

# Bulletin of the COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY CLASSICAL DEPARTMENTS



**Bulletin 26 (1997)**

## **Contents**

Crunching Figures

Richard Janko

Literature, Criticism and Authority: The Experience of Antiquity

Geoffrey Eatough

Classics at British Universities, 1996-7: Statistics

Pat Easterling & panel

Report on Research Assessment Exercise 1996

Bob Lister

Language Teaching at University: Some Further Thoughts

Lorna Hardwick

Translation: Future Imperative?

CUCD Conference Panel, Royal Holloway 1997:

Classics in the UK and Overseas: Some Comparisons

## Crunching Figures

RAE results and fallout, Dearing, the first wave of TQA, tuition fees, Oxbridge funding threats... It would be nice not to have another year like this; the fear is that we may see rather a lot of them. CUCD has been thinking hard this year about how we can beef up its effectiveness as the front line of defence between ourselves and our masters. The role of national subject organisations has expanded enormously since CUCD was originally constituted in 1969 "(a) to provide a central agency for the collection and exchange of information of matters of common interest, (b) to explore and develop other areas of cooperation, and (c) to represent university classical studies at the national level". That ranking presumably reflects what was then felt the order of priority; but it's undoubtedly (c) that has been the principal reason why Standing Committee meetings have been steadily lengthening over the past few years, and their agendas growing ever lardier.

As the stakes rise, and the pressures on CUCD as the national subject organisation for Classics at University level increase, CUCD is keen to ensure that it can continue to speak with strength for all UK Classics Departments in representing our subject at national level to the acronymocracy on the other side of the ceiling. Wherever possible, we want to get in ahead of the game, preempting policy rather than reacting to it. (For this reason alone it's increasingly important, for example, that all Departments have a voice - not just an observer - at the annual Council meetings in November.) In this context, the national survey of classical degree programmes conducted this summer is one of the most important projects CUCD has attempted. For the first time, we should emerge with a comprehensive national picture of what all of us are actually doing. In the immediate political term, it will give us the ammunition to resist HEQC pressure for national criteria-based definitions of "graduate outcomes"; but far more important, it will arm us to discuss what we do, what we want to do, and how we can protect and strengthen both. There'll be a chance to discuss the findings in open forum at the 1998 CUCD conference panel at the Classical Association in Lampeter.

In the meantime, some striking confirmation that what we're doing delivers the goods even as defined by the crudest *Machtstatistik*. Some colleagues will already know of the statistics on employment rates for graduates in classical subjects published in *Humanities Graduates and the World of Work*, published in June 1997 by the Council of University Deans of Arts and Humanities and the Council for Industry and Higher Education, and based on final destination returns gathered in December 1995 by the Higher Education Statistics Agency. (The report is free; copies can be obtained by ringing CIHE on 0171-468 2211.) The relevant table is reproduced below. "In the Languages category," the report notes on page 5, "both Classics and Linguistics fare well with Classics offering [my italics here:] *the lowest rate of unemployment on the table*." What makes this more striking still is that "Classics" here includes graduates in Classical Studies, Byzantine Studies, and other post-traditional degrees - knocking on the head any suspicion that employers' high valuation of classics graduates is based on traditional philological versions of the classical BA. Classics, as the slogan goes, works.

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Employed or Study/Training</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>
<b>Average for all subjects</b>	84.4	11.4
<b>Economic &amp; Social History</b>	83.7	8.7
<b>Theology</b>	87.3	8.8
<b>Design Studies</b>	74.6	21.3
<b>Music</b>	89	8.3
<b>Linguistics</b>	86.5	9.4
<b>English</b>	82.2	12.1
<b>Classics (including Classical Studies, Byzantine Studies &amp;c.)</b>	87.1	6.6
<b>Business &amp; Management Studies</b>	82.3	12.4
<b>Accountancy</b>	84.1	12.4
<b>Economics</b>	83.1	11.1
<b>Environmental Science</b>	77.6	17.1
<b>Physics</b>	85	11.1
<b>Civil Engineering</b>	83.5	11.9
<b>Production Engineering</b>	84.7	11.6

---

## **Literature, Criticism and Authority: The Experience of Antiquity[1]**

*Richard Janko*

The classical Greeks had no sacred text, no Bible or Koran, whose meaning had to be fought over in struggles for ideological or religious dominance. This is the most important fact about them; together with their political fragmentation into independent city-states, separated from each other by inlets, seas and mountains, this lack created that atmosphere of open debate about ideas - political, religious and philosophical - which led after long delays and detours to the rise of modern civilization. No other culture in the history of the world has had such a talent for viewing ideas in their starkest simplicity, or for creating the language needed to discuss them; none has been so willing to believe that ignorance is sin, that to pluck the apple from the tree of knowledge is not mankind's first disobedience but essential to human nature. Some Greek philosophers defined man as a two-legged animal; but this may also describe the ostrich. Instead Aristotle, in his biological writings, defines us as 'the most intelligent of animals', 'the only animal that has reason',[2] but also, less predictably, 'the only animal that can count' and 'the only animal that laughs'.[3] If pressed, he would have added that we possess these attributes only potentially, not necessarily in actuality - especially a sense of humour, which depends on a fine interlocking of reason and emotion.

The nearest Greek equivalent to a sacred text was the epic poetry of Homer and Hesiod. But even these poems were not created by a committee or checked for their coherence and acceptability by political or priestly authorities. The originally oral and unwritten tradition of narrative about gods and heroes had to supply the Greeks' need for an encyclopedia of what to believe about the world and its history. Homer's view of the gods, though generally reverent and respectful, emphasises in the last analysis that life on earth is all we mortals have, and we should make the best of it, within the limits of what the gods send us. The gods are what we might like to be, were we ourselves immortal; always enjoying power without responsibility, dismissive of humans as 'creatures of a day'. We, however, *are* responsible for our actions, because we can and will suffer and die; the ultimate insight of Homer's Achilles is that even our bitterest enemies, by virtue of their mortality, are human beings too. Yet Hesiod speaks with a quite different voice, of a world full of lurking disaster and hostile deities, of an earth stalked by 30,000 evil spirits of disease, of the fear of infringing the many taboos and superstitions by which life is defined and circumscribed.[4] These two voices stand opposed to each other at the origins of Greek civilization; the education of every ancient schoolboy began with these two poets. The need to live with, debate and puzzle out the contradictions between them was thus at the origin of Greek culture and persisted within it.

Down the centuries that followed, in the absence of a single, centralised political or religious authority, it was left to poets and thinkers to react in different ways to these different strands in Greek thought. Some, like Pindar,[5] proposed modifications to the grotesque old stories of gods dethroning their fathers or gods eating humans by mistake; a few, like Heraclitus,[6] said that poets like Homer who recounted such things should be flogged and expelled from the festivals where their poems were performed. The Greek in the street still believed that thunder was caused by Zeus and epilepsy by demonic possession, but, by the classical period, intellectuals were offering a vast range of largely uncontrolled speculations which dispensed with the gods, discussing topics like the behaviour of clouds during thunderstorms, the importance of the brain rather than the heart for thought, or the existence of atoms.

Few societies have proved able to tolerate speculations so subversive of religious and political order, so liable to offend those gods on whose goodwill the safety of the state depends. It was, the story goes, a court run by a jury of ordinary Athenians, whose democracy then lacked any real checks and balances to its authority, which ordered that Anaxagoras be put to death for his impiety in asserting that the sun was not a god but a lump of molten metal as big as half of Greece. Saved through the pleas of Pericles, who allegedly put his own life on the line for his intellectual protégé and friend, Anaxagoras was allowed to leave the city.[7] One recalls the trial of Galileo. A few years later, in his comedy the *Clouds*, Aristophanes mercilessly satirised the intellectuals' speculations. He ascribed to Socrates an absurd 'thinking-shop', the first academic institution. This, of course, is how universities were invented: by a Greek comedian, as a joke at the expense of scientific theorizing. Aristophanes' intentions *may* have been just as innocent as the caricatures of Richard Bentley's classical scholarship in Alexander Pope's *Dunciad*[8] or of modern universities in David Lodge's *Small World*, but the indirect results were even less amusing: the butt of his humour, Socrates, was condemned for impiety in 399 B.C., and died a willing martyr to his own variety of *philosophia*, 'love of wisdom'. [9]

As has happened many times since, the violent repression of a free thinker led some of his followers to advocate the repression of others, with consequences that have had a powerful impact even on our own century: I refer to the invention of the first sophisticated ideology of

authoritarianism, by Plato. Karl Popper[10] has traced the modern legacy of Plato's scheme for an ideal republic, run by philosophers and based on the 'noble falsehood' that one's status within the class system is genetically determined. There is no need to rehearse here either Plato's ideology or its youngest offspring, save to note the openness with which Plato grants that autocratic power must suppress the truth to maintain its grip; many despots have learned from that observation. What I wish to consider in this context is Plato's attitude to literature and education.

Plato was convinced that there could be no ideal society without a tight control on education, which in classical Greece traditionally meant music, athletics and poetry. It is the epic and tragic poets, for him, who depict gods and heroes in an improper light, as weeping, laughing and doing wrong. If literature can be purged of impropriety, the inhabitants will not imitate such behaviour; in modern parlance, they will have no bad 'role-models'. [11] Accordingly, the school curriculum must be subjected to strict political control; and a poet like Homer, who presents the gods in a frivolous light, or Hesiod, who narrates grotesque old myths of violence among the Olympians, must be crowned with garlands and . . . expelled from the city, [12] much as Heraclitus had advocated. In addition to such censorship, the inhabitants must also be kept from contact with foreigners, who might reintroduce such dangerous images and ideas.

You will have gathered that I am somewhat out of sympathy with Plato's approach. Fortunately, just as, at the dawn of Western civilization, Hesiod's primitivism was counterbalanced by Homer's humanism, so, four centuries later, Plato's insular dystopia was counterbalanced by the generous universalism of his pupil Aristotle, a perfect instance of how crucial it is that we teach our pupils (as Plato must have taught Aristotle) to react intelligently towards their teachers, rather than expect to be learn matter fit only to be regurgitated. Whereas Plato's philosophy is based on the metaphysical belief that there is a perfect world of the Forms, of which ours is but a changing and imperfect copy, Aristotle rejected Plato's metaphysics and therefore advocated the study of the world as it is rather than as the philosopher thinks it ought to be. His method is based on the eminently scientific attitude that we must try to explain the phenomena which we can observe, by comparing and analysing as many examples as possible of whatever we are studying, and by building on the experience of ordinary people and of previous investigators. He applied this approach equally to biological specimens, logical arguments, the constitutions of states and the structures of tragic dramas, in fact to nearly every field of learning: for him, there was no distinction in method between science and the humanities, and other European cultures are fortunate that their languages still make no such distinction. Unlike Plato and his predecessors, he distinguished clearly between criticism of poetry as the servant of politico-religious concerns and criticism of poetry as studied in itself. Thus it is no coincidence that Aristotle was the first to write a systematic treatise on literary theory, the *Poetics*, which lies, via the Stoics, Horace, Renaissance theorists, Charles Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure, at the root of much of modern aesthetics, semiotics, linguistics and art-theory.

In the *Poetics*, a mere 10,000 words long (and in fact his lecture-notes rather than a finished product), Aristotle begins by drawing distinctions between fiction and non-fiction, and between verse and prose. Ridiculously obvious, one may think, even if obscure to M. Jourdain; but stating the obvious is typical of Aristotle, since what is obvious to us is only obvious because someone else once thought of it, in this case Aristotle. But he misses a trick when he complains that there is no word for the concept 'literature', and then omits to invent one. [13] Another obvious idea, one might think; but there remained no word for 'literature'

for the next 2,200 years. ('Literature' acquires its modern sense in English and French shortly after the publication of the *Dictionnaire* of Diderot; Dr. Johnson seems to have been the first so to use it in English.) Aristotle identifies the concept of *mimesis*, imitation or representation, as central to art in general (for which he has no word), and to literature in particular. It is especially naughty of him to list, among examples of representation which happen to be in the medium of prose, dialogues about Socrates; these are of course precisely what Plato wrote, and yet Plato had inveighed against verbal *mimesis* as being an inferior imitation of reality. Aristotle stands this on its head: for him, human beings learn their first lessons from *mimesis*.<sup>[14]</sup> Worse yet, a fictive *mimesis* which represents an action represents it in a way more philosophically useful than history can.<sup>[15]</sup> Poetry represents not the actual, confused patterns of the many unconnected actions which we undertake in actuality, but universal patterns of a single action, with all the complexities stripped away so that we can comprehend the course of the action in and of itself.

Based on this principle, we can see why Aristotle regarded literature as worth studying; it represents, according to him, patterns of human action from which we can learn. Whereas Plato did not want poetry to show noble characters suffering misfortune, Aristotle regards this as perfectly acceptable, on two conditions: first, that the nexus of cause and effect is made plain by the representation,<sup>[16]</sup> and, second, that the misfortune originates in a mistake made by the character,<sup>[17]</sup> rather than in either his wickedness (for which he is totally responsible) or an accident that befalls him (for which he has no responsibility at all).<sup>[18]</sup> And whereas Plato disapproved of works of literature which affect our emotions, Aristotle thought that the best tragedy would be that which elicited from us the twin emotions of pity and fear,<sup>[19]</sup> just as the best comedy would be that which pleased us and made us laugh.<sup>[20]</sup> Obvious again, perhaps. But how could Aristotle hold such a position, which, as a Platonist would object, panders to our emotions rather than our reason, encouraging feelings which ought instead to be repressed?<sup>[21]</sup>

Aristotle's explanation of this view does not directly survive. It is in fact his famous but notoriously obscure theory of catharsis. The extant *Poetics* does not present this theory directly, but rather presupposes it; it was discussed in lost portions of his work.<sup>[22]</sup> Before I explain what the theory is and why it is so important in the context of contemporary questions like violence in society, the purpose of art, artistic and academic freedom and political control over the content of education, I want to use Aristotle's theory of catharsis as an example of how knowledge is won, lost and recovered. The loss of the past and its rediscovery are both serendipitous processes; one never knows what one will find. But there was a past, some of which can often be recovered: nobody who has worked on ancient manuscripts or on an archaeological site will remotely believe Descartes' null hypothesis, based on ancient scepticism, that the past is an invention of an evil enchanter, who makes sure that everything about the present is consistent.<sup>[23]</sup> While we cannot know many things with *certainty*, I remain sure that we *can* know about the past, with varying degrees of probability; the most important corollary of such knowledge is to be able to assess how likely a given theory about the past actually is.

The accumulated literature and book-learning of antiquity is largely lost. We know that at least twice as much early epic poetry as we now possess formerly existed; we have some 20% of the plays of Euripides, only 5% of those of Sophocles, hardly any of the voluminous writings of Democritus, one of the inventors of atomic theory, and so on. Ancient books disappeared for a dismaying variety of reasons. Natural disasters played some part: fires in libraries, earthquakes, even volcanic eruptions like that of Vesuvius, to which I shall return.

War, and its attendant catastrophes plague, famine and depopulation, played a very large role indeed: we know, for instance, when and where the last copy of much of Callimachus' poetry was destroyed - by Frankish knights when they sacked Athens during the Fourth Crusade of 1205.[24] Our own civilisation is even more fragile in this regard, when atavistic authoritarianism arms itself with modern weaponry: think only of the damage to libraries from Berlin to London during the last war, or the deliberate destruction of the National Library in Sarajevo.

Ideological reasons may also have played some part in the suppression of some Greek literature: Menander, the most popular dramatist of antiquity after Euripides, may perhaps have disappeared because of Christian disapproval of his portrayal of a secular bourgeois society in which boy marries girl, often, only *after* she is pregnant. Comedy was banned by canon law in A.D. 691 because dramatic festivals were indissolubly linked with the pagan god Dionysus.[25] On Christmas Day in A.D. 525, the orator Choricus of Gaza had had to plead before Justinian that dramatic performances be allowed;[26] over a century before, Augustine was already expressing disgust at how literature like Terence's comedies or Vergil's *Aeneid* could arouse in him emotions better kept under control[27] (one is reminded, not accidentally, of Plato). But suppression often failed, or had its own revenge: thus Celsus' arguments in his *Against the Christians* are preserved in Origen's refutation of them.[28]

The greatest culprits of all in the loss of ancient texts were certainly ignorance and its companion indifference. Educational horizons contracted with the economic decline of the third century A.D., increasing authoritarianism and the introduction of Christianity; the seventh and eighth centuries were especially calamitous. Above all, literacy declined and became a professional skill rather than one essential for craftsmen and citizens; higher education shrank almost to extinction, and the syllabus for use in schools became steadily more restricted and less ambitious. The proliferation of summaries and study guides to the classics presents a familiar appearance. This is why we have only seven plays by Sophocles, and without the chance survival of a section of the *Complete Works* of Euripides we would be almost as badly off in his case. Moreover, as new media for preserving knowledge were introduced, less popular works might well not be transferred into them. Once such moment was the invention of what we call the book. Until about 350 A.D., most texts were written on scrolls which had to be unwound as one read, like a microfilm, not with pages like our books. The book with pages, the codex, was probably a Christian invention;[29] it could contain more text, and could be made very small so that it could be easily carried and hidden from the authorities in times of persecution.[30] Many works were never transferred from roll to codex, and so were lost. Much of our present knowledge faces a similar danger: books of the last century and much of this, printed on acid paper, are already disintegrating horribly in overheated libraries in North America, and the knowledge in them will inevitably be lost if they are not recorded in some less perishable medium (the sort of project UNESCO ought to be organising, along with the recording by digital camera of the world's manuscript materials). One fears that the knowledge in many books may soon go the same way, once the CD-Rom becomes the new medium for storing information: at least Classics is fortunate that all texts in ancient Greek were put onto CD-Rom through the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae project, years before even the Bible or Shakespeare became searchable in this manner.

The fate of Aristotle's *Poetics* illustrates several aspects of the process of loss and rediscovery. It lost its second book, which dealt with comedy and with catharsis, at some time in late antiquity, before the remainder was translated into Syriac and then into Arabic in Bagdad in the early tenth century.[31] Umberto Eco, in his novel *The Name of the Rose*,[32]

invented the hypothesis (amusingly plausible in the light of the canon laws cited above) that the book on comedy was deliberately suppressed, because Jesus was supposed never to have laughed and a book on comedy by Aristotle would have been regarded by some clerics as especially dangerous.[33] The truth may be more prosaic: the *Poetics* was arranged as the last item in the collection of Aristotle's logical works (because poetry has a kind of logic, all of its own), and the last few pages in a volume were the most liable to fall out when the binding weakened.[34] Only one copy of the *Poetics*, or at the most two, survived from antiquity to be recopied in the Middle Ages; and neither contained the second book.

Now before the section on comedy and catharsis was lost, someone copied out short extracts from the theory of laughter into a manuscript of Aristophanes, whence it was eventually recopied into a number of Medieval manuscripts; and someone else made a brief, untitled, anonymous summary of the whole book, leaving out all the detail and all the jokes, onto leaves which were bound into a volume of extracts from commentators on Aristotle's logic, composed in the sixth century A.D. A copy of this summary, in a schematic format like a student's notes, survives in a tenth-century manuscript now in Paris, whence it was published in 1839.[35] This was the text for whose authenticity I argued in my notorious book, *Aristotle on Comedy*, published in 1984. My critics have since argued that parts of it are too like Aristotle to be by him - it must be an imposture, they suggest; whereas other parts are too unlike Aristotle to be attributable to him. I think they cannot have it both ways. When the book appeared I was astonished to see that, in *The Name of the Rose*,[36] Eco adapts parts of the same manuscript as the opening of his lost treatise, and still more astonished that, in the scene from the film based on his novel, where Sean Connery (alias William of Baskerville) finally tracks down the lost book on comedy as flames are devouring the library around him, the director used for that book a replica of the very same Parisian manuscript. I reflected, as I watched the flames licking the corner of folio 249 recto, that I must be the only person in the world fully able to appreciate the joke: here was a film based on a novel, both of them fictional, which reconstructed the fate of a manuscript which still existed, and for the authenticity of which I had just advanced what I still feel to be compelling arguments. Eco later told me[37] that, when he was writing his novel, a colleague of his, Benedetto Marzullo, knowing of the publication of 1839, informed him that, if anything of the lost second book survived, the manuscript in Paris was likely to represent it, which was why he adapted it.

Another burned library, a real one this time, provided me with a second means of reconstructing Aristotle's theory of catharsis, and also illustrates the unpredictable nature of academic research. Soon after finishing *Aristotle on Comedy* I was embarrassed to learn, by accident, of an obscure study in which an Italian scholar, just deceased, alleged that a refutation of Aristotle's poetic theory appeared amongst the works of Philodemus, an Epicurean poet and philosopher who was the teacher of Vergil.[38] Philodemus lived at Herculaneum on the bay of Naples, under the shadow - then a benign one - of Mount Vesuvius. He, or his patron, possessed the largest, indeed the only, library to come down to us from classical antiquity. Unfortunately Herculaneum lay directly under the volcano. When Vesuvius suddenly exploded in the famous eruption of A.D. 79, Philodemus' library was covered by superheated mud and carbonised at a temperature calculated at 325 degrees Celsius; a little hotter, and it would have burned entirely, a little cooler and it would not have been carbonised and thereby preserved, being buried under 20 metres of the soft rock called tufa and a further 7 metres of volcanic lava. The library was rediscovered in 1752 during tunnelling for antiquities in the spacious and magnificent Villa of the Papyri, of which the J.Paul Getty Museum near Los Angeles is a skilful reconstruction.[39] The library consisted of perhaps a thousand book-rolls, many of which remain unopened. Conserving them and

opening them are both tasks challenging even to modern technology. The texts are tremendously fragile, like burnt newspaper, with black ink on a black background. The middles of many of the rolls, however, were successfully unrolled by Father Piaggio, a priest employed by the enlightened King Charles III and supported financially by Sir William Hamilton and by George IV as Prince of Wales.[40] Two of the papyri in this library do indeed contain what are unmistakably attacks by Philodemus against Aristotle's literary theory, including his theory of catharsis.

However, one cannot simply sit down and read this material at sight, as I discovered when I first undertook to do so in 1986. In fact, recovering the knowledge in these texts is the most difficult thing I have ever attempted, which is one reason why I'm engaged in it. The papyri are kept in the Biblioteca Nazionale in Naples, in two large rooms full of specially designed steel cases, each of which contains many trays of material. One studies them in a large room with a glass ceiling, designed to let in the maximum light and no cross-currents of air, so that bits do not blow off the edges of the papyri. The summer heat in that room is beyond description. Reading the papyri is a slow process, painful to the eyes; indeed, it has made me think of 'reading' in an entirely new way. The papyri are not flat, but are often heavily creased, buckled and folded: they cannot easily be flattened and stored between glass, like papyri from Egypt, without unacceptable damage. Once unrolled, they were normally cut into sections, glued onto cardboard and mounted on small wooden boards. To read them, one has to tilt them this way and that, so that eventually the light falls on every facet of the surface at the correct angle and one has seen every speck of ink; otherwise the writing can be totally misread. The uneven surfaces mean that photographs like that reproduced here, even when taken in colour and with a Macrolite ring-flash, can give a very misleading impression: shadows and the crossing fibres of the papyrus can easily be misread as letters. Moreover, different layers of the papyrus often stick together, and one can suddenly be looking at a different layer, with just the tiniest crack, invisible on a photograph, to show where one layer ends and that below begins. Only sustained study of the original can avoid such mistakes (although digitised video images of the papyri might well solve the problem of photographing the buckled surface). The process of reading at different angles needs to be repeated several times, as the ink is often at the limits of visibility. Enhancing photographs scanned into a computer with Adobe Photoshop, a programme which enables one to adjust the colours, brightness and contrast, is a valuable help; more useful yet, for the indispensable work of reading the originals, is a powerful new Nikon binocular microscope with superior lenses and a halogen bulb.

What has amazed me about this work is the need for patience, determination and total flexibility of mind about one's own perceptions and theories. Getting others to stare at the traces of letters and tell one what they can see, without of course telling them what it should be, is a valuable safeguard. Working with a partner to take notes also means that one need not take one's eyes away from the microscope; otherwise, it can take a whole minute to find one's place again. A hypothesis that the text contains a given word can totally distort what one sees, unless that hypothesis is correct, in which case it can help one to see it. One's brain has a terrible propensity to join up traces of ink that in fact are not connected. It is humbling to realise how prone we are to err, how often the papyrus says something quite different from what one had hypothesised while away from it.

Sometimes the same text exists in two copies with different lineations, which must be compared with each other. It also takes skill and self-control as one works to keep an eye on, but not to crib one's text from, the nineteenth-century drawings of the papyri which were

made as they were unrolled. These usually turn out to be extraordinarily accurate, when careful work confirms what they show. The papyri must then have been more legible than they are now, even with the best microscopes; the drawings often show more letters than still survive, as the ink and the papyrus slowly but inexorably crumble away. We do not have forever to finish reading this library! But there is nothing more satisfying than the moment when, after hours of frustration, a damaged or excruciatingly faint line of writing finally yields up its sense, sometimes afterwards in the study, sometimes while one looks at it; or when, without being told what should be there, another scholar confirms what one has read oneself; or when one discovers in the papyrus a word which a scholar dead for a hundred years, who never went to Naples and saw only reprints of the old drawings, guessed must once have stood there. This happens so often, in the case of the best scholars like Theodor Gomperz, that it renews my confidence, at the end of an over-sceptical century, that the past can be recovered and that a degree of objectivity can be achieved by careful scholarship in the humanities.

Even when the papyrus is accurately read, with or without the aid of the old drawings, the interpreter's difficulties do not cease. Divining which letters are lost in the frequent holes or at the edges requires time and patience; having the published works of Philodemus, and indeed all of Greek literature, searchable on CD-Rom is an enormous help in filling in the broken words.[41] Often it is only by searching the entire known vocabulary of ancient Greek - easy for the computer - that one can eliminate all other possible readings, and then return to the papyrus to find that in fact it uses the word which one has at last hypothesised. Reconstructing the sense of a whole passage is even harder. Where is the verb? Where is the subject? The whole sense can seem the opposite of what is needed, because one has not realised that the word 'not' is lost in a hole, or that Philodemus began the sentence by saying 'it would be idiotic to suppose that . . .'. Here it is of enormous benefit to present damaged texts in seminars: the combined efforts of a dozen experts, all thinking at once and discussing each others' suggestions, can, like a computer using parallel processing, achieve in an afternoon what it would take an individual longer than a lifetime to puzzle out. Moreover, as in the case of Aristotle's *Poetics*, the scribes who copied these texts found them very difficult and made mistakes, which can be hard to detect and rectify by conjecture. One reason why they found the material so hard is that the technical terminology of literary theory in antiquity became every bit as sophisticated and complex as its modern counterpart; apart from these texts, little of ancient literary theory survives. Different critics could use the same term for different concepts, or invent new ones. This summer I finally read a word found only once elsewhere in the fifty-million-word corpus of Ancient Greek, οJmozhliva. Paradoxically enough, until I found that this occurs in the Septuagint,[42] I had repeatedly failed to read the passage. There is also the problem of establishing whether a given statement belongs to Philodemus or to his opponent. When that is determined, we can begin to ask who the opponent is, since the name is rarely given. Most of the critics mentioned in these texts - Pausimachus, Heracleodorus, Andromenides - are otherwise unknown to history. But in this same passage I was able to restore a well-known name, that of Heraclides of Pontus, a pupil of Plato.[43] These texts fill in the big gap in the development of ancient literary theory between that period and Horace in the Augustan Age, a gap which we need to fill.

The last difficulty I would mention - and all these difficulties have to be tackled at once, not in any particular sequence - is that of establishing in what order many of the fragments belong. This last difficulty has recently been overcome by the Delattre-Obbink method, evolved independently in France and America; I have described this technique elsewhere,[44] and cannot do so here. This new method at last offers the prospect of reconstructing lengthy

book-rolls almost in their entirety. New discoveries continue; following his finds of texts of Lucretius and Ennius, Knut Kleve has just recognised a papyrus of a lost Roman comedy, the *Money-lender* by Caecilius Statius.[45] Moreover, open-cast excavations have recommenced at Herculaneum: next year the Villa of the Papyri itself, which has now been relocated, will at last be brought to light, perhaps with even more texts than were recovered by the eighteenth-century tunnelling.[46] In this field of discovery, there is as much to hope for as there already is to be done.

So what light have these newly rediscovered sources already shed on the dispute between Plato and Aristotle over the nature and purpose of literature, with which I began? Let me briefly remind you of the issues involved. Plato censured epic, tragic and comic poetry for four main reasons. First, literature is an inaccurate guide to knowledge - you cannot learn about good generalship from Homer's *Iliad*. Secondly, Plato held that much literature presents poor role-models for human conduct - Achilles, for instance, ought to have shown more self-control over his anger. Thirdly, literature is an inferior imitation of reality, because of Plato's theory that there exists a transcendent world of Forms, of which our world is a shifting and unstable copy. Lastly, Plato argued that poetry, far from sustaining our intellects, encourages our emotions, which we ought rather to try to repress. Now Aristotle's attitude to the emotions was quite the opposite from that which we might have expected from someone who was the leading scientist of his day: for Aristotle regarded emotion as just as important as intellect in determining action.[47] Even a life devoted to research, which he deemed the type of life that best fulfils our specifically human potential, as animals capable of reason, is in his view a form of action, since happiness is an activity, not a state; and a correct balance in the emotions is essential to attaining the practical wisdom - *phronêsis* - essential to right action. His theory, presented in *Nicomachean Ethics* II-III, runs as follows.

According to Aristotle, human beings need to develop a disposition to feel emotion correctly, i.e. in the proper circumstances and to the right degree; our emotions, combined with our understanding, can then become a guide to right action. Take courage, for instance. Aristotle defines courage as feeling fear to the correct degree. If one felt too much fear, one would never make it across Euston Road; but if one displayed too little respect for the traffic engineers' determination to be unfair to pedestrians, one would end up maimed or dead. Incidentally, this quality, courage, is essential even in scholarship. If we have too much courage, we end up claiming things which are demonstrably wrong; but if we have too little, we risk becoming able only to criticise the errors of others, too fearful of error to think or speak for ourselves.

How, then, do we acquire the ability to act rightly? For Aristotle, we learn to act courageously simply by acting courageously, again and again. Each action we take builds our character; by acting in that way on numerous occasions we acquire a settled disposition to act in that way, a *habit* of action. This circular pattern is, for him, the origin of character; and it involves both emotion and intellect. We need to use our intellects to judge the circumstances surrounding an action, and our judgement about these then shapes our emotional response to it; but our emotional response may then influence the action we decide upon, and the aggregate of our past emotional and intellectual decisions creates our character. Now Plato had held that poetry was not only useless, in terms of what it teaches about the world, but harmful, since it induces us to indulge emotions which should be suppressed.[48] For Aristotle, on the contrary, poetry can help to habituate us to feel the correct emotional responses, and thereby to approach the mid-point between the extremes; this mid-point is where virtue lies. Put differently, poetry can hold up to us patterns of human action, from

which we can learn. Here Aristotle's theory of *mimesis* is crucial: by watching a representation of the actions and sufferings of *others*, we can benefit ourselves, in that we experience emotions which would be harmful if they were based on reality. This applies both to painful feelings like pity and fear in the case of serious genres like tragedy and epic, and to pleasant ones like laughter in the case of non-serious genres like comedy and satire.

We know this from a neglected passage in Aristotle's *Politics*, where he is discussing the place of *mousiké* in education. When Aristotle refers to *mousiké* and to 'songs', he means not 'music' only, but words set to music as well, and hence poetry as well as what we call 'music'; but it has taken a long time, and the discovery of parallels in Philodemus, for scholars to appreciate this essential fact. This is why the passage has been neglected by previous scholars trying to reconstruct Aristotle's literary theory. I quote:

When listening to representations (*mimeseis*), everyone comes to share in the emotion . . . Since *mousike* happens to belong among pleasant things, and virtue is concerned with feeling delight correctly and loving and hating correctly, clearly one should learn, and become habituated to, nothing so much as judging correctly, that is to feeling delight in decent characters and fine actions. Rhythms and songs contain especially close likenesses of the true natures of anger and mildness, bravery, self-restraint and all their opposites, and of the other character-traits: this is clear from the facts - we are moved in our soul when we listen to such things. Habituation to feeling both pain and delight in things that are like [reality] is close to being in the same state regarding reality.[49]

The word 'catharsis' does not appear in this passage. However, two pieces of another papyrus by Philodemus have enabled me to show that this is in fact what Aristotle meant by it. A new reading of the papyrus [50] provides a more reliable text of two fragments in which Philodemus reports Aristotle's theory of catharsis. In the first, he summarises three of Aristotle's tenets. First, "a poet is a representer of a complete action"; second, "poetry is useful with regard to virtue, purifying (*kaqaivrouça*), as we said, the related part <of the mind>"; and third, "each of the arts <aims at?> the best of those things (?) which are naturally within it".[51] These are Aristotelian tenets, but the connection between poetry, virtue and 'purifying the related part of the mind', that is catharsis, is made clear only here. Here is the second, adjacent fragment:

'Folly is present in the wisest of minds, and lack of self-control in the most moderate. Similarly there are fears in brave minds and jealousies in magnanimous ones.'[52]

In Aristotle's moral theory, even those who are generally virtuous can fall into immoderation, and so need catharsis - which is what this fragment implies. Now the name of Aristotle does not appear in these fragments, and it would take courage for a scholar to allege that the theory is his rather than that of a close follower. However, we can with due caution make this claim: Occam's razor specifies that entities are not to be multiplied unnecessarily, and it seems unadventurous, to say the least, to allege that the theory is terribly like Aristotle's but is not his. One can say the same about the anonymous manuscript in Paris, the *Tractatus Coislinianus*, which I argued to be a summary of the lost second book of the *Poetics*. Now this text mentions catharsis, as follows:

'Tragedy tends to reduce the mind's emotions of fear by means of pity and fear, and it tends to have a due proportion of fear . . . There is to be a due modicum of fear in tragedies, and of the laughable in comedies.'

This mysterious pair of statements is clarified by allusions to Aristotelian catharsis in the Neoplatonist philosophers Iamblichus and Proclus:

By observing others' emotions in both comedy and tragedy, we can check our own emotions, make them more moderate and purify them.[53] It has been objected that tragedy and comedy are expelled [from Plato's Republic] illogically, if by means of them one can satisfy the emotions *in due measure* and . . . keep them in a state suitable for education . . . It was this that gave Aristotle and the defenders of these kinds of poetry in his dialogue against Plato most of the grounds for their accusation against him.[54]

Terms like 'moderate' and 'in due measure' are references to the Aristotelian mean, that point at which virtue is attained.

By putting all these fragments together, we can see what Aristotle must have said. The representation in literature of universalised patterns of human action puts us through a process of reason and emotion which leads us towards the correct reaction, a reaction appropriate to the situation presented to us. We see Oedipus kill his father, marry his mother and find out about it. We are appalled, but, as E.R. Dodds showed,[55] we do not blame him in moral terms; understanding Sophocles correctly, we recognise that Oedipus did not know towards whom he was acting when he killed his father and married his mother - indeed, we see that he made every reasonable effort to avoid doing so. A Platonist critic might object that the play ought not to portray incest and parricide, in case watching it leads any of us to imitate those actions. The Aristotelian reply is that, whereas an eight-year-old, if foolishly allowed to handle a pistol, might indeed go off and shoot his father, no normal adult would do so. Instead, an adult is put through an emotional experience which would be extremely harmful if one underwent it in person; we sympathise with Oedipus and so identify with him, and can thereby understand his feelings without ourselves having to do what he did, while at the same time we can watch the play conscious, as spectators, that it is only a play, and that we are *not* Oedipus. This is actually useful: in serving on a jury, as Athenians often did, to judge the guilt of a man who had murdered a relative, someone who had seen the play would know how to discriminate between horror at the deed and the extent of the doer's culpability. Indeed, Aristotle would claim that we benefit from watching the play: our propensities to diverge from the mean in feeling emotions and judging actions are reduced, and our enhanced perceptions can help to improve our capacity for moral judgement and right action. The drama we watch is no fleeting experience; on the contrary, experiencing such appropriate emotional reactions can accustom us to achieve and maintain the proper standard in our moral choices, leading towards the mean in emotional terms and hence to practical wisdom and virtue.

Obviously this theory of Aristotle's is of central importance in the debates about sex and violence on the screen, and about political control of the media and of the educational curriculum. In his remarks about obscenity in comedy (and Greek comedy could be very obscene), Aristotle declares that it should be kept from minors;[56] and he would have said the same about those depictions of violence commonly characterised as 'senseless'.[57] Seeing endless random deaths seems likely to brutalise many young people who find themselves in war-zones; seeing on television repeated representations of such actions, where

there is no morally satisfying explanation of cause and effect, *must* by this theory have a similarly corrupting effect on people too young clearly to distinguish *mimesis* from reality.

I have spoken more today about the processes of finding out new knowledge than about that knowledge itself, because the basis on which we think we know something is more essential than what we know in itself. Gorgias, an older contemporary of Plato, wrote a book paradoxically entitled *On Nature, or On What is Not*, in which he argued three equally paradoxical propositions: first, that nothing exists; secondly, that if anything did exist, we could not understand it; and thirdly, that if we could understand it, we could not explain it to anyone else. Since he was a professional educator, I expect this was meant as a rhetorical *tour de force*; if he really believed any one of these propositions, it is hard to see how he could honestly have continued in his profession. For surely establishing what exists, understanding it and explaining it to others is precisely the essence of education. If we subscribe to any of Gorgias' propositions - and there *are* people in education, or influential upon it, who do accept one or other of them, albeit in some more elaborate, twentieth-century form - we leave open the field to those for whom education is politics by another means, people who think that history not only can, but also should, be rewritten by the victor, that research should produce only those results desired by, and effectively paid for, by its sponsors, and that truth is something to be defined to suit those in power, just as the rulers of Plato's republic are required to propagate a myth to maintain their power - the myth that they were born to be the masters and the others were born to be their servants. It is no coincidence that Plato's rulers are to expel from their state any poets who depict members of the elite in ways that might undermine their claims to power.

Fortunately, as we have seen, this was not the last word on these topics. For Aristotle, literature is a vicarious form of experience, from which we can learn, while at the same time we enjoy it. Like education, art should be an antidote to living only inside our own skin, stranded in our own place and confined to our own century; by voyaging to other lands, conversing in other tongues, and travelling to other centuries we are bound to bring back knowledge that cannot otherwise be found - above all, in the humanities, that knowledge of human nature at which the Greeks excelled. Our society still needs, in short, what classics can offer: the application of thought to civilisation.[58]

The past fifteen years have been difficult for higher education in this country - so much so that the word 'academic', which originated in the name of the first College, that founded by Plato, has come to mean, on the lips of too many journalists, 'irrelevant' rather than 'knowledge-based', and that a public service which already regulated itself with exceptional care has been subjected to further layers of external control and wasteful bureaucracy. These were good years to be teaching in America, and observing America's relative success in providing, for a large proportion of the population, a broad general education in which people have the opportunity to realise their potential; in the two major American universities where I taught throughout this period, some knowledge of the ancient origins of modern civilisation is still valued as an essential basis for all fields of study, including medicine and engineering. Such a system of mass education, properly constructed to foster academic rather than political objectives, could of course still provide at the top the high standards for which British universities in general and classical studies here have been renowned since the war.

During my long absence from this country, classics in particular has been subjected to a ferocious attack by some of Britain's politicians and, alas, some of her educationalists too. My subject found itself between a hammer and an anvil. The hammer has been the so-called

'right' - a right that has conveniently forgotten that money and power are means to an end, not ends in themselves; a right that has forgotten that a country's cultural inheritance is not merely a waste of money, but should be a well-spring for the happiness and cohesion of its citizens; a right that has forgotten that education is the *only* way in which a civilisation enables human beings, as Aristotle would have said, to realise their highest potential as human beings, namely to develop and use their minds.

Among some politicians on the left, meanwhile, classics has suffered from a sadder error, arising from ignorance rather than from vice: the mistaken belief that classics is still a subject only for a narrow wealthy elite, perpetuating imperial nostalgia in the image of Rome and Athens, or inspiring Rupert Brooke to fight on the plains of Troy. Some on the left seem to have forgotten that Latin is the key to most of the languages of Europe, that Greek is the key to the language of science, and that the origins of modern democratic institutions, of freedom of thought and speech, and of higher education itself lie in classical Greece.[59]

All this can, must and *will* change. The resilience of classics, in the face of this attack, has been impressive and heartening. Education must never be the obedient servant of either left or right, or of any one single idea. Our first duty as educators is to form responsible citizens who are not docile followers of some party line, who can and do think for themselves, who are mentally and emotionally agile enough to surmount not merely those situations which some narrow training has led them to anticipate, but even life's totally unexpected challenges.

In a beautiful lyric song, a Greek chorus once expressed exactly the dilemma of civilisation:

'Strange things are many, and no thing is stranger than man . . .  
Man learned language; he learned thought fast as wind; he learned  
feelings that order civilisation; he learned to shun  
the open-skied frosts of sleeping rough, to shun rain's dismal shafts,  
all-ingenious man; with a genius for everything he approaches the future.  
Only from death will he find no avoidance. But he has worked out  
avoidance of diseases beyond resource.  
With resourcefulness of skill, shrewdness beyond expectation,  
he advances some time toward evil, else toward good.  
If he honours the laws of the earth  
and the gods' sworn justice  
he is high in his city; no city has he who  
in joy at boldness lives with evil.'

The words are from Sophocles' *Antigone*, a drama of resistance to authority, resistance to the notion that any arbitrary fiat can conjure out of existence standards of human behaviour handed down by the wisdom of the past. We should be grateful to our predecessors down the millennia that Sophocles' play was still there when this century needed it, to inspire an Anouilh or a Brecht. For the sake of future generations, we must ensure that it will be there for them too.

Richard Janko  
*University College London*

[1] This Inaugural Lecture was delivered at University College London in October 1996, by the kind invitation of the Provost.

[2] *Gen. Anim.* II 6.744a30; *Politics* I 2.1253a10.

[3] *Top.* VI 5.142b25; *Part. anim.* III 10.673a8.

[4] *Works and Days* 252ff., 706ff.

[5] *Olympian* I 36-53.

[6] D.L. IX 1, = 22 B42 D.-K.

[7] D.L. II 12-14.

[8] *The Dunciad Variorum, with the Prolegomena of Scriblerus*, London 1729 (repr. Leeds 1966), with contains a marvellous parody of a philological commentary of its time.

[9] There would have been another victim too, had the 'atheist' Diagoras of Melos, whose views are ascribed to Socrates at *Clouds* 830, not kept away from Athens when he was condemned in 414 B.C.; since he allegedly divulged not only the Eleusinian Mysteries but also the Orphic *logos*, he is a good candidate for the authorship of the Derveni papyrus (see 'The Physicist as Hierophant: Aristophanes, Socrates and the Authorship of the Derveni Papyrus', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, forthcoming 1997).

[10] K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, Vol. I, *The Spell of Plato*, London 1945.

[11] *Republic* II 377b-III 392a.

[12] *Republic* III 398a.

[13] *Poetics* 1.1447a29-b-15, where we must read *toi'ç lovgoiç yiloi'ç h] toi'ç mevтроiç . . . <ajnwvnumoç suppl. Bernays> tugcavnei ou\ça*, and not the text printed in R. Kassel's OCT (1965).

[14] *Poet.* 4.1448b8.

[15] *Poet.* 9.1451a35-b10.

[16] E.g. *Poet.* 7.1451a9-15.

[17] *Poet.* 13.1453a8-17.

[18] For this distinction see *Nicomachean Ethics* V 8.1135b1-25.

[19] *Poet.* 13.1452b30-2.

[20] This is implicit in *Poet.* 5.1449a31-3.

[21] Cf. *Republic* X 606d.

[22] *Poet.* fr. 5 Kassel (though these fragments more probably belong to the *On Poets*).

[23] *Meditations on First Philosophy* I 22-3.

[24] A.S. Hollis, *Callimachus: Hecale*, Oxford 1990, 38-40.

[25] The Ecumenical Synod of 691, meeting in Constantinople, banned drama in general, mainly for this reason. See *Acta Concil. in Trullo*, canon 62, in *Patrologia Graeca* 137 p. 728a Migne, which forbids, on pain of deposition for clergy and excommunication for laity, ta;ç tw'n gunaiwn ojrchvçeiç, kai; pollh;n luvmhn kai; blavbhn ejmpoiei'n dunamevnaç: e[ti mh;n kai; ta;ç ojnovmati tw'n par' "Ellhçi yeudw'ç ojnomaçqevntwn qew'n h] ejx ajndrw'n kai; gunaikw'n ginomevnaç ojrchvçeiç kai; teletavç, katav ti e[qoç palaio;n kai; ajllovtrion tou' tw'n Criçtianw'n bivou, ajpopevmpomeqa: oJrivzonteç mhdevna a[ndra gunaikeivan çtolh;n ejndiduvçkeçqai, h] gunai'ka to;n ajndravçin aJrmovdion: ajlla; mhvte proçwpei'a kwrika; h] çaturika; h] tragika; uJpoduveçqai, mhvte tou' bdeluktou' tou' Dionuvçou o[noma th;n çtafuvlhn ajpoqlivbontaç ejn tai'ç lhnoi'ç ejpiboa'n, mhde; to;n oi\non ejn toi'ç pivqoiç ejpicevontaç gevlwta ejpikinei'n, ajjnoivaç trovpw/ h] mataiovthtoç ta; th'ç daimoniwvdouç plavnhç ejnergou'ntaç. (This is not noted by N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium*, London 1983, 12, 20.) Mime was banned in canon 51, p. 692c Migne: kaqovlou ajpagoreuvei hJ aJgiva au{th çuvnodoç tou;ç legomevnouç mivmouç kai; ta; touvtwn qevatra. The mystery is not the loss of Menander, but the survival of Aristophanes.

[26] *Oratio* 32, pp. 344-80 Foerster.

[27] *Conf.* I 16, III 2.

[28] H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum*, Cambridge 1953, xvi-xxiv.

[29] C.H. Roberts, 'The Codex', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 40 (1954).

[30] As witness the tiny codex of Mani in Cologne (*P. Colon.* inv. 4780); see L. Koenen and C. Römer, *Der Kölner Mani-Kodex*, Bonn 1985, and E.G. Turner, *Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World*, ed. 2 by P.J. Parsons, *BICS Suppl.* 46 (London 1987), 129 with Pl. 83.

[31] On the history of this text see my *Aristotle on Comedy*, London 1984, 63-6.

[32] *Il Nome della rosa*, Rome 1980; trans. W. Weaver, New York 1983.

[33] See pp. 473-7 of the English translation.

[34] See *Aristotle on Comedy* 89.

[35] MS Parisinus Coislinianus graecus 120; the text was first published by J.A. Cramer, *Anecdota Graeca e codicibus manuscriptis Bibliothecae Regiae Parisiensis*, Oxford 1839, I 403-6.

[36] P. 468 of the English translation.

[37] In New York, October 1984.

[38] F. Sbordone, 'La poetica di Filodemo', *Maia* 36 (1984) 17-19, referring to *P. Herc.* 207, which he had edited in 'Il quarto libro del peri; poihtmavtwn di Filodemo', *Ricerche sui papiri ercolanesi* I, Naples 1969 (the target of Philodemus' critique is in fact Aristotle's *On Poets*). I have since reedited this text (*Cronache Ercolanesi* 21 (1991) 5-65).

[39] See J.J. Deiss, *Herculaneum: Italy's Buried Treasure*, Malibu 1989, 60-82.

[40] Cf. M. Capasso, *Manuale di papirologia ercolanese*, Lecce 1991, 87-116; I. Jenkins and K. Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and his Collection*, London 1996, 42-6.

[41] I am grateful to T. Brunner and W. Johnson of the TLG Project for allowing my project to use the uncorrected texts of Philodemus, which have not yet been released on their CD-Rom.

[42] *Mac.* 4.13.25; the word is now also in Philodemus, *On Poems* I, *P. Herc.* 1074a fr. 5b col. ii 10-11.

[43] His name is also read at *P. Herc.* 1074a fr. 3b col. ii 4.

[44] See D. Obbink (ed.), *Philodemus and Poetry*, Oxford 1995, 69-73.

[45] Now published in *Cronache Ercolanesi* 26 (1996) 1-14.

[46] See M. Gigante, A. De Simone et al., 'Lo Scavo della Villa dei Papiri', to appear in *Cronache Ercolanesi* 27 (1997). It is hoped that the means will be found to prolong the excavations beyond December 1997.

[47] See W.W. Fortenbaugh, *Aristotle on Emotion*, London 1975.

[48] *Republic* X 605d-606d.

[49] *Politics* VIII.5.1339b42-1340a27. The translations which follow are from *Aristotle: Poetics*, Indianapolis 1987, where justifications for them will be found in the notes.

[50] *P. Herc.* 1581; this is from the start of Philodemus, *On Poems* V, as was shown in 'Philodemus' *On Poems* and Aristotle's *On Poets*', *Cronache Ercolanesi* 21 (1991) 5-65, at 59-63.

[51] Frag. I in M.L. Nardelli, 'La catarsi poetica nel *PHerc.* 1581', *Cronache Ercolanesi* 8 (1978) 96-103.

[52] Frag. II Nardelli.

[53] Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries* I 11.

[54] Proclus, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, p. 49 Kroll.

[55] 'On misunderstanding the *Oedipus Rex*', *Greece and Rome* 13 (1966) 37-49.

[56] *Politics* VII 7.1336b3-19.

[57] Cf. his condemnation of deliberate, knowing violence between *philo*i as *miarovn* (*Poet.* 13.1452b34-6).

[58] The allusion to Housman is intentional.

[59] In particular, the dangers to academic freedom resulting from the abolition in 1988 of tenure for established academic staff are amply proved by the climate of fear and intimidation which undoubtedly affects some British colleges and universities, and which is almost unheard of in the U.S. In such a situation, the only safeguards are courageous protest, collective solidarity and a Bill of Rights to protect freedom of expression.

---

## **CLASSICS AT BRITISH UNIVERSITIES, 1996-97: STATISTICS**

*Geoffrey Eatough*

The figures need little comment this year. If we look at Table A, the number of All Honours Students in Classics Departments is very much the same as last year both for individuals and for Full Time Equivalents (FTEs, the figure in brackets). There has been little movement overall for All Students in Classics Departments, though a more significant downward shift in the FTE figure. Staff in Classics Departments have drifted upwards slightly. The net effect of these minor shifts has been to produce a more noticeable drop in the Overall Staff/Student ratio, something which one would not expect to be tolerated in these days of financial restraints. The drop may however be more apparent than real, since there are various ways of calculating staff, because of part-time, temporary or shared appointments, and it also becomes increasingly difficult to track down the large numbers of students who may receive some teaching within a Classics department. One department has self-confessedly given up the attempt; other institutions either run unusually tidy departments, or they too do not have the energy to track down all their students.

In Table B, where the Honours Students are analysed in the broad bands of what are still thought of as linguistic and non-linguistic courses, though this demarcation will not hold in some institutions, both SH and JH students in Classics, Greek and Latin have declined, but unalarmingly. The number of SH students in SH Classical Studies, Ancient History and Archaeology has declined, but the more important FTE figure, more important if one is having regard for the financial implications, has gone up. There is also a rise in both figures, that is actual persons and FTEs, in Classical Studies, Ancient History and Archaeology (CSAHA) Joint Honours. If one looks back over the last ten years CSAHA Joint Honours has been the category where there has on the whole been persistent, steady growth, and indeed one could say the same of the CSAHA Single Honours, since the 1994 figure looks increasingly anomalous.

Table C gives finer detail. The suspicious figures in both Single and Joint Honours are in Archaeology. The Single Honours figure could well be unique in the history of our statistics, since the FTE figure is the same as the number of actual people taking the subject. What makes this more noteworthy is that there has been a considerable drop from 1995 in the figure of students taking SH Archaeology, but the FTE figures are virtually the same, a statistical lesson in the value of FTEs, but also on the probable unreliability of some figures. JH Archaeology also declines. Given however the buoyancy of Archaeology nationwide, which must include a good deal of Classical Archaeology, these figures are indicators of the difficulties of identifying or extracting figures in Classical Archaeology. In Table C, which enables one to pass over Archaeology, and Classical Studies which is in a steady state, one can see that the real growth in these non-linguistic subjects is in the category labelled Ancient History, SH and JH. Some of the growth however this year in these categories is due to the reforming statistician of last year who eliminated a considerable number of Ancient Historians from his statistics. He has so to speak called them into existence again. I prefer correspondents who are clearly thinking about their figures. Their figures are more reliable, and only a dull person would say that, if he was right this year, then he was wrong last. Even so I might agree that an organisation such as ours can only afford one or two people who think, certainly in any one year.

One institution has this year refused to send in its figures. The person who speaks on their behalf is emphatically dubious about the value of the exercise. I have pointed out the value of the exercise, since we have in the past been able to help departments in distress, and in one instance the whole subject which was under threat in one of our European neighbouring countries. We have in a previous time had to live with what we thought of as a major department not sending in its figures. I have in the recent case simply entered the figures from last year. It is preferable at this stage to do this rather than to make hypotheses, even if one could reasonably hypothesise.

The basis of these figures, the individual institutional returns, would in some cases offer the most interesting analysis. I simply note, because the evidence shows up so clearly on the computer screen, that the remnants of three once thriving departments, one of which to my knowledge was unable to die because vast numbers of students from other departments simply wanted to do Classical Studies, have finally ceased sending in returns. One hears of other departments under pressure, but at the same time notices the subject threatening to emerge in places where we did not suspect that there was a university institution. The emergence of new centres of learning has caused chaos in some of the main stream subjects which have never known the horrors of rationalisation. Classics, perhaps because of its position in the oldest universities, is for the moment, taken as a whole, fairly stable. It may not always remain so, as institutions or departments battle for survival.

Geoffrey Eatough

*University of Wales, Lampeter*

---

**TABLE A**

	<b>All Hons students in Classics depts.</b>	<b>All students in Classics depts.</b>	<b>UGC figure for Hons. students in Class.</b>	<b>Staff in Classics depts.</b>	<b>Overall Staff/ Student</b>	<b>1st yr. Hons. students</b>	<b>UCAS total admissions in Class.</b>
<b>1986</b>	3032	6415	1671*	354.6	9.3	1059	567
	(2153.2)	(3291.3)				(684.2)	
<b>1987</b>	3287	6284	1699*	334.3	9.9	1276	557
	(2258.4)	(3301.9)				(753)	
<b>1988</b>	3117	6142	1157	326.5	10.0	1052	591
	(2232.4)	(3276.6)	1680*			(700.5)	
<b>1989</b>	3740	7396	1240	353.5	10.6	1419	698
	(2534)	(3750.3)	1782*			(865.1)	
<b>1990</b>	3935	7378	1329	355.7	11.4	1443	737
	(2744.1)	(4049.1)	1869*			(911.9)	
<b>1991</b>	3998	8206	1466	348.3	12.4	1437	813
	(2970.6)	(4306.1)	2006*			(1011.5)	
<b>1992</b>	4649	8911	1638	347.4	14.2	1692	
	(3445.6)	(4924.7)	2178*			(1194.7)	
<b>1993</b>	5214	9549	1790	351.8	15.1	1939	659
	(3848.3)	(5316.1)				(1338.5)	
<b>1994</b>	5731	9731	2310§	378.6	14.4	2168	669
	(4010.8)	(5445.4)				(1340.2)	
<b>1995</b>	5606	9356	2420§	361.2	14.7	2152	643
	(3804.3)	(5317.1)				(1287.9)	
<b>1996</b>	5647	9269	2552§	364.5	14.0	2122	
	(3812.3)	(5095)				(1271.7)	
<b>1997</b>	5762	9219	2596§	356	14.9	2109	999
	(4006.4)	(5288.6)				(1350.6)	

	[including	16616		363			
	OU figures]	(6252.1)					
<b>1998</b>	5610	9878	2678§	350.7	14.7	2071	1012
	(3898.3)	(5148)				(1290.6)	
	[including	16610					
	OU figures]	(6118.6)					
<b>1999</b>	5869	8882		342.7	15.3	2275	1012
	(4120.9)	(5233.4)				(1405.4)	
	[including	18922					
	OU figures]	(6961.4)					
<b>2000</b>	5499	8665		360.3	13.9	2125	
	(3802.7)	(4996.3)				(1361.8)	
	[including	16634		370.3			
	OU figures]	(6475.3)					

\*It was considered that through a change of practice a substantial body of students were being miscategorised in the official statistics and an attempt was made over the years to calculate what could be considered the proper figure. It seems best on reflection to present the official figure, even if it is unfair, in its simplicity.

§These are figures supplied by the Higher Education Statistics Agency for student enrolments at all publicly funded HE institutions in the UK for subject code Q8 Classics.

**TABLE B**

	<b>Classics, Greek, Latin</b>	<b>Classics, Greek, Latin</b>	<b>Class. Stds., Anc. Hist., Archaeology</b>	<b>Class. Stds., Anc. Hist., Archaeology</b>
	<b>SH</b>	<b>JH</b>	<b>SH</b>	<b>JH</b>
<b>1986</b>	1187	276	819	750
	(1045.6)	(138.1)	(623.4)	(346.1)
<b>1987</b>	1327	211	1030	717
	(1136.8)	(101.9)	(684.9)	(334.8)
<b>1988</b>	1231	224	779	883
	(1069.7)	(107.3)	(647.5)	(398.9)

<b>1989</b>	1253	251	1057	1179
	(1101.1)	(124.7)	(799.9)	(508.4)
<b>1990</b>	1256	290	1148	1241
	(1175)	(139.2)	(926.4)	(503.5)
<b>1991</b>	1278	288	1416	1016
	(1199.8)	(135.3)	(1162.9)	(472.6)
<b>1992</b>	1294	328	1648	1379
	(1210.1)	(153.7)	(1472.6)	(609.2)
<b>1993</b>	1345	269	1813	1787
	(1263.6)	(139.2)	(1629.7)	(815.8)
<b>1994</b>	1335	307	2370	1719
	(1197.9)	(148)	(1888.5)	(776.4)
<b>1995</b>	1234	323	2099	1950
	(1162.2)	(139)	(1661.1)	(842)
<b>1996</b>	1165	299	2011	2172
	(1098.1)	(129.7)	(1703.9)	(880.6)
<b>1997</b>	1243	263	2207	2049
	(1158.5)	(117.8)	(1822.3)	(907.8)
<b>1998</b>	1241	333	2001	2035
	(1181.4)	(155)	(1710.6)	(851.3)
<b>1999</b>	1178	298	2375	2018
	(1073.7)	(119.5)	(2036.2)	(891.5)
<b>2000</b>	1109	219	2068	2103
	(1019.4)	(96.8)	(1823.9)	(862.6)

**TABLE C**

	SINGLE HONOURS						JOINT HONOURS					
	C	G	L	CS	AH	ARC	C	G	L	CS	AH	ARC
<b>199 2</b>	1160	12	166	854	712	82	63	42	223	548	713	118
	(1063.6 )	(12.0 )	(134.5 )	(786.5)	(609.9 )	(76.2)	(33.2 )	(19.1 )	(101.4 )	(257.5 )	(288.7 )	(63)
<b>199 3</b>	1193	21	131	970	761	82	47	28	194	604	1063	120
	(1134.1 )	(14.7 )	(114.8 )	(867.6)	(682.7 )	(79.4)	(31.5 )	(13.7 )	(94.0)	(291.3 )	(464.0 )	(60.5 )
<b>199 4</b>	1124	50	161	1173	974	223	76	39	192	813	768	138
	(1065.1 )	(22.3 )	(110.5 )	(982.4)	(778.4 )	(127.7 )	(53.2 )	(11.9 )	(82.9)	(396.2 )	(325.8 )	(54.4 )
<b>199 5</b>	1133	19	82	1070	791	238	64	54	205	912	939	99
	(1071.7 )	(14.1 )	(76.4)	(925.1)	(649.9 )	(86.1)	(34.2 )	(19.5 )	(85.3)	(441.0 )	(347.9 )	(53.1 )
<b>199 6</b>	1063	22	80	1121	809	81	72	43	184	885	1246	41
	(1009.9 )	(17.7 )	(70.5)	(921.6)	(701.3 )	(81)	(35.9 )	(14.3 )	(79.5)	(430.3 )	(433.3 )	(17)
<b>199 7</b>	1163	16	64	1226	931	50	56	37	170	762	1230	57
	(1087.7 )	(13)	(57.8)	(1013.3 )	(759)	(50)	(28)	(13.9 )	(75.9)	(356.4 )	(530)	(21.4 )
<b>199 8</b>	1078	54	109	1038	807	156	93	67	173	890	1022	123
	(1031.3 )	(49)	(101.1 )	(897.8)	(712.6 )	(100.2 )	(47.6 )	(32.1 )	(75.3)	(401)	(405.3 )	(45)
<b>199 9</b>	1072	24	82	1353	933	89	54	84	160	729	1159	70
	(1000.6 )	(15.4 )	(57.7)	(1107.9 )	(844.3 )	(84)	(27.2 )	(21.2 )	(71.1)	(353.1 )	(487.7 )	(50.7 )
<b>200 0</b>	1039	17	53	1179	791	98	53	30	136	627	1180	216
	(953.4)	(17)	(49)	(1066.9 )	(685.2 )	(71.8)	(26)	(11.9 )	(58.9)	(292.4 )	(497.8 )	(72.4 )

	<b>OTHER</b>										
	<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>CS</b>	<b>AH</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>BG</b>	<b>BL</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>PG</b>	<b>TM</b>
<b>199 2</b>	55	125	179	1259	1009	38	256	382	501	348	110
	(11.7 )	(42.7 )	(59.4 )	(375.7)	(291.1 )	(11.7 )	(61.7)	(96.8)	(139.9 )	(306.6 )	(81.8)
<b>199 3</b>	37	139	219	1484	640	93	257	375	560	364	167
	(18.3 )	(40.5 )	(60.3 )	(428.0)	(168.4 )	(25.5 )	(49.1)	(79.7)	(140.8 )	(317.8 )	(139.4 )
<b>199 4</b>	24	135	195	1093	649	133	251	389	542	408	187
	(19.5 )	(35.9 )	(56.2 )	(293.3)	(180.8 )	(39.6 )	(48.4)	(95.7)	(142.3 )	(350.8 )	(172.1 )
<b>199 5</b>	25	107	134	1079	549	94	208	356	608	445	145
	(17.3 )	(29.1 )	(44.7 )	(271.2)	(159.1 )	(26.1 )	(44.7)	(79.5)	(164.8 )	(395.5 )	(125.1 )
<b>199 6</b>	19	96	144	852	640	56	228	330	646	452	159
	(15.9 )	(25.4 )	(42.4 )	(196.8)	(160.5 )	(18.1 )	(53.3)	(84.7)	(163.4 )	(378.2 )	(144)
<b>199 7</b>	12	50	126	2303	492	142	790	449	5917	381	192
	(7.3)	(12.9 )	(29.2 )	(769.1)	(124)	(32.7 )	(219.4 )	(157.9 )	(403.8 )	(327.1 )	(162.3 )
<b>199 8</b>	46	45	84	2568	296	63	773	314	1010	555	246
	(18.9 )	(9.5)	(19)	(945.3)	(78.8)	(17.2 )	(181.2 )	(83.2)	(216)	(465)	(186.2 )
<b>199 9</b>	41	98	109	8865*	249	121	665*	1211*	992	534	168
	(18.1 )	(23.1 )	(27.4 )	(1431.6 )	(75.8)	(32.4 )	(148.1 )	(286.6 )	(202.3 )	(449.5 )	(145.6 )
<b>200 0</b>	9	48	105	7449*	318	140	626*	1206*	495	420	319

	(6.7)	(20.4 )	(32.9 )	(1354.8 )	(75.3)	(37.8 )	(133.6 )	(269.6 )	(133.6 )	(363.1 )	(244.8 )
--	-------	------------	------------	--------------	--------	------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------

\* figures marked with an asterisk include Open University figures.

Geoffrey Eatough  
*University of Wales, Lampeter*

## **Research Assessment Exercise 1996**

### **REPORT OF PANEL 57:**

#### **Classics, Ancient History, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies**

We hope it will be of some interest to colleagues, and particularly to our subject associations, if we report our experience of the recent Exercise.

## **1. The background**

### **(a) Selection of Panel Members**

Subject associations were invited to suggest names to the Funding Councils. The aim was to cover as far as possible the range of specialisms included under Classics, Ancient History, Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, to achieve a reasonable geographical spread and to ensure some continuity with the previous Exercise. The Panel that was eventually appointed (R.M. Beaton, A.M. Cameron, C. Carey, J.K. Davies, P.E. Easterling, H.M. Hine, A. Morpurgo Davies, J.S. Richardson, R.W. Sharples, B.A. Sparkes) was drawn entirely from names put forward by the constituencies. Of these nine, three (Beaton, Easterling and Richardson) had served in 1992 and the same Chair (Easterling) was appointed for both Exercises.

### **(b) The timetable**

Criteria were formulated in accordance with the Funding Councils' guidelines and published in the autumn of 1995. After receiving submissions from 27 institutions we met in early July 1996 to divide up the reading of publications, to devise grading systems for published work and for other aspects of the submissions, particularly Forms RA5 and RA6, and to consider which publications should be evaluated by specialist advisers or members of other Panels. By mid-September it was possible to collate and discuss the results of the reading process and to arrive at some provisional grades; the final decisions were made in October 1996.

## **(c) Procedures**

(i) All cited works were read by one or more Panel members, apart from a relatively small proportion of items sent to other Panels or to a specialist adviser. All Panel members read the full submission for each institution. (ii) In accordance with the directions of the Funding Councils, Panel members were not present for the consideration of any institution in which they had registered a major interest, and details relating to those institutions were not recorded in any documentation available to them. (iii) All discussion was open, and decisions were arrived at by consensus or by open voting, mainly straw polls.

## **(d) Grading**

We had been advised by the Funding Councils that our scoring of individual publications should use a different system of grades from the 1-5\* rating intended for whole submissions; we therefore devised a matrix for evaluating publications which would help us to take systematic account of the scholarly competence, imaginative range, and contribution to the field, of each piece of work. As for the number of works cited by each individual, we interpreted the official wording ('up to four') as giving us some flexibility, e.g. in the case of young members of staff at the beginning of their research careers or of established scholars who had published a single highly significant work based on many years of preparation. A number of the cited items fell outside our guidelines (e.g. the editing of a collection of papers which did not include a contribution by the editor); these therefore did not receive a score, but in some cases they could be considered under evidence for research culture or more general promotion of the subject.

The rest of each submission was evaluated under the following headings: the quantity and quality of post-graduate students, the success of departments in attracting grants, the standing of their members as indicated by external judgements, and the evidence, so far as it could be evaluated, for the active development of a research culture, for the use of available resources to create a favourable environment for research, and for strategic planning for the future. The aim was to apply the same criteria to each institution without using any quantitative scoring system. We tried to avoid penalising small departments for being small and to give credit to departments which took a serious interest in the development of young staff. We also gave weight to the many forms of service to scholarship, such as editorial work, reviewing, lexicography and the collection and publication of source materials, which are the necessary underpinning of all academic work.

The task was a complex one, in that we were required to balance two different kinds of evidence: on the one hand the 'snapshot' of work published during a limited period, and on the other the more diverse factors affecting the conduct of research in each institution. We also had to find a way of applying the distinction between national and international standards of excellence, as set out in the official rating scale. In disciplines like ours, where most research is carried out in an international context, the distinction is not easy to draw, but we tried to follow the official definitions as precisely as possible without resorting to a mechanical scoring system.

## **(e) The working of the evaluation process**

It was easier than in 1992 to obtain copies of out-of-the-way items from institutions, and it was a great help not to have to assess unpublished material. Bibliographical details were on the whole accurate, and in general the submissions were extremely professional; but some time was wasted in pursuit of false references. Occasionally there was some doubt as to whether the date of a work's publication was actually earlier than 31 March 1996. Some adjustments to categories of staff had to be made in the light of the Audit of submissions. The Panel did not regret having to read all the cited works, but within the time limits this was an arduous undertaking, and if there had been many more submissions it would have been impossible.

---

## **2. The outcome**

(a) Like our predecessors in 1992, we have found that research in all our fields in British universities is in a remarkably flourishing state. Standards remain high, and the publications that we have seen compare very favourably with work published in our subjects from other parts of the world. There is also a great deal of productive activity: conferences, seminars, editorial work on a larger scale than ever before. Some of this can be attributed to the effects of the RAE, particularly the unfreezing of some posts, improvements in the provision of leave, and the stimulus given to some older scholars to resume independent or collaborative research. Collaboration between researchers in different subjects and across institutions is also having a positive effect: there is far less isolation of small groups than in the past, and departments are being encouraged to think strategically about research as a matter of course.

(b) Although we can see a number of good effects directly flowing from the periodic scrutiny of research, we are anxious about some of the broader trends in academic life which the evaluation process seems to have accentuated. Some examples:

(i) There has been a general increase in the volume of publication, entailing a good deal of repetition and overlap in individual submissions. This is not always prompted by a desire for self-advertisement: the trend towards the publication of conference proceedings makes overlap less and less easy for even the most scrupulous scholar to avoid. Publishers have expressed their anxieties about intense pressure to meet RAE deadlines, leading in some cases to reduction in the quality of publications.

(ii) If research is periodically assessed, the period of assessment is liable to become the engine that drives policy-making, particularly in appointments (encouraging 'games-playing' or 'buying bibliographies'), in the choice of projects (favouring short-term over long-term research), and in the development of young staff (giving them less space for improving their scholarly range and for acquiring teaching and administrative experience without exploitation).

(iii) As all kinds of new administrative procedures have been introduced, and the need for special funding of research projects and research leave is becoming more widely felt in the Humanities, the volume of paperwork has hugely increased, particularly for senior

academics, in writing references and evaluating applications, taking part in formal and informal assessment, etc., often without significant secretarial support. All members of departments who are committed to a generous definition of 'good citizenship' and believe in the importance (e.g.) of promoting their subjects' interests in the wider community, or of supporting their colleagues in secondary education, find themselves torn by conflicting demands on their time.

(iv) All this - publication, paperwork, monitoring procedures (particularly time-consuming in relation to teaching and administration) - creates an atmosphere of strain in academic life which is liable to endanger creativity. Universities, after all, are extremely disciplined institutions: academics work within highly regulated organisational and financial structures, and their lives follow an orderly round of teaching, examinations and meetings that could become oppressive if they did not have their 'own work' in which to express their freedom and creativity - and to reflect these qualities in their teaching and contacts with students. Any system that threatens to remove intellectual freedom is bound to have bad effects on quality - certainly on the quality of life - in the long run.

---

### **3. The future**

We hope our subject associations will take the opportunity to look carefully, not only at the outcome in terms of grades awarded, but also at changing patterns in our subject areas which may or may not be related to the effects of the assessment process.

#### **(a) Statistics**

We suggest that it is worth gathering information about the number of posts in our fields that have been on offer each year, to see how far they are affected by the timing of the RAE (it seems, for example, that last academic year there were far more openings than this year, but it is probably too early to identify a trend).

#### **(b) Changing patterns in research**

The development of the Open University as a research centre illustrates a trend that will surely develop; distance learning, the recruitment of mature students and the increased use of IT resources will bring changes in some long-established patterns. Shifts of emphasis in current work are also worth noting, e.g. the strong interest in the culture of Late Antiquity, in neo-Latin literature, in reception studies and in social and economic history.

#### **(c) Quality assessment**

Given that the total resources allocated to particular subject areas remain constant, we ought perhaps to be asking for a different model for dividing them between institutions. Would there be an advantage, if assessment is here to stay (and once a grading system has been invented, there will always be pressure from up-and-coming institutions to ask for review), in looking for a much simpler approach? Could departments put forward what they judge the

single best item (or say, the best 50 pages) that each member has produced in a given period? Alternatively, each researcher could nominate up to four publications, indicating the best c.50 pages (e.g. a couple of chapters, or two separate articles) for panel members to read. Another possibility would be to reduce the number of works assessed from four to two, without reducing the period covered by the Assessment Exercise.

But these are relatively minor suggestions, and it is worth thinking about the future in broader terms. Since the current assessment processes are extremely costly, in time as well as money, and many academics now feel that the values underlying the whole university system are seriously threatened, we should like to urge the Funding Councils to undertake a more radical review, which would start from a consideration of the kind of Higher Education system that is wanted and would explore the possibility of making a holistic approach to assessment, to include both teaching (TQA) and research (RAE). It would be a great waste of resources if assessment itself were to undermine the very high standards of professionalism and the generosity towards students that have traditionally characterised most academic departments.

P.E. Easterling  
*Newnham College, Cambridge*

---

## Language Teaching At University

### Some Further Thoughts

#### *Bob Lister*

D R Langslow's thought-provoking article in the 1996 *CUCD Bulletin* raised a number of important questions concerning language teaching at university, some of which I would like to explore in the light of my own teaching experience, first as a teacher in the maintained sector and more recently as a language teacher in the University of Cambridge Faculty of Classics. I would like to consider in particular the following questions: what level of language competence can we expect of students on arrival at university, what level of language do we expect of them by the end of their first year and how can we help them advance towards that level? Throughout, discussion will be limited to language competence in Latin in relation to students entering university with 'A' level Latin already behind them.

To the first question above there is no simple answer, even in an institution such as Cambridge where almost all the students have gained an 'A' grade in 'A' level Latin. As Langslow points out, "even an 'A' grade in 'A' level Latin is, in itself, of very limited value as evidence of successful learning of the Latin language". Even if there were only one Latin 'A' level syllabus, with no options to make the 'A' level more literary or more linguistic, one could not easily define the level of competence that candidates taking the examination were being expected to achieve. As it is, teachers can choose to enter their pupils for any one of three (soon to become two) different Latin 'A' level syllabuses, each with its own slightly different aims and objectives - though these are in the process of being standardised by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority. And not all the differences are slight: one board, for instance, permits the use of dictionaries in the unseen paper.

The picture is further complicated by the wide diversity of Latin provision now offered in schools. Before the 1960s, it could be safely assumed that students had studied Latin for at least seven years before coming up to university. Now there is a vast gap between the traditional pattern of provision still available to some pupils in the independent sector and the minimal provision offered in those comprehensive schools which have managed to retain Latin in some form or other in spite of the pressures of the National Curriculum and tight financial constraints.

At one end of the spectrum there are the boys (and I mean *boys* - this pattern is confined almost exclusively to boys' preparatory schools) who start Latin at seven, know their Kennedy from start to finish by the time they take Common Entrance, take their Latin GCSE a year early (and still find it much too easy) and in the sixth form read a broad range of authors over and above the prescribed 'A' level texts. At the other end, there are the boys and girls who take their GCSE after three years of studying Latin outside the timetable, are justifiably delighted when they gain an 'A' grade, and spend most of the sixth form desperately trying to plug the gaps in their knowledge caused by the speed with which they have had to rush through the GCSE syllabus. Through no fault of their teachers, these students are very unlikely to have read more than the minimum number of 'A' level texts, and may well focus on verse authors such as Virgil and Ovid rather than prose authors such as Cicero or Tacitus, because of the linguistic difficulties associated with the latter.

Given this wide variation among first year students in terms of their previous experience, and taking into account variations in aptitude and motivation, one can see how difficult it is to develop an effective and accessible programme to raise the general level of language competence. And what level of language competence are the first year students expected to achieve in Cambridge? During the first year they are required to read the equivalent of seven 'A' level set texts in Latin, and a similar number in Greek (unless they are on the Intensive Greek programme). For each prescribed text there is a lecture course - which may be supplemented at a college level by specific supervisions - but students are generally expected to read, i.e. translate and come to an initial understanding of, the texts on their own. Therefore the level of language competence expected of these students with regard to their preparation of set texts might be defined as that of fully independent readers, by which I mean readers who are able to read, understand and appreciate a range of classical authors without the excessive use of dictionary and/or reference grammar (to adapt one of the definitions quoted by Langslow). This represents a significant step-up for students who have received the minimal school provision I outlined above, not necessarily in terms of the difficulty of the authors (though Horace and Tacitus, for instance, are likely to cause problems) but in terms of the sheer quantity of texts to be read and the degree of independence with which they must be tackled.

It was with these students in mind that I set up a Latin consolidation course to help bridge the gap between school and university and give them the means to become more independent as readers. In an attempt to provide the students with a fresh way into material that was already familiar to many of them (and in line with Langslow's argument that developing students' active competence in Latin can be the quickest way to develop secure recognition skills), I have built the course round a series of cloze exercises requiring the students to use active recall of Latin syntax and accidence (but not vocabulary) to revise key points of grammar, starting with sessions on basic language principles such as adjectival agreement and the sequence of tenses before moving on to all the main constructions they are likely to meet in the course of their first year reading.

Each week the students are given 15-20 pairs of sentences on a specific point of grammar. They are also given a sheet with a brief explanation of the grammar point in question, which they can keep for later reference. Each pair of sentences comprises an English sentence followed by a Latin translation with key endings omitted, presented in the following format:

*The king was advised not to attack the city.*

rex mone \_\_\_ \_\_\_ urb \_\_\_ oppugn \_\_\_.

While these exercises are obviously too easy for students who have already done prose composition at school, they provide a reasonably demanding challenge for most other students. Not only do such exercises provide the student with constant reinforcement of basic grammar within a systematic framework, they also provide the lecturer with a valuable assessment tool. Consider, for example, the following three answers:

**Example:** *We saw the farmer working.*

agricol \_\_\_ labor \_\_\_ vid \_\_\_.

**Answers:** agricolam laborare vidimus.

agricolam laborans videmus.

agricolam laborantos vidimus.

The first answer is not absolutely right, nor is it absolutely wrong: at least the words make a possible Latin sentence. The second answer might be the work of a careless student who knows that the present participle is required and knows what it looks like but does not remember to make it agree with the noun (*videmus* for *vidimus* or *videbamus* also suggests carelessness). The third answer is perhaps the most worrying, partly because its author clearly has confused ideas about how the present participle declines, and partly because *-os* seems such a surprising accusative singular ending. In all three cases, of course, further evidence will be needed before one can make a more precise assessment of the quality of the individual's work.

In order to make the teaching materials more flexible - and therefore of greater benefit to a wider range of students - I have experimented with an electronic version of the cloze exercises, providing the students with exactly the same information on each topic, and with exactly the same examples to complete. Once they have filled in the endings on the screen, they can check for errors: a click of the mouse reveals the correct endings and highlights any mistakes they have made. And at any point they can receive a record of their score.

From the students' point of view there are a number of advantages in having the materials on computer. They can choose which grammar point to revise, where to revise it, and when to revise it; they can enter their answers without any fear of being exposed or humiliated, however bizarre their answers may be; they can receive regular feedback; they can return to exercises at a later date to see for themselves whether they have improved (or not!). But there is a major drawback: the computer can only tell the students *what* they got wrong, not *why* they got it wrong. It will be some time before computers can carry out the sort of sensitive and precise assessment we considered above.

Can cloze exercises contribute to students becoming fully independent readers of Latin? Students for their part have indicated in formal evaluations that the consolidation course has made them feel more confident of their knowledge of Latin grammar. Certainly, the fact that cloze tests require students to make active use of Latin accidence does improve their ability to make effective use of dictionaries and grammar books, and this in turn should improve the speed with which they can read their texts. Finally, at the most basic level, all the students taking the consolidation course develop a greater awareness of the importance attached to the ends of words in Latin, which is no bad thing when it comes to studying an inflected language.

Bob Lister  
*University of Cambridge*

---

## **TRANSLATION: future imperative?**

*Lorna Hardwick*

My starting point is the optimistic assumption that the study of Classical subjects is entering a new stage of development. This is a healthy state of affairs yet also brings the need to look carefully at the implications of changing patterns of recruitment and learning. Underlying these, there are also changes in the way that the ancient world is perceived, both inside and outside universities. There are also exciting possibilities in the mediation into teaching of the results of new research, which have in a variety of ways both enhanced the content of the undergraduate curriculum and challenged some of its traditional orthodoxies and priorities. I suggest that one further nettle should now be grasped. The time has come to consider more systematically how the theory and the practical aspects of translation may best be addressed in undergraduate courses. The issue is conditioned by three main aspects of our current condition - students' study of classical languages; perspectives on the relationship between ancient and modern cultures; the nature of the relationship between Classical subjects and those of other disciplines.

## **Current trends in language study**

An increasing percentage of students entering universities to read Classical subjects does so without A level passes in Greek and Latin. This has been recognised by the development of *ab initio* courses in one or both languages, including fast-track learning aimed at the achievement of Hons. standard. Quite apart from any praiseworthy desire to enable students from all types of schools to be admitted, this trend seems likely to continue, given the decline in the numbers of A level entrants, even in schools which are centres of excellence in the teaching of Classics.

All this means that many students are initially attracted to Classical study by reading works in translation. In other words, the nature of the sandwich has changed. It is no longer the custom to study Greek for many years before being admitted to the delights of Thucydides. Nowadays, translations of Thucydides (and of the tragedians and Homer) come first and may stimulate curiosity about the language. The same is increasingly the case for Vergil, Tacitus

et al. Fortunately, there is considerable expertise available from school and university teachers to ensure that the language filling in the new sandwich is both tasty and nutritious.

Nevertheless, it follows that a considerable proportion of sixth form and undergraduate reading is now done through the medium of translation. Of course, I do not cast doubt on the well known propensity of undergraduates to read all texts, both ancient and modern, in the original language even if this is not specifically required. More important, however, is the likelihood that the brightest of the fast-track *ab initio* language students will not wish to confine his or her reading to texts suitable for the early stages of language learning, nor to postpone study in depth of works which were probably the initial source of interest in Classical subjects. Furthermore, the substance and diversity of many modules and special options is supported by the prescription or recommendation of suitable translations of complete texts and collections of sources.

This situation has its positive features. There is already evidence that enhanced language awareness at even a basic level enhances the capacity to read critically in translation and that this in turn increases motivation for further language study. More might be done to develop this interaction if the sometimes entrenched distinctions and divisions between 'Classics' and 'Classical Civilisation'-type courses were re-examined. It is, of course, easy to see why language based courses were 'ring-fenced' when their very existence was under threat. However, the new initiatives in language teaching and the large numbers of student applicants should now permit confidence and enable the review of the old divide between language and non-language based courses. This divide seems in any case, for the reasons outlined above, to be in the process of being dismantled in an *ad hoc* way and, while it is not my aim here to comment on the syllabus in schools, I believe that some teachers have ideas about the potential advantages of more integration between language and non-language work, provided that this could be achieved without diluting the language achievement of the more able pupils.

If the relationship between language and non-language courses is in the process of reconstruction, the time may be right for the removal of the taboos which have hindered the recognition of the importance of reading translations and have therefore tended to prevent proper attention being paid to the relevant critical processes. Of course, this would not and should not detract from the importance of language learning nor of opportunities to develop expertise in textual criticism and the other vital specialisms. In fact, a stronger emphasis on language awareness, including a critical approach to reading in translation, should strengthen linguistic expertise in general.

## **Perspectives on the relationship between ancient and modern**

Recent research on the appropriation of Greek and Roman cultures by intervening societies has, fortunately, liberated the ancient world from the naive tendency (strongest among some sociologists) to identify Greek and Roman values and ideas with those of the appropriating groups or cultures. The processes of appropriation have been shown to be complex and conditioned by the cultural politics of the receiving society. We now have a clearer idea of how and why Arnold's Homer differed from Newman's. We are attuned to the effects of 'universalising', 'domesticating' or 'distancing' tendencies in scholarship as well as in politics

and it is now commonplace for a comparison between a David and an Alma-Tadema to open up a discussion of Roman society as well as of art history.

The current upsurge of interest in the Reception of ancient texts, images and ideas has been fostered by a variety of research projects, ranging from the study of the performance histories of particular plays to analysis of the impact of ancient texts on the literatures of subversion and on the construction of post-colonial identities. All these initiatives necessarily engage with issues of translation, not only between source and target languages but also across cultures, in terms both of time and of place. Study of the semiotics of performance, for example, also requires attention to the way in which the director, designer, choreographer and players have responded to the text, whether that is in the original language or in a translation.

As a result of these trends both scholars and 'lay' people have an increased sensitivity to the fact that, however expert the readers' or audiences' knowledge of the ancient languages, they cannot respond in a way which is purely that of an ancient Greek or Roman (even if it were possible to generalise about *that* elusive being). There is also increased interest in issues of reception and appropriation within antiquity, together with a greater sense of the dynamics underlying the translator's interpretation and refiguration of the ancient text.

## **Classical subjects and other disciplines**

The relationship between disciplines combines aspects of the environmental and intellectual issues outlined in the two preceding sections. Almost all study and research in Classical subjects requires some engagement with the content, methods and theories of other disciplines. Equally, those based in departments of philosophy, theology or literature, for example, frequently need to work on ancient texts in a way which seeks to avoid closing the debate about meaning, always a danger if a translation is used uncritically. Currently, there are welcome signs of the emergence of new kinds of edition which include text and a commentary giving basic linguistic help as well as more sophisticated discussion of textual aspects and ideas. Sometimes a translation is also included. However, more might perhaps be done to comment on the translation itself within the same volume. Important recent initiatives also include accelerated learning materials to enable postgraduate students and researchers from other disciplines to encounter in the original language philosophical, medical and *koine* texts, which they would otherwise read only in translation. Such studies inevitably involve some focus on translation issues. Nor is this trend confined to work on ancient languages. The welcome broadening of the international academic community of students, researchers and critics also raise questions about the use of translations of works of scholarship and about comparison of translations from Greek and Latin into various modern languages.

## **Future steps**

All these trends suggest that the existing level of work done via translations will continue and even increase. It is also clear that this will increasingly be carried out by students alongside or in closer conjunction with their language work and reading of texts in the original. As yet there has been relatively little research done into how the two activities might be developed in ways which enhance one another. A doctoral thesis by Jan Parker, currently a Research Fellow in the O.U. Institute of Educational Technology, included analysis of the

achievements of groups of students in different universities who read translations in which some words were kept in the original . As a result of this work it is hoped that a handbook of glossed readings will be published. enabling students to consider a range of contexts and meanings and thus to debate for themselves some of the issues on which translators have to make decisions. In addition, however, there is an urgent need for research into the learning and reading patterns of those who are on fast-track language learning schemes.

On a broader front, Translation Studies is developing considerable vitality as an area of specialist research and study. There have been important studies of the manipulative aspects of translation (Hermans 1985, Lefevere 1992). However, most of the discussion of translations from Greek and Latin has been confined to historical studies, from Kelly (1979) to Venuti (1995), or to descriptive surveys (Bassnett-McGuire 1980), although the 1960s interest in translation of Greek plays (Arrowsmith and Shattuck 1961) has been refreshed by recent journal articles. The current trend seems to be to adapt purely descriptive models to focus more on the interaction between source and target languages and cultures (Toury 1995). Translators sometimes discuss their approaches in Prefaces, Introductions and Epilogues, while some special seminars and projects have brought together scholars and practitioners from Classics, Theatre Studies and other specialisms as, for example , in the seminar on Theatre and English translations of *Antigone* at the University of Sydney Centre for Performance Studies (Allen 1994).

Although there is a growing number of specialist conferences on aspects of translation, the contribution of classicists to discussion of the broader issues raised by translation has been rather muted. A recent major international conference attracted several hundred participants from all over the world. They vigorously debated the historical, moral, political and future roles of translations in the construction and reshaping of cultural identities. Yet Greek and Latin texts were virtually ignored. The comparative reticence of classicists about these issues is quite surprising, particularly since the main impact of recent literary theory has been to question the stability of language and meaning and to foster interest in the effect of, for example, narratological and other techniques in a range of genres. When such developments are placed alongside the acknowledged role of translations in mapping, directing and valorising in areas of cultural tension and change, it seems essential for students at all levels to develop a critical awareness of the impact of the processes of translation on their own learning and on scholarship in general. Professor Venuti's work forthcoming work on the unpredictable effects of translations should add spice to the debate.

Of course, many university courses and seminar discussions address at least some of the issues set out above, although some do so more overtly than others. It might be useful to exchange views and ideas about the future role and importance of translation issues in the Classical curriculum and to get a sense of the varieties of approach and their motivation - whether based on the realities of the language teaching environment or on the intellectual exigencies of discussing interpretation and meaning. Perhaps, too, some classicists intend to contribute to the wider academic discussion of Translation. I would be glad to hear from colleagues interested in participating in a Colloquium on these and other related issues.

## References

- C. Allen (1994) in 'Translating for the Stage', *Didaskalia*, vol. 1 issue 3.  
W. Arrowsmith and R. Shattuck (eds. ) (1961) *The Craft and Context of Translation*, Univ. of

Texas Press.

S. Bassnett-McGuire (1980) *Translation Studies*, Methuen.

T. Hermans (ed. ) (1985) *The Manipulation of Literature*, Croom Helm.

L. G. Kelly (1979) *The True Interpreter: A History of Translation Theory and Practice in the West*, Blackwell.

A. Lefevere (1992) *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, Routledge.

G. Toury (1995) *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, John Benjamin's Publishing Co.

L. Venuti (1995) *The Translator's Invisibility*, Routledge.

Lorna Hardwick (L.P.Hardwick@open.ac.uk)

*Dept. of Classical Studies, The Open University*

---

## **CUCD conference panel at the Classical Association, Royal Holloway, 13 April 1997:**

### **Classics in the UK and Overseas: Some Comparisons**

Three speakers from different corners of the diaspora gave accounts of their experiences in different countries. Marcus Wilson from the University of Auckland, an Australian based in New Zealand, spoke about the teaching and research culture in the Antipodes. Paola Vianello de Cordova, an Italian Hellenist at the Autonomous University of Mexico, spoke of the distinctive pressures facing Classics in Mexico, where the classical languages are emerging from the shadows after a long monopoly of Latin by the church (and a consequent marginalisation of Greek), there is a huge industry of translation, and the problem is expansion of numbers rather than contraction. Finally, Lene Rubinstein, a Dane now settled in the UK, compared traditions of language teaching here and in Scandinavia. The ensuing discussion included contributions from the UK, US, Germany, and South Africa. Thanks especially to John Betts, Chris Carey, Gillian Clark, Lynn Fotheringham, Barbara Gold, Judy Hallett, Tamar Hodos, Barbara McManus, Shelly Haley, Christopher Rowe, Alison Sharrock, David Scourfield, and the speakers; the editor's usual apologies for the inevitable omissions and corruptions of contributions and credit.

---

### **Teaching loads, assistance, training**

British higher education still rests, however precariously, on a tradition of individual contact, with written work returned with extensive individual comments, small-group tutorials, and individual pastoral care (in the academic rather than the moral sense). There is a wide gap between this model and the European system, with its large classes and much smaller element of written work and tutorials - whence part of the difficulty in inducing British students to go overseas in Socrates/Erasmus and similar programmes. It is the European rather than the UK model that tends to be mirrored elsewhere in the world, with large course enrolments that

make individual contact impractical, so that most students are encountered only as faces at lectures. But even in the UK the model is under threat: in some institutions in some non-classical subjects, individual focus has been strong in the runup to TQA but neglected as soon as the hoop has been jumped through.

Use of postgraduate teaching assistants depends partly on institutional structures, partly on supply; Auckland has historically had fewer graduate students to be TAs because they tend to go overseas, and most teaching is done in large lectures, with all the marking done by the lecturer (plus one tutor per course) - a huge teaching load. Training for new staff, well established in the US, is still in its infancy in the UK, with a variety of different systems of widely varying usefulness; Academic Audit has at least brought institutions' attention to the issues, and it is likely to loom larger in the wake of Dearing.

## **Student motivation**

This touched a common nerve, particularly in connection with language learning: "the refusal to learn grammar is cross-cultural". There was discussion of the extent to which more "visual" kinds of learning could make up the difference - though the danger is that once lectures become too entertaining the students may just put down their pens. One problem perceived with the British system is students' lack of responsibility for their own progress; the case can be made that too much responsibility lies with the teacher, and too little with the student (something a spell overseas can help to correct). British staff teaching in the US are often surprised to meet a more active appetite for work; UK students can be reluctant to go to the library and read, and are exasperatingly happier to be "spoonfed".

## **Quality assessment and market forces**

UK participants were especially curious about the extent to which their own nightmarish experience of a fanatical state culture of quality assurance was mirrored overseas. Though there is a lot of this kind of thing in the Antipodes, it tends to be rooted in the institution rather than the state. In the US, though there is no single equivalent to (for example) TQA, there are numerous mechanisms in the State system for teaching assessment, promotion, and "accountability to many different masters". The US model is perhaps more outcome-led (what students have learned, and how to prove it - an area where documentability of transferable skills is valuable) than input-led (hours put in &c.). In the US, private universities are heavily at the mercy of market forces, and league-table pressures are strong. Though the introduction of topup fees in the UK, however undesirable in other ways, might encourage the student to take more responsibility, it also puts the learning contract on a dangerously commercial footing: "once people start paying for a product, they'll start suing you." This is already a significant pressure in the US: one contributor typically received around 20 calls a year from people threatening litigation.

And what, in the end, are we trying to turn out? - "flexible, cultured, humane persons", or potential graduate students? Ideally, we should be aspiring to both - and many UK institutions would still hope that their degrees do produce both.