Contestation and change in Cambridge Classics, 1822-1914

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It might be thought something of a puzzle that, over a hundred and seventy years after its foundation in 1822, the Classical Tripos, the classical honours course at Cambridge, remains completely unstudied. It is, after all, one of the two most prestigious such institutions in Britain; the other being Literae Humaniores, established at Oxford in 1807. These two courses played a central part in two crucial and related processes in Victorian Britain: the transmission of culture and the reproduction of social élites. Each year they received cohorts of boys – largely from the public schools, whose curricula were dominated by classics throughout the century; each year they sent out cohorts of men who went on to positions in the Church, the law, and politics, and later in the expanding civil service at home and abroad. The curricula and syllabuses of 'Lit. Hum.' and the Tripos constituted a kind of institutional map of classics, in a period when the study of classical antiquity lay at the heart of English high culture, while the study of English language and literature still hovered on its margins. Or rather, it would be more accurate to say that the Oxford and Cambridge courses mapped the world of classics on different projections, since they differed significantly in several respects. This point will emerge below.

Why has the Tripos remained unstudied? The answer depends on which academic location one considers. In the case of the currently fashionable field of Cultural Studies, its avoidance of history, and of élites, is sufficient explanation. As Stefan Collini has pointed out, its practitioners emphasize the theoretical importance of difference, but in their analyses concentrate on differences between dominant and dominated, exploring only the latter. The dominant élite, as Collini puts it, becomes 'a featureless landscape of sameness, populated by privileged robots who unreflectively carry on their daily round of perpetuating dominant images and reproducing exploitative practices'.[1] He also points to a systematic avoidance of the *history* of culture. Cultural Studies is, in short, a child of *ressentiment* marked by a historically specific ahistoricity. Its practitioners are

DIALOGOS | Hellenic Studies Review | Number 4 (1997)
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not interested in exploring the internal variety and the changing nature of the historical world of élite males; and that is especially bad news for students of the uses of antiquity, for it is precisely in that world that much of their subject is located.

We might hope for a more sympathetic treatment from classical scholars; but in their writing on the history of scholarship a marked avoidance of institutional analysis is noticeable: the shaping of knowledge in and by curricula, examinations and pedagogy has generally been neglected in favour of a focus on individuals and texts. Consider the following three pronouncements, all by classical scholars. In 1903, Housman wrote that 'we now witness in Germany pretty much what happened in England after 1825, when our own great age of scholarship, begun in 1691 by Bentley's *Epistola ad Millium*, was ended by the successive strokes of doom which consigned Dobree and Elmsley to the grave and Blomfield to the bishopric of Chester. England disappeared from the fellowship of nations for the next forty years.'[2] Housman's rhetorical invocation of doom leaves no room for such mundane events as the foundation of the Tripos three years before the deaths of Elmsley and Dobree. It did not, however, escape the notice of M.L. Clarke, who in his history of classical education in Britain wrote as follows: 'It is a curious fact, and one which should not be forgotten by those who put their trust in courses and examinations, that the date at which, according to A.E. Housman, the great age of scholarship in England came to an end, coincided almost exactly with the foundation of the Classical Tripos at Cambridge.'[3] An even more curious fact, to my mind, is that this is the final sentence of Clarke's chapter on classics in the universities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nowhere in his later chapters dealing with the nineteenth century, where the Tripos is several times discussed, does he return to this point. My final witness is C.O. Brink, whose *English Classical Scholarship* includes a chapter on 'Classical education and scholarship in the Victorian age'. Brink places the sentence I have just quoted from Clarke at the head of his chapter; but again, the point is not pursued. Brink's thesis is that in the Victorian age 'the public wanted reasonably educated and civilized men and it got what it wanted . . . It stands to reason that the public did not get what it did not want.'[4] What it wanted, in Brink's view, was gentlemanly classics – the elegant taste of the composer – rather than what he calls 'critical scholarship'. The foundation of separate honours schools in classics, at Oxford in 1807 and at Cambridge in 1822, thus led to a tradition of tasteful scholarship rather than to the pursuit of truth.

None of these accounts is adequate. Brink deserves credit for tackling Victorian classics head on, and for taking secondary schooling into account; but the notion of unmediated demand from an undefined public will hardly help us. In order to assemble a more nuanced account, I propose to examine the history of the Tripos from its foundation until 1914, looking both at internal changes and at its relationship to wider contexts. Three phases are clearly discernible in this history. From its foundation in 1822 until 1854, the Tripos was tied to the Mathematical Tripos and students could read classics only after passing in mathematics at a high level. In 1854 classics was freed from this tie, but other humanities honours courses were founded which eventually challenged its authority and its recruitment. In 1879 it was reorganized into the bipartite pattern which survives today: Part I represented traditional amateur learning, Part II the specialized knowledge of the professional scholar, fragmented but covering a wide range and going beyond language and literature. Even this brief sketch raises questions about the content and structure of the classical curriculum, relations between classics and other subjects, and the ideological tension between gentlemanly amateurism and professional scholarship. I will try to deal with these as they arise in each phase. In this way, I hope both to give a sense of development and to trace ideological currents.

Sequential subordination, 1822-1854

The Tripos was established in 1822 after a campaign led by Christopher Wordsworth, Master of Trinity, and the first examination was held in 1824. Why was it set up at just this point? Several other developments will have made it seem increasingly anomalous that the university had no degree examination in classics. By this time the Oxford examination *in literis humanioribus* was well established. Sixth formers at the reformed public schools were working to an increasingly high linguistic standard, the most remarkable case being that of Thomas Brancker, who in 1831 won the Ireland Scholarship at Oxford (defeating Gladstone amongst others) while still at Shrewsbury. Meanwhile several editions of Greek plays had been published by the Cambridge scholars, Dobree, Monk and Blomfield; all three were followers of Richard Porson (d. 1808), the most famous English classical scholar since Bentley, whose close textual analysis remained a powerful exemplar in Cambridge.[5] The university prizes were prestigious, indeed lucrative, and much sought after, but they were confined to composition in Latin and Greek, and the German scholarship whose published results had been widely

available in Britain since the end of the Continental Blockade in 1816 offered a powerful alternative vision both to the compositional tradition and to the narrowly linguistic style of the Porsonians.[6] The contrasting styles are visible in the two classical journals edited in Cambridge in the 1820s and 1830s. The final issue of the Porsonian *Museum Criticum* appeared in 1826, a victim of the elevation of its editors Monk and Blomfield to bishoprics. In it they announced that a successor journal was hoped for from other hands; and this duly appeared in 1831 as the *Philological Museum.* But this Museum was a different animal altogether: a platform for the Germanic historical philology of the Liberal Anglicans Julius Hare and Connop Thirlwall.[7] They, too, were soon lost to scholarship when they were given ecclesiastical positions. But while Hare went to a rich family living, Thirlwall was given the Bishopric of St Davids only after being expelled from Trinity for publishing an attack on compulsory chapel attendance. The new philology was dangerous knowledge, and though seized on by Anglicans as a weapon with which the Word of God might be defended, eventually proved corrosive of traditional belief.[8]

Both preferment and expulsion are significant. If the latter reminds us that philology was a double-edged sword, the former echoes the point made by Housman about the disappearance of Blomfield to a bishopric. Oxford and Cambridge were the educational wings of the Established Church. Their teachers had no academic career structure to move through, the holders of chairs often being absentees who gave no lectures. A college fellow would normally hope to move to one of the 780 or so rural livings in the gift of the colleges: Hare's departure for the living of Hurstmonceux was thus completely ordinary. And while some men continued to pursue their scholarly interests, many will have concentrated on pastoral duties and theology after taking up their livings. Not one of the works published by Hare after leaving Cambridge deals with the classical philology which had so occupied him at Trinity.

The man who expelled Thirlwall, Christopher Wordsworth, was also the prime mover behind the foundation of the Tripos. As this might suggest, one of the motives for introducing examinations in the early nineteenth century was to exercise some control over the powerful, and potentially dangerous, knowledge of antiquity, in a period of political turmoil when classical models were being employed by revolutionaries as symbolic devices.[9] The examination offered a powerful instrument of control which shaped both knowledge and knower through its regulation of eligible subject matter and the finely graded mechanism

of the mark. We should notice here a clear contrast between Oxford and Cambridge. Oxford discouraged direct competition between individuals – in theory everyone could gain a First – whereas Cambridge was much more directly competitive. Hence the numerical order introduced in mathematics – Senior Wrangler, second, third, fourth wranglers etc. – followed in the Classical Tripos by Senior (etc.) Classics. There were even titles for the lowest scorers: the Wooden Spoon in mathematics, the Wedge in classics.[10]

The powerful and long-established mathematical tradition at Cambridge adequately explains this stress on competition and marking (similar moves at Oxford in the 1820s came from the mathematicians there). It also influenced the shape taken by the new Tripos, since Wordsworth's original proposals were watered down so that the mathematicians would not block them. He had wanted original composition included in an examination taken after the Mathematical Tripos which would be compulsory except for the top ten Wranglers. The proposal approved in 1822, however, was for an entirely voluntary examination consisting of translation to and from Latin and Greek, with no historical papers and no original composition. This last was apparently regarded as being beyond the powers of those who had concentrated on mathematics. Wordsworth, Hare and Thirlwall were all fellows of Trinity, which in this period was overtaking St John's as the largest college in the university. Trinity had been conducting rigorous classical examinations for its fellowships since the turn of the century, and in a sense the Tripos was an extension of a college procedure to the whole university. The noticeable rise in the university's intake of students in the 1820s may have relaxed intercollegiate tensions to some extent, and it probably facilitated the introduction of the new Tripos. Nevertheless it seems likely that St John's, which was noted for mathematics rather than classics, suspected that the Tripos proposals were a Trinity plot.[11]

The sequential tie between classics and mathematics invites speculation. Did mathematical thinking influence the style of classical scholarship? It has been suggested that if we look at the writing of James Duport, a seventeenth-century Regius Professor of Greek 'imprisoned in a world of texts', and compare them with the incisive scholarship of Bentley, we can see what Cambridge classics owed to Cambridge mathematics.[12] In the nineteenth century, it can certainly be argued that the Porsonian style, with its glorification of problem-solving within a delimited area, has more affinity with mathematics than does the Oxford Greats tradition. And of course those who sat for the Tripos had just come through an

exhaustive course of mathematics. But the influence was reciprocal, since from the mid-1820s on, many of those who took maths had their sights set on the new classical tripos which lay beyond. The maths dons were in effect teaching mixed ability classes; and accordingly, in the later 1820s they began to rewrite and simplify their textbooks.[13] In 1849 the mathematical entry requirement was lowered and an ancient history paper introduced. This met a longstanding complaint. In 1836, Christopher Wordsworth had complained that the Tripos focused unduly on the manner, rather than the matter, of the ancient authors.[14] As this suggests, the historical and philological emphasis of the *Philological Museum* represented a road not taken. Not until the 1880s would comparative philology and ancient history be given secure homes in the curriculum.[15]

Autonomy and plurality, 1854-79

The second phase begins with the final detachment of the Tripos from its mathematical elder sibling. Like many other changes, including the introduction of triposes in law, theology and moral sciences, this resulted from the recommendations of the 1850 Royal Commission on the ancient universities. The new honours courses in the mid-1850s at first attracted hardly any students; but their mere existence affected both the authority and the definition of classics. The old sequential pattern was replaced by an array of courses from which students could choose.[16] This encouraged renewed calls for reform of the Classical Tripos, in particular for the downgrading of composition and for increased attention to ancient history. One could compare the fear among Oxford classicists, at much the same time, that the new modern history course would sweep the board unless Lit. Hum. was made less linguistic; hence the switch in 1850 to the two-part sequence which persists today: a linguistic and literary course ('Mods'), followed by the philosophical and historical emphasis of 'Greats'.[17]

In the late 1860s, a time when reform was in the air nationally and the academic liberals were very active in politics, there was a flurry of pamphlets and flysheets on curriculum reform. Farrar's *Essays on a Liberal Education*, which appeared in 1867, included a powerful dissection of the arguments in favour of classical education by Henry Sidgwick, who also contributed to the battle of the flysheets.[18] In his own chapter, Farrar attacked the continuing emphasis on verse composition in the public schools. At Cambridge, W.G. Clark and Robert Burn argued that this had distorted the Tripos curriculum: the university prizes and medals sufficiently rewarded such skills, and the Tripos itself should be reoriented in newer direc-

tions.[19] Another bone of contention was the status of ancient history, which Augustus Vansittart described as bringing 'an alien and disturbing element into our great Classical examination'. He also objected to the inclusion of questions on ancient philosophy, for which, he suggested, the new Moral Sciences Tripos was as a more suitable home.[20] These debates often drew on the contrast with Greats; a comparison which was to be expected, since the Royal Commissions on Oxford and Cambridge had proceeded in parallel, initiating, in effect, a pair of linked discussions on the curriculum and organization of higher education. In his flysheet, Vansittart wrote: 'Let there be two schools – Oxford classics (philosophical) and Cambridge classics (philological).' His argument is that anyone who wants a broader-based curriculum should go to Oxford rather than try to introduce it to Cambridge. The comparison persisted into the later nineteenth century and was echoed in Housman's notorious thumbnail sketch in his 1911 inaugural: Cambridge scholarship simply meant scholarship with no nonsense about it; Oxford scholarship embodied an erroneous tendency to import literary taste into the study of texts. Housman was referring to the middle years of the nineteenth century, as was J.P. Postgate when he wrote in the *Classical Review* in 1901: 'Cambridge was as ever ready with a certain contempt for the inaccurate freedom of Oxford as Oxford for the stiff grammatical precision of Cambridge.' Postgate added diplomatically, 'Each has learned from the other; and accuracy is as much honoured at Oxford as style can be at Cambridge.'[21]

In his own flysheet, Sidgwick summarized Vansittart's argument thus: 'if we endeavour to ascertain that men have understood and reflected upon the authors which they have read, we are mixing up with classics something which is not classics'. Sidgwick's discussion is notable both for this focus on the idea of the subject and for the way it refers to 'Classics' *tout simple*. He begins, for example, by asking 'whether Classics alone can form a satisfactory basis of education'. He goes on to reject the view that ' "Classics" and ancient thought are things naturally distinct'.[22] Sidgwick's categorical analytics are notable in a context where most people spoke of 'the classics' as subjects of a plural verb. The unprefixed singular form had appeared in 1839 in the *New Cratylus* of John Donaldson, who had come to Cambridge from the new University of London; it probably originated in the bureaucratic labellings of the new multi-subject London BA degree set up in 1836.[23] As with Cambridge in the 1850s, plurality and competition led to redefinition and marginal differentiation.[24]

Sidgwick may have won the argument, but university politics was not a

rational activity, and the insertion of history and philosophy into the Tripos continued to be bitterly resisted. For the conservatives, classics was the prime instrument of liberal education, and as such it was a linguistic and literary training in gentlemanly style rather than in learning facts about the ancient world. But at Cambridge this was defined as the pursuit of accurate linguistic knowledge and a sense of verbal style. This was the 'pure scholarship' which F.A. Paley in an 1868 pamphlet on the Tripos glossed as 'accurate verbal scholarship'. Paley's position is evident from his peroration: 'What *is* classical scholarship? Is it a knowledge of the ancient authors, or only a smartness and quickness in construing and composing?'[25] A generation before this, J.W. Blakesley had suggested that the typical product of the tripos was 'a hard-headed philologer'. That might suggest a theoretical knowledge of language, but what was meant was in fact an accurate and detailed command of the nuances of literary language, evidenced in both writing and translating Latin and Greek.[26]

The emphasis on dexterity and speed in Cambridge stems from the influence of the mathematics exams, where manipulation and problem-solving were much prized. In some quarters, however, the increasing dominance of examinations was viewed with suspicion: J.R. Seeley declared that Cambridge was like a country invaded by the Sphinx – men thought of nothing else but to answer its questions.[27] In Oxford too examinations were becoming central to university life, but the direct comparison of individuals was still resisted. This may explain why private coaching took hold more weakly in Oxford than in Cambridge.[28] Some of the debates on this subject were re-run in the 1870s and 1880s when female students appeared in Cambridge, and the ideology of competition can be seen clashing with the powerful feeling that ladies did not belong to the public sphere. In 1881, for example, Benjamin Kennedy, the Regius Professor of Greek, in supporting a motion for the admission of women to university examinations, argued for 'free intellectual competition between the sexes', then added, 'but without personal competition'.[29]

The 1840s and 1850s witnessed yet more classical journals which collapsed after a few years: the *Classical Museum* in 1850, the *Journal of Sacred and Classical Philology* in 1859. An academic community able to support such publications was still lacking. The crucial shift which was to lay the foundations for such a community took place between the mid-1850s and the mid-1880s, when able men began to look outside the Church for their careers. The beginnings of what we would recognise as academic organization – societies, journals,

specialization and a career hierarchy – followed the intervention of the state, but were facilitated by the decline of religious faith.[30]

Liberal learning, 1879 - 1914

Once again, state intervention in the shape of a Royal Commission led to structural changes.[31] Pressure for the widening of the tripos led to a compromise similar to that of the 1820s. Liberal education and 'pure scholarship' were represented in the new Part I, which was entirely linguistic and literary and which itself gave access to a degree. Part II was optional, open only to those who had passed Part I, and was divided into five Groups: literature, philosophy, history, archaeology and comparative philology. Of these, archaeology constituted the most obvious extension of the subject coverage in the curriculum. It became popular in particular among women students, who were in general relatively ill-equipped to handle the traditional linguistic core of the tripos. This could be seen as the beginning of a brave new world; especially when we remember that in the 1870s, after the repeal of the Test Acts and the foundation of Girton and Newnham, women and dissenters had acquired access to Cambridge classics.[32] But this last phase is better seen as a transitional one, in which pure scholarship and the world of the Anglican bachelor male remained dominant, despite the inroads made by new students and new knowledge. Until 1895, for example, the literature course in Part II, unlike the other four groups, was compulsory. In the early 1880s a body called the Association of Classical Teachers published lists of dons willing to act as private tutors. Its members also seem to have practised the competitive writing of versions. The emergence of this somewhat mysterious body (which disappears from view after a few years) may represent a reaction to the wider fields and fragmenting divisions of the new Part II; but it also reflects the increasing co-ordination of teaching on an intercollegiate basis, pioneered by the Trinity tutors in the 1860s. It is this university-wide system which Cornford supported in his pamphlet *The Cambridge Classical Course. An Essay in Anticipation of Further Reform* [1903], while urging that it should be improved and extended.[33]

The bases of an academic career had begun to be laid, since the graduates who had previously gone into the church or into schoolmastering now had fellowships to compete for. But they were mostly six-year posts, and many were forced to turn to teaching, inspecting or examining when their fellowships expired.[34] Recruitment to the Tripos forms a very clear pattern: most of the men took Part I and then their degree; very few bothered to go on to part II. In 1887, for example, over 110

candidates sat the Part I examination, while Part II attracted only eleven. In this period, the recruitment of men to Part II actually halved – the cause of much alarm in the 1890s, when abortive proposals were made to divide the Tripos into three parts.[35] The root cause lay in the subversion of the university's reforms by the public schools. Let off lightly by their own Royal Commission in the 1860s, they continued to send up boys who had learned traditional literary classics, practised more of the same in Part I and then left – as gentlemen rather than scholars.

The pattern of female recruitment is very different. The numbers were much smaller, but proportionately women were much more likely to go on to Part II, and their entry rate in this period doubled.[36] Typically, they struggled through the linguistic and literary hurdles of Part I, for which they had generally had a much shorter and less intense training than the men, and then escaped thankfully to the newer courses in Part II – especially archaeology. This escape was of course only partial, until the literature course was made optional in 1895. Women sat the examinations but separately – for example in the drawing room of the aged Regius Professor of Greek, Benjamin Kennedy. But their results were published, and increasingly, in a way which made it possible to compare their achievements with those of the men. The outstanding triumph was that of Agnata Ramsay in 1887: the published results show that she was the only candidate in the first division of the First Class. What has not been sufficiently appreciated, and what makes her triumph all the more striking, is that this was the Part I examination – the literary bulwark of the male world of pure scholarship. (Walter Headlam's name appears in the third division of the First Class.)

The reorganization of the Tripos led to the recruitment of Charles Waldstein and William Ridgeway to teach art and archaeology. It also prompted the foundation of the Greek Play, in which Waldstein was heavily involved. Here was an institution which had the potential to bring together at least some of the specialisms in a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In some ways, however, collegiacy may have benefited from the boundaries between subjects,[37] as friction seemed greatest within subfields. Jebb and Sophocles, Verrall and Euripides, Headlam and Aeschylus formed a cosy set of pairings; but when Verrall published on Aeschylus, he was attacked by Headlam in a pamphlet of over 150 pages. It may have been such pressures which led R.G. Bury to choose to work on Plato's *Philebus* and *Symposium*, both well off the beaten path in that period.[38]

The major controversy which hung over Cambridge in this period was the running battle about 'compulsory Greek', begun in 1870 and not resolved until

1920. Compulsory Greek became a symbol both of high culture and of institutional autonomy. In a period of agricultural depression, when declining rural rents made it possible that the universities would have to accept state aid and state intervention, their power to maintain such demands became a symbol of their autonomy, and of the power of classically educated Anglican bachelor males to keep the modern world at bay.[39] In this area, as in others, the appropriation of Greece was very much an appropriation of Greek. The position of Greek was affected by the emergence both of non-literary fields and of the study of Latin. The chair of Latin dated only from 1869, but Latin scholarship was put firmly on the map by its first holder, H.A.J. Munro. The ancient history chair was established only in 1898, while philosophy and comparative philology had to wait until 1931. This last was by that time something of an anomaly, since 'philology' had been largely supplanted by the growth of the new discipline of linguistics; but the pattern of Part II specialisms set up pressures for equal staffing.[40]

Conclusion

The history of the Tripos offers a case-study in the appropriation of antiquity: making the past one's own. But whose own? As we have seen, both property and propriety were subject to dispute in the nineteenth-century history of the Tripos. Its first two phases were pervaded by concerns with purity and danger. The narrowness of pure scholarship at least made it safe, whereas a broader, more socially responsive classics might be dangerous in the wrong hands. In the third phase, as the new world of professionalizing academics emerged, arguments over primary ends gave way to the less public world of method and evidence. What ensued was a competent but dull professionalism – the 'technique' dissociated from 'humanism' which E.R. Dodds confronted in his inaugural lecture of 1936.[41] The cultural high ground once occupied by late-Victorian Hellenism was captured by F.R. Leavis and the *Scrutiny* group.[42] In the 1990s English classical scholarship is emerging from this positivistic complacency, and a reintegration of technique and larger cultural questions is taking place, driven amongst other concerns by feminism and by the debate on canonicity. The result is apparent not only in the expansion of work on such areas as ancient sexuality, but in a more general orientation to previously marginalized times and places: the East, the Late Antique, the Hellenistic world. Light is being shed on long neglected areas: what new shadows is it casting?

I began with Collini's critique of Cultural Studies in its avoidance of history

and of élite groups. The history of the Classical Tripos is a history of élite culture, and thus falls under both the *de facto* prohibitions Collini identifies. It also challenges the assumption of the robotic homogeneity of élites. First, because it represents a different appropriation of classical antiquity from the Oxonian variety: the individual style of Cambridge classics was both a central focus of contention in the history of the Tripos, and as we have seen, defined in opposition to Oxford Greats. Secondly, because its history has been one of change, and of change which was the product of competition and conflict. We are dealing, in short, with a politics of knowledge. In this particular case, what lies at the heart of the conflict, and of the history, is an ideological notion of pure scholarship.[43]

The teaching of classics has always also been a history of resistance, of the creative recoding by children of the coded knowledge imposed on them by adults. This is a politics of knowledge in which the struggle is between teacher and taught.[44] In the history of the Tripos, the salient feature is the conflict between the teachers themselves. In 1839 Robert Scott of Balliol – the Scott of 'Liddell and Scott' – wrote as follows of the eminent German classicist Gottfried Hermann:

> This venerable man has long outlived the freaks which brought him under the lash of Porson . . . His pre-eminence cannot be disputed; pity only it is that he wishes to reign like the Turk, with no brother near the throne; and declares war against all and sundry who will not join his party . . . Our readers may smile at the use of such a word as *party*, in connexion with the dead languages and their literature. *Political* England has other excitements.

The implication is that English scholarship is not, as in Germany, a vehicle for cultural politics. Yet Scott goes on to denounce three of his contemporaries for using English notes:

> What can possibly compensate for the substantial evil of four hundred and fifteen pages, whereof three hundred and thirty-four are of closely-printed notes . . . This comes of the 'fatal facility' of English note-writing! English is as unfit for notes, as Latin is for lexicography . . . Latin notes . . . must be terse . . . Dr Arnold and Mr Mitchell have . . . much to answer for, in giving the sanction of their high names to an example so fruitful in bad effects.[45]

Scott's complaint invokes a contentious issue which was much more than a squabble over technicalities. To conservative Anglican scholars, the use of English threatened the incursion of the vulgar everyday world not just into classical scholarship, but potentially into the sacred realm of biblical knowledge.[46] English 'classics', then, certainly lacked the sense of cultural mission which marked the grand progress of Germanic *Altertumswissenschaft*. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, before classical scholarship was professionalized and marginalized, it was central to a politics of knowledge, culture and religion. Within the institutional arenas of the universities, however, this politics was, as we have seen, further complicated by local conflicts of interest and ideology.

NOTES

This is based on a paper given at the conference, 'Nineteenth-century appropriations of Greece in Britain', University of Reading, July 1995. I am glad to be able to thank the organizers, Edith Hall and Fiona Macintosh, for inviting me to speak on that occasion.

1 S. Collini, 'The passionate intensity of cultural studies', *Victorian Studies* 36 (1993) 455-60 and 'Escape from DWEMsville', *Times Literary Supplement* (27 May 1994) 3-4.

2 A.E. Housman, *M. Manilii Astronomicon Liber primus recensuit et enarravit A. E. H.* (London 1903) I, xlii.

3 M.L. Clarke, *Classical Education in Britain 1500-1900* (Cambridge 1959) 73.

4 C.O. Brink, *English Classical Scholarship. Historical Reflections on Bentley, Porson and Housman* (Cambridge 1985) 119.

5 Dobree published on Aristophanes' *Plutus* (1820); Monk edited four Euripidean tragedies (1811-1845); Blomfield produced editions of five of Aeschylus' plays between 1810 and 1824. All three published notes written by their master, Porson: Monk and Blomfield edited his *Adversaria* (1812), Dobree his notes on Aristophanes (1820).

6 German classical philology emerged from a matrix of theological hermeneutics and retained a sense of mission; the totalizing ambitions of F.A. Wolf's *Altertumswissenschaft* also envisioned a breadth far beyond the concerns of the Porsonians. See A.T. Grafton 'Polyhistor into *Philolog*: notes on the transformation of German classical scholarship, 1780-1850', *History of Universities* 3 (1983) 159-92.

7 Brink (*English Classical Scholarship* 112) refers to the *Classical Journal* (1810-29) as the *Museum Criticum*'s 'successor journal'. This is misleading: the *Classical Journal* was a competitor which outlived the *Museum Criticum* (though not for long), rather than succeeding it.

8 J.W. Burrow, 'The uses of philology in Victorian England', in J.H. Plumb (ed.), *Studies in Social History* (London 1955) 241-87.

9 The best-known examples are the paintings of David and Delacroix. For a good discussion of these and other revolutionary uses of the antique, see M. Warner, *Monuments and Maidens. The Allegory of the Female Form* (London 1985). The link with examinations is explored by S. Rothblatt, 'The student sub-culture and the examination system in early 19th century Cambridge', in L. Stone (ed.), *The University in Society* (Princeton 1971), I, 247-304.

10 The 'Wedge' was named after the unfortunate who was placed last in the first Tripos examination, Hensleigh Wedgwood (later a keen amateur philologist).
11 On the relative sizes, and performances, of Trinity and St John's, see D.A. Winstanley, *Unreformed Cambridge* (Cambridge 1935) 185-7; on Trinity examinations, 315. The surge in matriculation levels in the 1820s is graphically displayed in J.A. Venn, *Oxford and Cambridge Matriculations, 1544-1906* (Cambridge 1908).
12 G.V.M. Heap, 'James Duport's Cambridge lectures on Theophrastus', in H.W. Stubbs (ed.), *PEGASUS: Classical Essays from the University of Exeter* (Exeter 1981) 84-97, at 93. Heap's suggestion is that the growing influence of mathematics in Cambridge from the 1660s accelerated the transition from 'accumulative' to 'critical' scholarship.
13 This is a preliminary conclusion derived from a comparison of examination regulations and textbook publishing. Nothing has been written directly on the point, but cf. P. Williams, 'Passing on the torch: Whewell's philosophy and the principles of English university education', in M. Fisch and S. Schaffer (eds.), *William Whewell: a Composite Portrait* (Oxford 1991) 117-48.
14 On the 1849 changes, see D.A. Winstanley, *Early Victorian Cambridge* (Cambridge 1955) 216-18. Wordsworth's complaint was made in a letter to the *Cambridge Chronicle:* the text is in Lambeth Palace Library, MS 2141.200.
15 The reforms of the 1870s and 1880s are documented in D. Winstanley, *Later Victorian Cambridge* (Cambridge 1947) 144-235.
16 The new courses were in Moral Sciences and in Natural Sciences (both first examined in 1851); followed by Natural Sciences (1851), Theology (1856), Law (1858), Law and History (1870), History (1875), Semitic Languages (1878), Indian Languages (1879), Medieval and Modern Languages (1886), Mechanical Sciences (1894) and Oriental Languages (1895).
17 This point is made by Oswyn Murray in his draft chapter on ancient history for the forthcoming vol. 7 of the *History of the University of Oxford*, which he kindly allowed me to inspect. See in general the chapter on 'Pattison's Oxford' in J. Sparrow, *Mark Pattison and the Idea of a University* (Cambridge 1967) 62-104.
18 The original title of Farrar's book was *Essays on a Classical Education.*
19 W.G. Clark and R. Burn, paper, 26 April 1866: Cambridge University Library, CUR 28.7.18.
20 A.A. Vansittart, Fly sheet, 16 May 1866: Cambridge University Library, CUR 28.7.20.
21 A.E. Housman, *The Confines of Criticism. The Cambridge Inaugural 1911* (Cambridge 1969) 25-6. J.P. Postgate, 'The *Classical Review* and Anglo-Saxon classical scholarship', *Classical Review* 15 (1901) 2, n. 2. For a comparison by the young John Conington in 1843 when he was at Rugby, see his *Miscellaneous Writings*, ed. J.A. Symonds (London 1872), I, xviii.
22 [H. Sidgwick], flysheet, n.d. but probably late October 1866: Cambridge University Library, CUR 28.7.27.
23 J.W. Donaldson, *The New Cratylus*, or *Contributions Towards a More Accurate Knowledge of the Greek Language* (Cambridge 1839) 14.
24 'Classics' (without a definite article) occurs in a letter of 28 November 1837 written by Thomas Arnold about the status of the University of London vis-à-vis Christianity, but is clearly plural: 'if by Classics we mean anything more than Greek and Latin grammar, they are the one part of our Examination which embraces points of general education': A.P. Stanley, *Life of Thomas Arnold D.D.* (London 1903) 458.
25 [F.A. Paley] *The Proposed Changes in the Classical Tripos* (Cambridge 1868) 15.
26 J.W. Blakesley, *Where does the Evil Lie? Observations Addressed to the Resident Members of the Senate, on the Prevalance of Private Tuition in the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge 1845).
27 In his essay on 'Liberal education in universities' in F.W. Farrar (ed.), *Essays on a Liberal education* (London 1867) 145-78.
28 A point made by Mark Curthoys in his draft chapter on examinations 1800-1914, in vol. 7 of the *History of the University of Oxford*, which he kindly allowed me to inspect.

29 Reported in *Cambridge Review*, 16 February 1881, 169.
30 On the transition, see A.G.L. Haig 'The church, the universities and learning in later Victorian England', *Historical Journal* 29.1 (1986) 187-201. The *Journal of Philology*, founded in 1868, ceased publication in 1920 after the Cambridge Philological Society withdrew its support. The oldest British classical journal to survive today, the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, was founded in 1880.
31 The Commission was appointed in 1850 and reported in 1852. See Winstanley, *Early Victorian Cambridge*, 234-69.
32 The Test Acts were repealed in 1871; Girton and Newnham were founded in 1869 and 1873 respectively.
33 Some of the background is given in Gordon Johnson's introduction to the reprint of Cornford's *Microcosmographia Academica* [1908] in his *University Politics: F.M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician* (Cambridge 1994).
34 Examples include W.H.D. Rouse – headmaster and founding editor of the Loeb Classical Library; J.W. Headlam – HMI, later historian to the Foreign Office; J.C. Stobart, author of *The Glory that was Greece* [1911] and *The Grandeur that was Rome* [1912] – HMI, later Director of Education at the BBC.
35 The statistics of candidates are taken from the *Cambridge University Calendar for the Year 1906-1907* (Cambridge 1906). Some of the figures are tabulated and analysed by C. Breay,' A Gentleman's Education? Women and the Classical Tripos 1869-1910' (Part II dissertation, Classical Tripos, 1990).
36 Breay, 'A Gentleman's Education?' 39-40.
37 Waldstein acted as stage manager for the first production in 1882, and trained the actors in later productions. On the Greek Play, see briefly C.A. Stray, 'Culture and Discipline. The Transformation of Classics in England 1830-1930' (Diss. University of Wales 1994) 238-41. A fuller study by Professor P.E. Easterling is forthcoming.
38 W.G. Headlam, *On Editing Aeschylus. A Criticism* (London, 1891);Verrall replied in *'On Editing Aeschylus'. A Reply* (London 1892). Most of the students who chose Group B (philosophy) in Part II were from Trinity. There is a distinct line of Trinity Platonists, from Hare through Thompson to Jackson – and even to Cornford, though disrupted by his attachments to the anthopological 'ritualism' of Jane Harrison.
39 S. Rothblatt, *The Revolution of the Dons. Cambridge and Society in Victorian England* (London 1968) 252-4; J. Raphaely, 'Classics and the Curriculum. The Question of Compulsory Greek at Cambridge from 1870' (Part II dissertation, Classical Tripos 1994).
40 Gerald Graff's discussion of the 'field coverage' aspect of institutional knowledge is relevant here: *Professing Literature* (Chicago 1987) 1, 6-9, 101-4.
41 E.R. Dodds, *Humanism and Technique* (Oxford 1936). I have benefited from reading an unpublished paper on 'Humanism and technique in classical scholarship' by Professor Robert B. Todd.
42 See F. Mulhern, *The Moment of 'Scrutiny'* (London 1979).
43 A fuller discussion will be found in C.A. Stray, *Reconstructing Classics: Schools, Universities, and Society in England 1830-1960* (Oxford 1997), ch.6.
44 For an attempt to collect and discuss the scattered evidence for this in classics, see C.A. Stray 'The smell of Latin grammar: contrary imaginings in English classrooms', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 76 (1994) 201-20.
45 [R. Scott] 'Modern criticism on Aeschylus', *Quarterly Review* 64 (1839) 371, 378. His complaint about the length of (English) notes is directed at T.W. Peile's edition of the *Agamemnon* [1839]. 'Fatal facility' originates with a letter from Byron to Moore of 2nd January 1814: 'Scott alone, of the present generation, has succeeded in triumphing over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse.'
46 See, for example, Christopher Wordsworth, 'On the practice of publishing ancient authors with English notes', *British Magazine* 13 (March 1838) 243-6.