above is Hughes' first intertextual reference in the paperback edition of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. The schoolboy who wrote this excerpt was fully aware of his belonging to a large body of future men. There is nothing strange here, of course every schoolboy will become an adult. Yet, the belief of this schoolboy seems to be a declaration of intentions, a compromise with English society, as if he was one of the chosen members with the right and duty of being called a 'man'. To strengthen this view, public schools were seen as «miniature Englands»: models to build the future generation (SANDERS 1946: ix). Rugby mirrors England itself, or better said, the whole Empire with the social structure and the intense feeling of being part of a great country. Rugby stands for a reason to be proud of, a justification to do greater things, and an excuse to fight for the beloved school-house. This was a new piece of children's literature which emerged as a way to «explain to the young the principles, ethical as well as practical, by which the society that has produced it works or should work» (NELSON 2007: 75). Beneath an innocent story for the young, issues like religion, gender and social class overlap «an excellent way to chart changes in ideals of manliness over the Victorian period» (NELSON 2007: 76).



It is fair therefore to say that the message accommodated the demands of the Empire. Rugby Public School acted as an excellent means of communication. And consequently, the messenger should necessarily be the headmaster, an outstanding role model so that this stream of thought would reach deeply in boys' minds and souls. Following this premise, Rugby became an institution to be admired and respected rather than a mere secondary school. The term 'a white public school' is deployed on the grounds of an idealized entity to which boys were closely attached, where the colour white relates to a period of innocence where purity and perfection settled down. As regards the phrase 'upon a hill', this pinpoints its preferential localization, overlooking other public schools and acting as the best model possible. Thomas Hughes has thus superbly concentrated on portraying this picture of public school in which boys are turned into perfect English citizens.

Next I shall study how Hughes handled the message of Englishness in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. I have organised the strategies in two subsections: how Hughes understands Englishness and the collective identity built at the public school. The first subsection is divided in four ways to enact Englishness beginning with lineage, followed by a rural setting located in the Vale of White Horse, then popular culture and finally, the features of manliness and friendship.

## 2.1. SHADES OF ENGLISHNESS

Hughes' «sole object in writing was to preach to boys» as he contends in his preface to the sixth edition (HUGHES 1835: xl). Such a decision is influenced by his will to advise boys about life in public schools. Through a first-person narration, probably based on his own experience<sup>6</sup>, he mainly describes the customs of public schools: the existing hierarchy of students —flag, præpostor, sixth-form student—, the bullying practice and the expected manly behaviour at the school. But, at the same time, Hughes tends to trace the concept of Englishness in the light of an illustrious family origin: the Browns.

Right from the outset Hughes firmly suggests that the work of Browns' lineage for England happens to be significantly relevant, in contrast to the work done by the high-class group. No wonder Hughes provides readers with former literary examples from

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas Hughes attended Rugby public school at the age of twelve, with his elder brother George, from 1834 to 1842. Then, he went to Oriel College in Oxford whose experience likely inspired him to write the second part called *Tom Brown at Oxford* in 1862 (MITCHELL 2004).

Thackeray and Doyle where heroes with the name of Brown encapsulate a highly respected middle-class. As a result, the Browns are metaphorically placed at the top of the hill. They are presented as the real workers for England as well as tireless members of a great honest family striving to live the right way whatever the circumstances are. The features of this «fighting family» (HUGHES 1835: 3), Hughes' coined term for the Browns, comprise somewhat a hymn of praise of their brotherhood, their downright beliefs and their perseverance of character. These are, to some extent, the qualities defended by his admired headmaster Arnold, who inherited the existing school hierarchy to promulgate a «moral thoughtfulness in every boy» (HUGHES 1835: xlii). It is the recipe to find a true Englishman, in other words, the formula for Englishness<sup>7</sup>.

The next means to construct identity involves a vivid account of Englishness through a rural setting, «the small nest of Browns» (HUGHES 1835: 5), located in the Vale of White Horse<sup>8</sup>, where Thomas Hughes belonged<sup>9</sup>. Criteria for selecting this region may be for three causes. First, this county, and particularly this vale, owns an extremely fertile soil to exploit (HUGHES 1863: 410-412). Second, the vale was the memorable stage for the battle of Ashdown<sup>10</sup>, as well as the birthplace of King Alfred the Great<sup>11</sup>. And third, the biggest and the oldest figure of a chalk horse in England is in

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<sup>7</sup> «In the nineteenth century, competing and complementary meanings of Englishness constellated variously around race/whiteness, moral feeling, righteous behaviour, God-fearing Christianity, shared heritage, and beliefs in imperial greatness» (POON 2008: 6).

<sup>8</sup> In Thomas Hughes' times the Vale of White Horse belonged to Berkshire in South-Eastern division, but in 20th century it changed to Oxfordshire county (HUGHES 1857: 383).

<sup>9</sup> «I was born and bred a west-countryman, thank God! a Wessex man, a citizen of the noblest kingdom of Wessex, a regular 'Angular Saxon', the very soul of me 'adscriptus glebæ'. There's nothing like the old country-side for me, and no music like the twang of the real old Saxon tongue, as one gets it fresh from the veritable chaw in the White Horse Vale...» (HUGHES 1857: 10).

<sup>10</sup> It was the scene where Anglo-Saxons fought against the Danish invaders on 8 Jan 871. The king of Wessex died some weeks later and his brother Alfred became king (CANNON 2009: 41). The Whitehorse Hill is presented as the most probable site of the battle of Ashdown (MERKLE 2009: 47-48).

<sup>11</sup> Alfred the Great was also known as The White Horse King because he was born in Wantage (MERKLE 2009: 4). Wantage is situated on the borders of the Vale of the White Horse (KNIGHT 1840: 116).

the Whitehorse Hill<sup>12</sup>. Hughes' love is such that he dares to write that the inhabitants of that vale «are a people of the Lord» as if they were the chosen ones (HUGHES 1857: 10).

Throughout a faithful detailed depiction of Hughes' and Tom Brown's homeland, readers effectively feel psychologically attached. The setting is instrumental in the plot to create the whole sense of Englishness. The Browns are either yeomen or countrymen living in the heart of England. Toolan explained «features of the setting may be ... either cause or effect of how characters are and behave» (HUGHES 1857: 104). Here the setting and the characters are intermingled; in fact, the setting indirectly portrays the characters by analogy. The lineage of the Browns and their homeland are part of the recipe to become a true Englishman. Nevertheless, the construction of Englishness does not end at this point, let alone the indirect characterisation.

Hughes is weaving a complex identity which comprises a narrow although powerful canvas placed in the vale. Everything flows within it and there is no positive mention of any contact outside this tiny world. This is promoted through popular culture. Traditional games like the jingling match or back-swording or the 'vale veast' are handled as a national treasure to be indisputably kept throughout generations (HUGHES 1857: 33-34-39). The inhabitants are defined by their doggedness, their unconditional affection for their culture and homeland, yet there appears to be a fixed social hierarchy in the foreground. A good example is the greeting for Tom Brown, son of a squire, as «young Master» (HUGHES 1857: 19-26). Ironically, Hughes' voice is there to remind us that Squire Brown «didn't matter a straw whether his son associated with lords' sons or ploughmen's sons, provided they were brave and honest» (HUGHES 1857: 52-53). To put it into other words, unless village boys do not forget to keep the right distance, Tom was allowed to mix with them. Simultaneously, these underlying details are strengthened by the distinct speech between masters and villagers. The latter ones speak in a dialect which is phonetically reproduced as shown in «Thee mind what I tells ee and doan't ee kep blethering about fairings» (HUGHES 1857: 38). The same technique is employed when the Rugby farmer is talking «I doan't care they was arter my fowls to-day —that's enough for I» (HUGHES, 1857: 277).

Whether we might reckon that Hughes shows a sort of hypocrisy or not, what is explicit is his passionate defence of equality either through Squire Brown or the narrator's voice. I claim that there is inconsistency in Hughes' demand of equality, since this demand only refers to middle-class stratum. There is nothing to do with lower

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<sup>12</sup> The Uffington White Horse is approximately 110 meters long and 40 meter high. It has been confirmed to be of prehistoric date from Bronze Age (HAUGHTON 2008: 252-254).

classes which are pictured as ignorant, obedient and happy to serve middle-class Squire Brown for example. This inequality Hughes is denouncing and preventing is not a full democracy among English society but a partial one. Maybe a further democracy was inconceivable even for a social reformer as Thomas Hughes (MITCHELL, 2004). To summarize, the term of Englishness for Hughes embraces those who belong to the middle-class like the Browns, in close contact with rural lifestyle and following traditional culture.

The last means to construct Englishness is the significance of being a man and a friend. Boys at public schools learned how to become a useful member of the English society, as part of «a class of enlightened and earnest middle-class gentlemen» (WEAVER, 2004: 455-487). They were trained to fit in the great British Empire, as a military man or working for the bureaucratic system. They used to identify themselves with their peers, «identification male/male» (WEAVER, 2004: 455-487), idealizing those bonds and making them to last in time long after their schooldays<sup>13</sup>. Each of these patterns are shown in Hughes' novel when he is explaining the fag structure<sup>14</sup>, of which older boys were the model for the younger ones while the latter ones were servants for the former. Similarly, Hughes appeals to old schoolboys to recall and write about their schooldays, always keeping the bonds tied. Those are the reasons that British public schools were closely «connected with the growth and maintenance of the Empire» (WINSLOW 2010: 2).

A further argument in support of this stance is the fact of being brought up under the fag system allowed the schoolboys to understand and accept that «if one were to become a leader, one first had to become a follower and obey orders from those of higher status» (LANDOW). The success of the fagging was based on values such as honour and decency. Moreover, there was no place for tale-bearing or complaints to adults. There is a special emphasis on tying manliness with physical development either by cross-country running, fighting with other boys or hunting creatures<sup>15</sup>. From an early

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<sup>13</sup> In the real case of Thomas Hughes, he fags A.H. Clough at Rugby Public School. Afterwards, A.H. Clough is Hughes' tutor at Oriel College in Oxford. James Fraser, Hughes' second tutor, becomes his ally in the co-operative movement (MITCHELL, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> A fag was a junior schoolboy acting as servant to senior schoolboy. This hierarchical system was an old custom in Rugby public school, which Thomas Arnold kept with the aim of preventing anarchy and «lawless tyranny of physical strength» (HUGHES, 1857: 397).

<sup>15</sup> It was common in kids as it is illustrated in this novel the activity of looking for butterflies, holes of humble-bees or mice, birds' eggs (HUGHES, 1857: 66-266-270). Another tradition in Rugby was to steal some poultry from the nearby farmers (HUGHES, 1857: 272-275).

age, boys learned to face troubles by themselves. Such a trait was encouraged by the headmaster Dr Arnold too as reflected in the novel.

These four means to express Englishness determined that lineage, birthplace, folklore and personality traits such as manliness and friendship are essential for an Englishman. All these conditions refer to individual qualities which any Englishman should possess. The following stage of the growing up process will be the immersion into society. This will be discussed in the next subsection with the creation of a three-dimensional identity. This is the period of socialising with their peers at the public school. The English boy shapes his identity at the school-house to be successfully suitable in the real world.

## 2.2. A COLLECTIVE IDENTITY: FAMILY-HOUSE-STATE

Above sense is undoubtedly built at the public school. The contact with other boys out of the family bonds is vital to complete the change from boy to man. The schoolboy needs to be separated from their childish lifestyle and protected space. He is exposed to daily troubles that he will solve with the aid of his peers.

The excerpt below corresponds to the meditation of Tom's father in the novel:

Shall I tell him to mind his work, and say he's sent to school to make himself a good scholar? Well, but he isn't sent to school for that—at any rate, not for that mainly. I don't care a straw for Greek particles, or the digamma; no more does his mother. What is he sent to school for? Well, partly because he wanted so to go. If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truth-telling Englishman, and a gentleman, and a Christian, that's all I want (HUGHES, 1835: 73-74).

Attending a public school is not only a matter of curriculum, but a question of enhancing character and spirit. Hughes provides some evidence when he explains that Tom had «imbibed a fair amount of Latin and Greek at the school, but somehow on the whole it didn't suit him, or he it, and in the holidays he was constantly working the Squire to send him at once to a public school» (HUGHES 1857: 67). Though Tom learned at the village school, that was not enough for him, he was in need of the enrolment at the public school as his father did because that was the way to proceed in keeping with his social status. It shows a contradiction, despite an apparent equality among the Squire's son and the village boys, they should be placed in the right side.

Once at Rugby school, pupils were organised into houses, that is to say, groups of students who will seal their acquaintance for the future. Owing to the fact that Hughes is dealing with implied readers, there is little evidence of how these houses were divided

and how each boy was assigned to a particular house. In any case, it is interesting that the older boys are worshipped by the younger ones for their performance in football rather than for their academic outcomes. The bond of friendship grew so strongly that it would live on to adulthood. A comparative study with Eton discloses that such bonds were not always so positive in reading schoolboys' essays for three reasons: more honest writing than in Rugby, less pressure and less control from their headmasters to reflect «the often brutal truths» (WEAVER, 2004: 455-487).

Every pupil, as Hughes argues in his novel, was harbouring a deeply-rooted desire to become a man with a heavy burden on their shoulders: to maintain and to enlarge the Empire. Certainly, that was a privilege for them and, consequently, the schoolboys behaved. They were perfectly aware of their heritage as well as proud of it (DUNAE, 1980: 105-121). Yet all this process took place out of a family environment, these young gentlemen created their own structure of trust and honour. The fact that the sixth-form Brooke, who is about to finish his studies at Rugby, is known as Old Pater Brooke gives a fascinating insight to comprehend their organisation. The pupils are bound to listen to Brooke for that reason, as if he were the father of every student. Now Old Pater Brooke can dig and seed the right tenets of success within their hearts. Brooke delivers his speech and immediately supports it with arguments and examples. The core of Brooke's message is that each of them must pull on the same side in earnest union sharing a house of feeling to overcome the process of growing up.

This method firmly reproduces the image of a family in harmony. The future of Britain depends on them and it is time and again entailed in Hughes' novel. Feeling such a responsible duty, schoolboys should grow up learning and aiming at the best model. Within Rugby school-house, Hughes points at Brooke as the stereotype to follow. The drawback is that Brooke is not paternal at all. He is not the protector of the students. Brookes insists on the necessity of absence of bullying, describing that if bullies get ahead, the school-house will lose their match. In contrast to possible expectations, older students like Brooke do not interfere and do not react against tale-bearing, otherwise younger pupils will not learn to stand and develop into better football players. In view of Brooke's suggestion, pupils have no other alternative but to face their problems without the help of Old Pater Brooke. These boys happily shoulder their future responsibility in the Empire. In Rugby they fag for older students as they will perform in adulthood whilst they deal with bullying and other problems. The Empire needs brave men under strict discipline who absolutely worship their country. Perhaps this critical reflection will aid to understand the real event below at the Rugby school:

...before the 18th century was out, the School saw its Great Rebellion. Across the Close from School House stands a Bronze Age burial mound formerly known as the Island,

surrounded until 1847 by a six-metre wide moat. It was here in 1797 that certain pupils, having blown the door off the Head Master's classroom and burned their books on the Close, retreated and drew up the drawbridge behind them. Only when the local militia closed in with pikes and muskets did they yield. The Riot Act was read and some boys were expelled —some later to become renowned military leaders. («ABOUT THE SCHOOL: HISTORY», 2011)

The above pupils were likely told to work shoulder to shoulder to achieve their goals. Obviously, their goal was not to obey the headmaster. The male-to-male structure led them to follow the steps of the *præpostor* and the successive sixth-form student. They were taught to obey within their own student hierarchy. Apparently the problem was based on the non-existence of a link between the sixth-form student and the headmaster. Unlike this case, Dr Thomas Arnold took advantage of this unwritten structure to instil his own doctrine by placing him at the top of the pyramid of government.

The study of this section has shown how Hughes reformulated the concept of Englishness. Lineage points out the character and personality traits of the individual rather than his family origin. Next, birthplace or setting enhances rural in contrast to urban to include middle-class yeomen. Another feature entails the continuity of old customs to glorify the nation. Finally, manliness and friendship between male peers that will help any boy to become a true gentleman. All these four means, together with the collective identity family-house-state, ensure that the schoolboys acquire the necessary foundation to grow up with the expected pattern for the Empire.

### **3. BUILDING THE CHARACTER OF THOMAS ARNOLD**

#### **3.1. GENERAL APPROACHES**

Not a single mention to Thomas Arnold in Hughes' novel do readers find until Old Brooke speaks about him «There's this new Doctor hasn't been here so long as some of us, and he's changing all the old customs» (HUGHES, 1857: 123-124). The perception of Pater Brooke is that he is Dr Thomas Arnold's right-hand man, considering that Brooke is his spokesman at least at the beginning. A careful reader would definitely find the clue when Hughes reports that the Doctor still had no time to be known by every schoolboy but for a small number of bigger boys with whom the Doctor was in direct contact (HUGHES, 1857: 127). Dr Arnold seems to be in the background, giving advice to sixth-form students who will put Arnold's doctrine into practice: «Now remember,

this fight is not to go on—you'll see to that. And I expect you to stop all fights in future at once» (HUGHES, 1857: 299).

Nelson confirms the same standpoint when she maintains «Arnold worked to disseminate this power along orderly and effective lines by shaping a tightly knit cadre of masters and sixth-form boys loyal to his vision» (NELSON, 1995: 142). Even though Hughes decided deliberately to displace the figure of Dr Arnold at times, his strength and his influence on schoolboys is obvious. Curiously, this silence in the novel does not mean a failure, just the opposite, since the reader's imagination is forced to fill the blank spaces left by Thomas Hughes<sup>16</sup>. The novel does not refer to Dr Arnold's words neither in his daily prayers nor in his Sunday lectures which were established by himself as a novelty in *Rugby* (HUGHES, 1857: 396 n. 137). I can dare to say that the outlook and feeling of the old boy Hughes built up the charisma of Dr Thomas Arnold.

Keeping in mind that *Tom Brown's Schooldays* evolved into a classic along with the precursor of schoolboy's and schoolgirl's literature, it is hardly surprising that the film industry chose this novel to interpret the struggle of growing up every now and then conforming to each period. Whereas in the novel Dr Arnold barely appears, cinema brings him to life even overshadowing Tom Brown. To explain this phenomenon, Michael Ryan Moore declares that «adaptation suggests not only the preservation of narratives, themes, and rhythms but also a keen recognition of technical constraints and social practices, both within the original medium and its adaptive counterpart» (MOORE, 2010: 179). Although Moore is referring to the new media, his argument might be applied to any adaptation. On the question of adapting a text for screen there are some limitations regarding faithfulness to the original. These restraints compel directors and scriptwriters to modify the true source to adjust it to the new audience<sup>17</sup>.

Due to the silences in Hughes' novel about Dr Thomas Arnold I spread my study towards the cinema for the purpose of analysing this character. I have selected two quite distinct adaptations: Robert Stevenson's film released in the United States in 1940 and David Moore's film released in the United Kingdom in 2005, the most

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<sup>16</sup> From the first publication of Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays* in 1857 seventy-eight publishers sold Hughes' novel only in US until 1907 (ALTERMUS 2012). As stated in Internet Movie Database the first UK film adaptation was released on 1916 directed by Rex Wilson, starring Joyce Templeton and Wilfred Benson as Tom Brown and Dr Arnold respectively (*Tom Brown's Schooldays* 1916).

<sup>17</sup> See ASENSI and IGLESIAS for an in-depth analysis on reception studies.



recent film adaptation based on *Tom Brown's Schooldays* until now<sup>18</sup>. Although distant in time and space, it is fair to compare them as they extensively detail the figure of the headmaster Thomas Arnold on the basis of Thomas Hughes' novel. This article focuses on the case study of Sunday sermons as they illustrate Dr Arnold's views as well as his public side. I explore how each adaptation has dealt and developed Thomas Arnold's charisma to fit with their respective times and societies. Even more interestingly, how the two directors show the ins and outs of Thomas Arnold to their audiences and the final outcome. Therefore, I chose the same scene in both films to thoroughly examine the staging of the whole scene including the setting, all the characters involved, the music, the sound and the light effects.

### 3.2. FILM ADAPTATIONS ON THE CASE STUDY OF SUNDAY SERMONS

Scarcely three pages were devoted by Hughes to paraphrase one of Arnold's Sunday sermons as narrator (HUGHES, 1857: 141-143). Hughes' glance at it is in stark contrast to Stevenson's and Moore's film adaptations. The reason for this divergence is that «the novel falls off to reveal the skeleton beneath», then instinct and flexibility are both needed to fit the film in commercial structure (PHAROAH, 2005: 10). Each adaptation was performed for two distinct audiences. Stevenson reconstructs the scene in a true-to-the-text style pursuant to the American «horizon of expectations» (IGLESIAS, 1994). However, Moore's approach appears to be a quite different story from the original on the whole as his scriptwriter confesses «I feel comforted by the fact that only a few retired Wing Commanders and I have actually read *Tom Brown's Schooldays* so I should be safe» (PHAROAH, 2005: 10). The explanation is that Moore's implied audience can interpret the plot more easily so that he attempts to expand and add other growing-up problems in contemporary society.

### 3.2. STEVENSON'S FILM ADAPTATION (1940)

Stevenson's film introduces Dr Arnold and his particular view of education far from the classic one<sup>19</sup>. He is hired as headmaster of Rugby to change the face of education in

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<sup>18</sup> The illustrations from number 1 to 9 were taken from Robert Stevenson's adaptation (1940) while the illustrations from number 10 to 16 belong to David Moore's adaptation (2005).

<sup>19</sup> Dr Thomas Arnold incorporated in Rugby academic subjects like History, Science and English Literature (REEVE 2007).

England. Squire Brown sends his own son to study in Rugby because he backs Thomas Arnold's methods to the end. Dr Arnold teaches his pupils that the disobedience of his rules would cause an immediate expulsion. Stevenson offers a faithful Victorian English society where social classes are clearly defined. There is a specific emphasis in the values of loyalty and honour. Stevenson conforms to Hughes' novel in many aspects like the happy ending and the use of the pejorative term «murphies» (HUGHES 1857: 115)<sup>20</sup>. As an innovation to the source, the character of Thomas Arnold is previously introduced as a revolutionary free-hand private tutor going from rags-to-riches. As regards to the character of Tom Brown, this future middle-class gentleman is more naïve than in Moore's adaptation. Leaving aside bullying troubles, there is a sort of code of honour which schoolboys fully respect: no tale-bearing. It is also reflected in the novel, but Stevenson emphasizes this feature by ending the friendship between Tom and his best friend East because of the breach of this unwritten Rugby rule.

The Sunday sermon always takes place in the chapel of Rugby School. This event is compulsory for every member of the school, either schoolboy or tutor. The headmaster preaches to all of them with his monologue<sup>21</sup>. This scene of the chapel lasts one minute and fifty-five seconds. The audience is exposed to a previous ten-second fixed image of a large number of black hats (illustration 1). There is no background music at this point except for a well-defined voice-over which says «I've come to a great school...». The fading of this scene drives us to the chapel scene in which Dr Arnold is delivering his sermon.

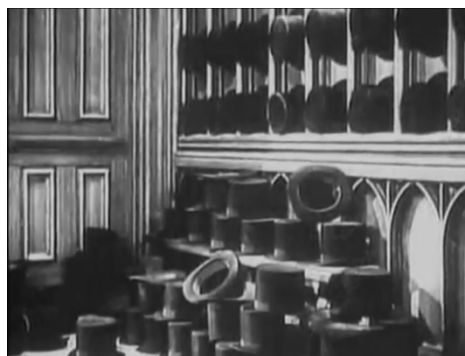


Illustration 1. Top black hats in the chapel. Time 7:14-7:24.

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<sup>20</sup> This pejorative word derives from the Irish name Murphy, and refers to baked potatoes. Irish people were seen as inferior citizens who only could eat potatoes, therefore, English schoolboys called potatoes with an Irish common name (OED Murphy, n.2).

<sup>21</sup> In Oct 1831 Arnold was appointed Chaplain by the trustees in addition to his Headmastership (HUGHES 1857: 397).

As portrayed in «the oak pulpit standing out by itself above the School seats» (HUGHES, 1857: 141), Dr Arnold is standing over the schoolboys' heads. Light falling from his right side is used to enhance the whole pulpit and consequently several shades of grey appear (illustration 2). The stream of light is especially reflected against Arnold's figure with maximum brightness to give meaning to Hughes' description when he wrote that Arnold stood there with his spirit full of «righteousness and love and glory» (HUGHES, 1857: 141). That light effect darkens the remaining parts of the scene significantly highlighting the focus of attention: Dr Arnold in his sermon. Likely, this technique attempts the display of the divine light to capture the meaning visually. While the mischievous schoolboys sit in darkness, Dr Arnold stays on the right side with light. Given that the ray of light is directly sent to Dr Arnold, the audience can see his shadow so that Arnold's projection is three-dimensional<sup>22</sup>. When spectators hear the word 'corrupted' (illustration 3), there is a close-up on Dr Arnold dressed in white to reflect the light His sight inspires solemnity and respectfulness and his voice is loud and clear<sup>23</sup>.



Illustration 2. Beginning of Dr Arnold's sermon. Time 7:24-7:28.



Illustration 3. Close-up when Dr Arnold is saying 'corrupted'. Time 7:28-7:33.

Once the words 'demon thieves' are pronounced, the camera turns to the schoolboys (illustration 4). With this simple and precise movement of the camera, the target audience of the sermon is identified. The camera changes its focus when a key

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<sup>22</sup> The invisible is visible: the divine light. Audience can see the bright beam as described in «... the King of righteousness and love and glory, with whose spirit he was filled, and in whose power he spoke...» (HUGHES 1857: 141).

<sup>23</sup> «... the tall gallant form, the kindling eye, the voice, now soft as the low notes of a flute, now clear and stirring as the call of the light bugle...» (HUGHES 1857: 141).

word is stressed or when Dr Arnold addresses to a particular group. Then for a few seconds a wave of heads is swinging due to these words, and all of a sudden each one directs and fixes his gaze on the headmaster with clear surprise because he said the word ‘us’ as in «This is for us, for you and for me to remove that approach and things have to be done» (illustration 5).



Illustration 4. Dr Arnold says ‘demon thieves’. Time 7:33-7:36.



Illustration 5. Dr Arnold says ‘us’. Time 7:36-7:40.

It is true that the reactions are exaggerated on purpose. For example, there is a sharp synchronism when all the schoolboys look up at the same second. Such movements tend to express a less naturalistic interpretation. Nonetheless, they are conveying the message with success, and maintaining a correspondence between the speaker and the addressee. The narration is told in third-person thanks to the camera. Slight changes in zooming provide a wider or closer vision depending on the objective of the speech. It is worth noticing how the gleam of light intensifies when Dr Arnold turns his speech to a positive future where «reasonable beings will encourage the weak and chastise the offenders» (illustration 6). Now the invisible divine light is again visible, even clearer and closer, and the lighting in the whole lecture hall is better<sup>24</sup>. This sight is symbolically expressing how this divine light comes for the good.

It should be noted that the setting is rather bare<sup>25</sup>. Large glass windows are not stained at all and the wood carving in the seats are the simplest ever seen. There is a unique decorative object on the table, a plain cross, and the pulpit is covered with a piece of black cloth without any pattern or ornament (illustration 7). Hence it appears to

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<sup>24</sup> «It was a great and solemn sight, . . . , when the only lights in the chapel were in the pulpit and at the seats of the præpostors of the week, deepening into darkness in the high gallery behind the organ.» (HUGHES, 1857: 141).

<sup>25</sup> Hughes only describes the pulpit and the light in the novel (HUGHES, 1857: 141).

be that this setting matches with the austerity of the Puritan church<sup>26</sup>. Needless to say there are evident similarities between the Manifest of Destiny and Dr Arnold's speech<sup>27</sup>. These schoolboys are the chosen ones to begin a new generation that will change the face of education of England as Dr Arnold's character says.



Illustration 6. The gleam of light intensifies Dr Arnold. Time 8:40-8:48.



Illustration 7. Long shot indoors. Time 9:12-9:19.

Beginnings and endings determine the structure of such literary pieces and this is not an exception. After a condensed speech full of great prospects for the future, spectators face a humoristic sketch when tutors are leaving the hall. «I'll give him a year, ... six months» (illustration 8). Here the director seeks complicity with the audience. Instead of a large argument, the tutors act naturally disapproving the headmaster's view. «Moral principles, what's the school going to do with moral principles? Feeding one end, beating the other. That's education» (illustration 9). This ending shows the other side of the coin, the opposite side that Dr Arnold has to fight against. Good and evil have been introduced and the mission is on the way to being accomplished. To summarise, this scene adaptation provides an easy reading for American audience because of the familiar Puritan setting and the similarity with the Manifest of Destiny.

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<sup>26</sup> The plain-style aimed at highlighting the sermon rather than the medium by avoiding any kind of decoration. For an in-depth analysis on Puritan churches (WILLIAMS, 2000).

<sup>27</sup> Puritans believed that they were the chosen by divine providence to expand throughout America so that they will stand as a social model (ANNENBERG FOUNDATION, 2013).



Illustration 8. Tutors leaving the chapel. Time 9:19-9:24.



Illustration 9. Tutors disapproving the headmaster. Time 9:24-9:31.

### 3.3. MOORE'S FILM ADAPTATION (2005)

Moore's film begins when Tom Brown is departing towards Rugby. The figure of Dr Arnold reveals even more human features than Stevenson's film adaptation and Hughes' novel, since the headmaster makes a mistake and even apologizes to a student. Tom's opposition to Dr Arnold is resolved with his mission of protecting a new schoolboy called Arthur. Taken to the extreme, the bullying provokes the death of Arthur. Moore takes a contemporary perspective discarding old conflicts and replacing them with others such as sexual harassment. A deeper insight into Dr Arnold's private life shows a human being struggling to improve the quality of students' life. However, a sad end is chosen, probably as a warning to the current problem of bullying. This adaptation displays all the novel characters including Arthur, who was deleted in Stevenson's. The world of Rugby School is more violent than in the novel, since it ends up with Arthur's death. The humanity in Dr Arnold is much more exploited and a dramatic ending offers a hard approach to the reality of bullying.

The beginning of the scene of the Sunday sermon is an exterior sky view, together with the top of the chapel while the sunlight is pouring through to the windows of the building (illustration 10). Regarding the sounds, we overhear some caws still in the exterior sight, and at the same time we hear Dr Arnold's voice, and a robin bird's song is heard. Without a doubt, such slight and short sounds are easily dismissed, however, the audience relates these sounds with Dr Arnold's identity.



Illustration 10. Exterior shot of the chapel. Time 24:01.

This indoor setting has nothing to do with the simple outlook in Stevenson's film adaptation. The abundance of luxuries is widely displayed around the chapel. For example, some large painted windows, many golden decorations on the wall and two large crosses: one in silver and the other one in gold. From all this it can be easily interpreted that these schoolboys belong to wealthy families, and consequently, to a particular social class<sup>28</sup>. This time Dr Arnold is performing in a closer position rather than in a top pulpit when he says «A place of light and learning and goodness» (illustration 11). In contrast, he is preaching with his right hand lying on an open bible (illustration 12).



Illustration 11. Interior shot of the chapel. Time 24:03.



Illustration 12. Holding his hand on the open Bible. Time 24:48.

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<sup>28</sup> Hughes does not describe the scenery of the chapel apart from the pulpit, the light and his own feelings as a Rugby student (HUGHES, 1857: 141-143).



Moreover, the acting technique is much more natural than in Stevenson's adaptation. Each schoolboy acts individually, not in unison. It shows a varied range of stories and motives among all the schoolboys (illustration 13). Diversity creates a better sense of authenticity. Body language and facial expressions convey as much as the meaningful words told by the headmaster. Arnold's speech on the screen is to be understood as a teaching lesson for victims of bullying: «It is therefore no disgrace for the bullied to come forward and point the finger at the bully» (illustration 14).



Illustration 13. Schoolboys in the sermon.  
Time 24:14.



Illustration 14. A teaching lesson. Time 25:28.

Also, the principles of Arnold's pedagogical reform are staged when he convincingly argues his ideal to the group of teachers: «All the boys will have considerable responsibilities but they will be taught in pastoral care and Christian love, not in an atmosphere where only the strongest and the cruellest survive» (illustration 15). Moreover, Dr Arnold is described as a human being able to make mistakes, feel bemused by the chaos and even sometimes nearly overwhelmed by the circumstances. Having all these features considered, Dr Arnold apparently defends the weak against the strong with a great effort and instils love and sympathy among the schoolboys.



Illustration 15. The doctor speaks in front of the tutors. Time 12:57.



Likewise, the figure of Dr Arnold stands for a fraternal authority who would carry out justice to everyone without caring who the father of the student is. The Doctor, henceforth, takes a real active role, every time he appears to warn or punish the bully. To perform this point, Dr Arnold's image results in a symbolic father by establishing a relationship of confidence, as expressed in «I will believe each boy's word as I will believe a man's word» (illustration 16). To some extent, this sentence strengthens bonds of communication between the schoolboy and the headmaster, but this is a double-edged sword with its downsides. Since the youngsters are going to be men, they will be treated like them.



Illustration 16. Creating bonds of communication. Time 24:51.

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER PROJECTS

This article has investigated the false denotation of the compound word 'public school' as well as the historical origin of this misunderstanding. The purpose of the current research was to determine the evolution of a public school from its creation up to Victorian times. The Reform started by King Henry VIII established the basis to build an educational system beyond the control of Catholic Church. His measures marked a turning point. Under no circumstances were Englishmen allowed to endow superstitious uses which could mean the increase of Church power. The present study, however, makes several noteworthy contributions to enhance our understanding of how these public schools became traditional institutions basically for distinguished sons of England and the flourishing progeny of landed gentry class. This study has shown that there are social and political reasons which caused to maintain the term 'public school.' Taken together, these findings suggest that any evaluation of the educational system moved to the headmaster's jurisdiction. A brief examination has been developed about

Thomas Arnold's myth from the diverse literary contributions about his life and ideas. The findings of this study have confirmed that his image of beloved headmaster was fed by his own schoolboys not only after his early death in 1842 but also when he was alive.

Based on a classic Victorian novel *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), written by an old schoolboy named Thomas Hughes, an exploration and analysis was undertaken in two directions. First, this project shows the depiction of a particular public school called Rugby in Victorian times. The methods used for this purpose were divided into the construction of the identity according to true Englishness and the widespread sense of unity felt within the British Empire: a collective identity family-house-state. The first point emerged from the evaluation of four different devices to shape the identity: lineage, rural landscape, popular culture and personality patterns such as manliness and friendship. The second point dealt with the practical objective of a public school education aimed at the service of the glorious Empire. John Winthrop's ideal of a truly model society is the inspiration for the title of this section 'a white public school upon a hill', since I understand that it was the basic principle of this Victorian novel. Thomas Hughes honestly wished to place the 'ordinary English boy', as he used to say, among the English gentlemen who belonged to the huge British Empire. For that reason, the boys should be taught to behave like them from the public schooldays. The second aim of the study was to assess a real headmaster in Rugby public school called Thomas Arnold. A reasonable approach to tackle this issue was to search his real biography to see how his spirit was captured in literature by Thomas Hughes.

Given the silence over this literary character, the study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of this character in cinema. The choice of the two film adaptations was subject to two different periods —the mid-twentieth century and twenty-first centuries—, and countries —the US and the UK—. A case study was analysed: Sunday sermons to identify the distinct approaches to Dr Arnold's persona in his public side. The relevance of Dr Thomas Arnold is clearly supported by the current findings. But the methods to depict the two films differ substantially not only for the periods reflected but also for the implied viewer they address to. The analysis of this case study adds considerably to our understanding of Dr Arnold by fulfilling the expectations of the implied viewers. The obvious finding is that the Doctor's spirit is perceived and revealed on the terms of the implied viewer as a revolutionary fighter to level the inequalities in both adaptations. The following conclusions can be drawn from the present article: Dr Arnold highlights as the central piece during the growing-up period of many teenagers who sincerely are touched by his determination and uprightness. The implication of this is that Stevenson and Moore put into practice the words which Thomas Hughes did not express in his novel. In general, therefore, it

seems that both versions express and share the same magnetic powerful speech over the schoolboys. Although this case study is only a small sample of the depiction of the character, the findings suggest that Dr Arnold could be the guiding light that the schoolboys needed in their journey through the adulthood.

Returning to the hypothesis posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that Thomas Arnold strongly contributed to the creation of a new generation of middle-class gentlemen who would become a fitting cog in the Empire. The evidence from this study confirms that Arnold applied his policy upon an old self-government of students, the so-called system of *præpostors*. An implication of this is the emphasis of bonds between male-male in which Arnold lay as the first model to follow. The results of this study support the idea that Arnold was the precursor of a reform that would serve as template in other public schools. Taken together, these results provide a new understanding in how Dr Arnold managed a system of discipline imposed by the students towards a new supervised one by the headmaster through the collaboration of the sixth-form pupils.

For further projects on literature, it would be interesting to compare literary experiences of individuals within the same conditions in Rugby to confirm the image of Dr Thomas Arnold provided by Thomas Hughes. If the research could be moved forward to other groups such as collaborators, teachers and fathers, the results would be even more accurate to real life. Surely, this research would disclose many aspects which Hughes did not dare to write such as the long-lasting mark of bullying that a schoolboy could bear for his whole adult life. Also, the hidden text of close, eternal and sincere friendship between males which lead to the issue of banning the acts of gross indecency under which Oscar Wilde was prosecuted in 1895. It is recommended to explore the works of other writers who were students at Rugby to check if they were similarly influenced by Dr Arnold's educational system. A further study could assess and compare Hughes' novels on Tom Brown Series: *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) and *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1862). The latter novel was a three-volume novel which did not share the same fame and power as the first one. I suggest the study of the evolution of the character Tom Brown and how he integrates into an even more select institution like the University of Oxford. Another thread to develop could be a research on the similarities and divergences between schoolboys' novels and schoolgirls' novels on the figure of the headmaster and their struggle of self-identification as individuals.

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