Bulletin of the COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY CLASSICAL DEPARTMENTS

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Contents

Quality Control

As anticipated, this has been a busy year for CUCD, and this year's *Bulletin* for the first time includes a Chairman's Report on the items that have preoccupied us most over the twelve months since Council. As well as a testimony to the energy and efficacy of our current Chair, it reflects CUCD's ever-great enmeshment *qua* national subject body in the issues of policy and quality we need to influence if we are to defend the things that make our field unique and uniquely resistant to easily assimilation into uniform models of academic structure and outcomes. It remains CUCD strategy here not merely to stay abreast, but where possible to outflank. Even so, the goalposts have been not merely mobile this year but positively skittish, with potentially far-reaching changes in the structures of research funding and academic assessment. We hope that a report from the Chair will help to keep colleagues up to speed with national and subject-specific developments.

In this context, the *Bulletin* retains an especially important role as a forum for current thinking on aims and methods of classical language teaching. Here Charlotte Roueché has recently been pressing a powerfully-argued case for a new role for Greek and Latin as the vehicles for formal language study of a kind largely vanished from the teaching of English and modern languages in schools, but increasingly essential for precisely the new disciplines that are moving towards the centre of the curriculum. We reprint here the call to arms originally published in *Dialogos*, and whose argument seeded a wide-ranging discussion at the CUCD panel in this year's Classical Association Conference in Lampeter where justifications for current patterns of classical language teaching were considered against the wider background of the QAA's post-Dearing agenda for the national auditing of academic standards.

Such a discussion is timely for other reasons as well, since 1998 has seen the archives ransacked as never before for an unprecedented crop of fascinating monographs on the history of classical education in the UK, most of them by the indefatigable Chris Stray. Thanks especially to his work, the history of classical teaching, its methods, and its self-definition within the changing culture of the past two centuries is now better-documented than ever. It is a particular pleasure to be able to offer here the aparchai of his recent and continuing work on the history of Classics at Oxford and Cambridge.

Finally, hostage-to-fortune time: this should, notwithstanding past promises written on water and air, be the first issue of the *Bulletin* to appear entire in electronic form before its base-matter edition hits street. Past issues under the present editor have also at last been rounded up, and their missing bits virtualised at our website (http://www.rhbnc.ac.uk/Classics/CUCD/). At the same time, however, the editor is trying to tighten up his act on distribution of the print edition. If you are reading this on something that was once a tree, it means that something worked; if you're not, but you think you should be, click here now. (The editor regrets that this feature is disabled in the print edition.)

Attractive and Nonsensical Classics: Oxford, Cambridge and elsewhere

Christopher Stray

Oxford vs Cambridge: a topic so clichéd that one hesitates even to mention it. Yet beneath the froth of cliché there is a serious topic, and one to which a book could usefully be devoted. In such a book, the contrast between the ways in which classics has been studied in the two places would surely merit, if not a chapter, at least a section. Its epigraph would doubtless be taken from Housman's inaugural lecture as Professor of Latin at Cambridge in 1911. Referring to the second and third quarters of the previous century, Housman remarked that 'Cambridge scholarship simply meant scholarship with no nonsense about it; Oxford scholarship embodied one of those erroneous tendences against which I take up my parable today.' He went on to say that 'Scholarship ... is not literary criticism; and of the duties of a Latin Chair literary criticism forms no part'.[1] These were the words of a man familiar with the scholarly output of both universities, and who had had opportunity to observe both from a neutral standpoint since his election to the chair of Latin at UCL in 1892. Yet Housman was hardly neutral himself, having failed in Greats: he had followed a Cantabrigian furrow in a foreign field, and was ploughed for his pains.

Housman was neither the first nor the last to suffer in this way. Charles Badham, one of his scholarly heroes, had done only a little better, gaining a third in Greats and ending up in exile, first as a Birmingham headmaster, later as a professor of classics in Sydney. Well after Housman's time, public schoolboys went up to Oxford after a decade of immersion in Greek and Latin - reading, translating, repetition, composition - to find more of the same in Mods. But Greats plunged them into alien fields - notably, into the convoluted world of Oxford philosophy. Charles Stevens went up to New College in 1922, armed with a scholarship and a thorough grounding in classics at Winchester. He gained a first in Mods, but plunged to a third in Greats; a disaster which blighted the rest of his life. His philosophy tutor was H. W. B. Joseph, notorious for his long silences and for spending an hour dissecting the first sentence of an essay. The Oxford analytical style may well have destroyed Stevens' confidence in his own abilities; the scepticism it brought with it probably undercut the conventional Anglicanism he had learned in home and school. In later life, he turned to a kind of animistic pantheism.[2] Stevens' story cannot be taken as representative; I mention it because it is documented, and to make the point that styles of scholarship are not just patterns in glass bead game. Different styles of work make a difference both to scholarship and to those who practise it; conflicts and discontinuities, as in Stevens' case, can be disastrous.

Housman's pronouncement is interesting not just for what he said, but for the way in which he said it. The contrast he paints is not of two legitimate alternatives, but of sense and nonsense. The Cambridge scholarship exemplified in the writing of Kennedy, Munro and Mayor is presented as a kind of classics degree zero. Housman was of course speaking to a Cambridge audience on a heavily charged symbolic occasion, and speaking as a Cantabrigian soul redeemed from an earlier bondage amid alien corn. But what he said resonates, as he would have known, with a local tradition of self-description. Cambridge classical scholarship had been described by its practitioners as 'pure' or 'definite' scholarship; by sympathetic critics as 'masculine and narrow'. What this meant, roughly, was that it focused on the texts of ancient authors, studying them as linguistic, not literary corpuses. It sought an understanding of their different styles through intensive reading, translation and composition. These

practices were thought to promote intellectual discipline, in a way which literary criticism or historical analysis could not. This definition residualised modern discussion in favour of the study of the imperishable ancients. Attempts in the 1850s to introduce recent works on Greek history into the syllabus were denounced in some local quarters as the pollution of a well of eternal value by transient opinions. The attitude of the conservatives is summed up in the title of a polemical pamphlet issued by Richard Shilleto in 1851 attacking the sixth volume of Grote's *History of Greece.*

Shilleto's pamphlet, *Thucydides or Grote?,* was motivated by more than scholarly concern. As he admitted in his opening remarks, he spoke as an avowed conservative, in opposition to one who was happy to declare his republican sympathies. Grote's attempt to rehabilitate the reputation of Cleon was thus doubly repulsive to Shilleto: it questioned the impartiality of Thucydides, and looked favourably on a demagogue. I choose 'repulsive' deliberately: Shilleto's reaction carried a strong emotional charge. Similarly, 'pure scholarship' not only denoted an identifiable, linguistically-focused style of work; it also connoted an essence to which scholars might cling and from which they gained a sense of exemplary value. Parallels are not hard to find. The association of language with romantic nationalism has imbued the study of modern vernaculars with powerful emotional overtones. A more fruitful parallel, perhaps, lies in the conservative defences of grammatical learning within natural language areas. Here too, as Deborah Cameron has documented in her book *Verbal Hygiene* [3], notions of identity and selfhood are at stake. The erosion of grammatical knowledge symbolises the pollution of a constitutive cultural resource.

The Cambridge style I have described was not peculiar to classics. We gain a glimpse of it in action in an account written in 1847 by William Johnson (later Cory), then teaching at Eton, of a visit from his undergraduate contemporary Henry Maine. Johnson and Maine had become friends after the latter went up to Cambridge five years earlier. Johnson wrote that during Maine's three-day visit, 'We talked for some twenty-four hours nett ... He and I went through several hard subjects in the old Cambridge way, in that method of minute comparison of opinions, without argument which I believe to be peculiar to the small intellectual aristocracy of Cambridge'.[4] Maine and Johnson had been undergraduates in the 1840s, when the Classical Tripos was open only to those who had passed the final mathematical examinations at a high level. Success in the Mathematical Tripos was the pinnacle of academic achievement in Cambridge, a university as much dominated by mathematics as Oxford was by classics. As Johnson's remarks suggest, the mindset induced by the Mathematical Tripos's demand for hardnosed, fast problem-solving had become generalised, to become the 'Cambridge way' to which he referred. He called it the *old* way not because he was looking back to his student days, which were only recently past, but because the domination of Cambridge student life by mathematical study and thinking had been established for over a century. Soon after he wrote, however, the situation began to change. In the early 1850s the Classical Tripos was set free from the maths requirement (the 'Classical Emancipation', as J.B. Mayor of St Johns put it),and new subjects were introduced. Mathematics itself changed, becoming more professionalised; in an expanding world of specialisms, no one subject had the critical mass to generate a mindset across the whole curriculum.

The content of classics itself changed rather little in the 1840s and '50s. In 1849 a solitary paper in ancient history was added to the Tripos examination, but it seems not to have taken very seriously. In the '60s a debate on the curriculum was initiated by two Trinity fellows, William Clark and Robert Burn, and this led to the insertion of questions on philosophy and

philology. Some of their colleagues, however were unhappy with what they saw as the dilution of the grand old Cambridge curriculum. To them, any broadening of range pointed toward the Oxford model of classics. This had, for them, two especially noticeable features. First, it was 'philosophical' rather than 'philological'. Second, to the extent that ancient literary texts were studied, they were taken as set books, rather than as part of an overall linguistic corpus. Set books could be learned off by heart, whereas unseen translation challenged the learner's mastery of a wide variety of styles and vocabulary.

How much did such arguments owe to information, and how much to mutual stereotyping? There were certainly plenty of ways in which information could be exchanged. In some cases, brothers went one to one place, another to the other,and then compared notes. This is the case, for example, with Charles and Christopher Wordsworth, nephews of the poet, in the 1820s; Arthur and Henry Sidgwick in the 1850s; Cecil and James Headlam in the 1880s. Then there were the joint dining clubs like the Ad Eundem and the Arcades, set up to link members of the two universities. Finally, some men moved from one place to the other, like the archaeologist Percy Gardner, who went from a Cambridge to an Oxford chair. All these mechanisms facilitated mutual learning - as did the railway line. Henry Jackson, who succeeded Richard Jebb as professor of Greek at Cambridge in 1906, belonged to the Ad Eundem club. In 1913 he responded to a comment from a friend that Gilbert Murray was a 'very attractive person' by saying that 'Oxford is very successful in breeding "attractive" scholars: more so than Cambridge. And this is not surprising. For *we* dare not talk our shop in a mixed company, and even in a scholars' party we are very conscious of our limitations as specialists'.[5]

The contrast is very clear, between a high-profile scholarship integrated in general culture and social performance, and a more retiring and specialised mode of work. But it also reminds us that comparison is complicated by interaction between different institutions. This is just as true when we look beyond Oxbridge to the other universities. The Scottish universities had their own separate tradition, in which students entered earlier and studied widely in philosophy in their first year. The civic universities might be seen as linkd to Oxbridge by their reaction to it, especially in their concern for industrial technology. But in fact their civic pride was also entangled with cultural deference. Some took their first principals from Oxbridge, and these in turn activated the old-boy network to fill chairs in the humanities. A university, a proper university, had to have a classics department. This rule applied still in the 1950s, when Keele was founded, largely under Oxonian influence. Only with the plate-glass wave of the 1960s was it challenged. Kent, a self-consciously Oxford-style institution, had a department; York looked instead to the Leavisite tradition and made English the linch-pin of its humanities curriculum.

This process of colonisation had of course operated more widely. The founding professors of the new Australian universities of the 1850s came from the British Isles, but the exemplars chosen varied. If Sydney opted to follow the Oxbridge model, Melbourne was influenced by Belfast, where classics had an established but not dominant place. In Melbourne the development of the classical teaching was affected by a running battle between the professoriate, who saw classics as one subject among many, and the local magnates who dominated the university council. For them, classics symbolised cultural and social status: it showed the world that their rough young society belonged to the sphere of European civilisation.

Three English examples not so far mentioned make a striking contrast with one another. The new University of London, founded by Broughan and his allies in 1826, was planned as something very different from Oxford and Cambridge. Its models lay north, in Scotland, and west, in Jefferson's new University of Virginia. It was a secular university with a wide range of subjects. The secondary school founded within it in 1830 had a rickety start, but two years later was taken over, as joint headmasters, by the professors of Latin and Greek, Thomas Key and Henry Malden. The school was a reversed image of the conventional public school: there were no compulsory subjects, no corporal punishment, no chapel and no playing field. In the classical teaching, though the rules of metre were taught, there was no verse composition;and this feature obtained also in the degree courses. In the late 1830s Alexander Gooden, who went from UCL to Cambridge, complained in his letters home at the heavy emphasis placed on compositional skill. (He managed to overcome his disadvantage,and ended up as Senior Classic in 1840.) King's College was founded as an Anglican counterblast to the 'godless college' in 1828; its curriculum emphasised literature, where language was central at its rival. Several of the professors at UCL (as the university became in 1836) were Cambridge men, and one might describe the foundation of Kings as an Oxonian response to Cantabrigian liberalism. The University of Durham was formed in much the same mould as King's, though it was like Oxbridge a collegiate institution. King's was a metropolitan college, and like UCL appealed the the urban middle classes. It seems to have aimed at the social stratum below that which predominated at Oxbridge, and this may have had something to do with its development of English literature as an important element in the humanities curriculum. The linkage between class and curriculum became evident in the 1840s, when the King's model was described as 'an English, or middle-class education'.

The overall picture of university classical curricula in the 19th century is thus one of a cultural market in which a number of different pressures operated. Local or regional pride might encourage curricular distinctness (as with Scottish resistance to 'Anglicisation');[6] more often, one sees a deferential imitation of the Oxbridge model. Chairs of Latin and Greek went with the classical orders of the new town hall as symbolic identifiers of membership in the world of culture. The Oxbridge model was not however monolithic. If Greats provided the dominant exemplar of what classics might be, the lower-profile, narrower rigour of the Cambridge Tripos constituted a powerful alternative. It also enshrined, especially after its reorganisation at the end of the 1870s, the principle of advanced specialisation. This became embedded in the curricula of the civic universities: Latin and Greek, rather than Classics.

The subsequent history of this field has been influenced by a variety of factors. Declining and changing demand has prompted strategic repackaging. The merger of Latin and Greek chairs into a chair of Classics, which at one time might be seen to reflect the victory of the Oxford model, is more likely to stem from a perceived need to make cuts. At one time some municipal universities had reliable local student intakes which may have encouraged curriculum variation. Now the national market, modularisation and the apparently irresistible rise of the audit culture encourage homogeneity. Oxford and Cambridge, once the twin peaks of conventional dominance, take on a tinge of deviance - wild cards in an increasingly standardised pack.

Which brings us back to Housman's contrast. If he was right, why was it that the two universities' styles of classical scholarship had converged by the end of the third quarter of the 19th century? Some tentative answers can be offered. The first is that both were subject to the influence of German scholarship. Yet each place responded actively, and in different ways. While Cambridge absorbed the research ideal, it was defended in Oxford by a vocal

minority against the continuing power of the collegiate tradition. Secondly, the broadening of the Cambridge curriculum between 1850 and 1870, which I mentioned above, can be seen as a shift toward the Oxford pattern. Yet the specialised Part II courses set up in the late '70s had no parallel with what went on in Greats. The literature section (compulsory until 1895) stood in striking contrast with the Oxonian exclusion of literature in favour of history and philosophy. Similarly, the new archaeology section, taught by the young Charles Waldstein, was unlike anything in the other university. The philosophy section's teaching was dominated by the Trinity dons Henry Jackson and Richard Archer-Hind. Jackson's work on Plato stood in an embedded Trinity tradition which began with Julius Hare and continued with his own teacher W.H. Thompson; the next generation was to be represented by F.M. Cornford. But this was a very different style from that of Jowett and Green: there was no Hegelianism and no agenda of social reform. Thirdly, by the time he wrote his inaugural in 1911, a series of scholarly journals had been established: the *Proceedings* (1872) *of the Cambridge Philological Society* (1868); *JHS* (1880); *CR* (1887), *CQ* (1907) and *JRS* (1911). Between them they helped to establish classics as an academic field which transcended specific institutional styles. (A parallel case is perhaps Gildersleeve's American Journal of Philology (1880), which, like other journals founded in that period at Johns Hopkins, was explicitly aimed at servicing a national population of scholars, rather than being confined to its own parent institution.)[7]

It could be argued that the present century has seen a further covergence. The importation of Oxford scholars in the 1950s, notably Denys Page, led to the introduction of set books into the Cambridge Tripos. Greats has been more resistant to change: it took the radical shakeup of the 1960s to bring literature into the syllabus. Both Gilbert Murray and Eric Dodds, successive Regius Professors of Greek, tried in vain to effect changes. It was hardly surprising that Kenneth Dover, who also had a reform programme, refused the chair when offered it. In that case, alma mater did not receive back her own. More often, the two ancient universities have recruited from their own alumni; and this has presumably been a powerful pressure for the reproduction of the kind of institutional styles I have been discussing. We are now witnessing the impact of a whole range of new factors - extensive state intervention, changing job markets outside Britain, the decline of the subject in schools, the expansion of Web-based resources. These are likely to lead to new ways for institutions both to reconstruct their identities and to learn from, and about, one another.

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References

[1] A. E Housman, *The Confines of Criticism*. The Cambridge Inaugural, 1911, CUP 1969, 25-6.
[2] For Stevens' schooling and career, see C. G. Stevens, *Winchester Notions: the English Dialect of Winchester College*, Athlone Press 1998.
[3] Routledge, 1995.
[4] Extracts from the Letters and Journals of W. Cory, selected by F. W. Cornish, privately printed 1897, 46.
[5] Jackson to J. A. Platt, 15 August 1913. R. St. J. Parry, *Henry Jackson OM*, CUP 1926, 184-5.
[6] A stirring account is given by George Davie in his *The Democratic Intellect. Scotland and her Universities in the Nineteenth Century*, Edinburgh UP, 1961.

[7] Some of the above points are covered in more detail in the contributions to C. A Stray (ed), *Classics in Cambridge*, Supplementary Volume to *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 1998.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: 1997-8

Christopher Rowe

A Chairman's Report seems especially appropriate at the end of so full a year (counting from the full Council Meeting in November 1997); minutes of meetings of Council - or even of Standing Committee - necessarily only give an outline of the total picture.

The chief exceptional items of business have been

1. involvement in discussions with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA[HE]) in relation to the design of a new quality assurance regime to replace the existing TQA process;
2. formulating responses to consultation papers from the HEFCE (RAE 2/97, 1/98, 2/98) over the shape of the next Research Assessment Exercise; and
3. a response to a further consultation paper, from the Humanities Research Board of the British Academy, on 'Postgraduate Awards in Library and Information Science; Art and Design; and Certain Other Vocational Subjects' (17 December 1997, relating to the transfer by the DfEE to the HRB of responsibility for administering awards in the named areas).

Under (1), the Standing Committee had made a decision, endorsed by the November meeting of Council, to take part in the Subject Associations Pilot Projects scheme organized and funded by the QAA as part of their Graduate Standards Programme; bids were accepted from 14 subject associations, of which one was CUCD. The outcome was the 'Report to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, December 1997' (an edited version of a draft prepared by the researcher for the project, Dr A.G. Keen). A copy of this report was circulated to all constituent members of CUCD at the end of 1997; it will therefore suffice to reproduce here no more than the title, abstract, and 'project summary':

Title:
'A survey of types of degree programmes in Classical subjects currently on offer in UK universities and colleges; of types of teaching and assessment used; of criteria used for judging final degree results; of expected outcomes in terms of knowledge, understanding, and more general skills; and of the operation of the current system of external examiners.'

Abstract:
'For a variety of reasons the patterns of teaching in Classical departments in the U.K. have in recent years changed considerably. In the light of these changes, a detailed survey of what is currently on offer, how it is taught, assessed and moderated (moderation now being the

primary role of external examiners in most, but not all, cases), and with what expected outcomes, is timely. The results display above all the extraordinary *diversity* of undergraduate degree programmes in Classical subjects - a diversity which the changes in teaching patterns have themselves markedly increased; a large measure of agreement about outcomes, although these are in many respects only indirectly reflected in the assessment of final degree results; and a sense both of the usefulness of the present system of external examiners, and of the difficulties which affect it.'

Project summary:
'1. The original project proposal was formulated with reference to Annex E (3) of the Draft Report of the GSP, 'Recommendations to subject/professional groups'. We decided that it would not be helpful to address 'generalised expectations for degrees' (§3.1: 'Range of degree expectations'); what we needed was rather a 'bottom-up' approach, beginning with a detailed survey (i) of the types of degree programmes actually being offered in Classical subjects across the UK, (ii) of the types of teaching and assessment used, (iii) of the overall criteria employed in judging the final degree result, and (iv) of the expected outcomes in terms of knowledge, understanding and more general skills, including those of the sort which would perhaps usually only be made explicit e.g. in references and testimonials written by individual tutors for the benefit of prospective employers. These points fell mainly under headings 3.2 ('Typology/profiling of programmes') and - possibly - 3.4 ('Development and use of archives, statistics and information') of Annex E (3). With reference to 3.3 ('External examiners'), we also thought it likely be helpful (v) to ask, for example, about the precise role accorded to external examiners, which can differ widely between institutions, and perhaps also (vi) to ask those who had served as external examiners themselves about what they saw themselves as contributing to the process.

2. In the event, the project itself has served to 'strengthen the involvement' (Draft Report §3.5) of CUCD in the debate on standards. It still remains to be established how, in practical terms, this subject association might be able to 'support institutions in the development of threshold standards for programmes and programme elements' (§3.6), given the multidisciplinary nature of the subject in question, and the marked diversity of both the programmes and the programme elements involved, which make the notion of 'core' elements in teaching less applicable than it is in many other subject areas (see Appendix below, §2). However these special aspects of Classics themselves make it essential that CUCD play the fullest possible part in the process of 'informing institutional standards' (ibid.), and the Council at its November meeting expressed its intention to do so. A system of standards set up with reference exclusively to less complex subjects would be in danger of impinging on the very nature of Classics itself, contrary to the implications of §7.3 of the Final Report of the GSP, and of §50 of the QAA response to the Dearing Report (September 1997; see *Higher Quality* 1/2, November 1997, p.12). At the same time, discussion of the issues as they affect Classics may well be relevant to those affecting other subjects which might broadly be described as non-standard, and also perhaps help to refine the classification of types of degree programmes suggested by §9.3-9 of the Dearing Report.'

So far as the QAA was concerned, the chief purpose of the report - as should be clear from the abstract and summary - was to impress on the Agency the special, and diverse, nature of Classical provision in UK universities; and, more generally, to ensure that the voice of Classics (in the broadest sense) should be heard in a process which looks likely to affect us all. (The report made no claim to exhaustiveness, being merely as full as was allowed by the

six months allowed for its completion.) CUCD was then fully involved in the follow-up to the pilot projects, which culminated in a meeting of representatives of all subject associations in the spring of 1998. At this meeting, I chaired a panel discussion between subject association representatives and members of the QAA, including the Chief Executive, John Randall. The discussion did much to elucidate the then-current thinking of the Agency; since that time, direct involvement in the QAA's planning (including the setting up of subject groups to 'write standards') has been limited to only three subject associations, those for Chemistry, History, and Law. CUCD has received no direct communication from the QAA about developments since that meeting, but has continued to express concern about the dangers of using such relatively monolithic subject areas as templates - as in the following response, dated May 1998, to the consultation paper published in *Higher Quality* 1.3 (March 1998):

Consultation: developing the quality assurance and standards framework for UK higher education
Response from the Council of University Classical Departments
Following a meeting of its Standing Committee, the Council of University Classical Departments makes the following response to the consultation paper.

1. It goes without saying that we should prefer as light a touch in any future quality assurance procedures as is consistent with the legitimate requirements of stakeholders. Any reduction in the burden imposed by present procedures will be welcomed; a more differentiated approach, recognizing both the relative strengths and weakness of internal systems and performance in past reviews, may well be appropriate.
2. We have serious concerns about too rigid an application of the concept of 'levels' in HE, which we think likely to be against the interests of its consumers, and to be incompatible with the very concept of lifelong learning. Students enter HE with widely differing backgrounds, and any system adopted must be flexible enough to recognize that fact. In particular, there must be reasonable scope in individual degree programmes, especially those of a multidisciplinary nature, for students to embark on different areas of study at different points, within the necessary limits imposed by the rationale, and progressive aspect, of overall programme structure. The outcomes of any multidisciplinary programme will themselves frequently include different levels of attainment in different areas, with higher levels in some areas and lower levels in others; embarking on a new discipline may itself represent a form of academic progression. (Economies of scale will also often necessitate the teaching of different cohorts together, given that the alternative will be an undesirable restriction of the choices available to students.) It is unclear to us to what extent the draft template for programme specification (Annex A of the consultation paper) is capable of meeting these points; but we urge that issues of programme specification and design should not be determined by criteria established from the perspective of single-subject degrees. The simple principle of progression, more easily applied in such degree programmes, needs to be balanced against, and combined with, the special advantages offered to students by multidisciplinary degree programmes, most importantly of exposure to a range of approaches and types of study which do not always or easily fall into a neat pattern of distinct levels. Some related issues are raised e.g. in §10 of Part III of the consultation paper, but clearly much work remains to be done if the special features of what may broadly be called non-standard subject areas are to be preserved.

3. Our colleagues in the Open University have particular concerns about the application of some aspects of the paper in the context of the OU's specific (and necessarily specific) organisational structures.
4. On the subject of REEs [Registered External Examiners] (Part VII), we have a clear preference for the 'possible variant' introduced in §20, chiefly in the light of the dangers of conflict of interest mentioned in §19 as attaching to the main model. We see such conflicts as unavoidable in any version of that model, if indeed any actual version turned out to be workable. However we should need further specification of the 'academic reviewers' which would be appointed by the Agency. The nomenclature of 'academic' reviewers suggests that the basic principle of peer review would be maintained; any panel of reviewers would also need to include individuals who were not only actively teaching and researching in the subject area under review, but of some standing, and able to command the respect of the reviewed. More generally, we should urge a solution along the lines of §20, conceived in the spirit of §27 (iv).
5. In Annex B, in place of 'Classical Languages and Ancient History' we should prefer the HEFCE title 'Classics and Ancient History', both as more familiar, and as a more accurate reflection of the nature of the subject area.'

One tangible result of CUCD's negotiations with the QAA is implicit in §5 above: at first, the proposal had been to subsume Classics under another subject area (e.g. 'Foreign languages and related subjects'), but it now seems likely that it will be properly identified as a distinct subject area in any future arrangement. I had written to John Randall on this issue, and was set to discuss it with him when he came to see me in Durham in February 1998; but by the time I met him the QAA had already made the change. It is more than likely that we have Robin Jackson, then one of the senior staff-members of the QAA, to thank for this. Dr Jackson, himself a Classicist, has sadly now moved on (to the CVCP), but before his move he was extraordinarily helpful to us: he both addressed the November Council meeting, and came to participate in the CUCD panel meeting (on QA and related issues: especially the teaching of the ancient languages) at the Classical Association Annual Meeting in Lampeter in April 1998 (reported elsewhere in this issue).

A further important outcome has been the recognition of CUCD as the subject association for Classics at university level, alongside e.g. the Council for College and University English and the History at the Universities Defence Group. The well-attended November 1997 Council meeting formally agreed that it was appropriate for CUCD to possess this status, which is fully in accord with its Constitution, originally drafted in October 1969 ('The aims of CUCD shall be ... to represent university classical studies at the national level'). Council at the same time agreed to a significant increase in subscriptions from member departments, as proposed by Standing Committee, taking the view that a subject association must be properly funded.

In case this should seem an example of pedantry, the status of CUCD is (or was) evidently not recognized by HEFCE, which failed to include it in the list in RAE 2/98 of 'bodies to nominate panel members' - though it also failed to include any of the mainstream Classical bodies in the list.

This takes me on to (2) above, and the RAE consultation papers. Quite how CUCD (and others) came to be omitted is not clear: there can be no doubt that CUCD did play a major role in the nomination process last time round, after full consultation with its members, and the general view seems to be that it is in any case the appropriate body to carry out such

consultation. However it is to be hoped that a flurry of correspondence from me and others will have succeeded in achieving the appropriate reinstatement(s). (HEFCE came as close as it could to accepting that there had been a clerical error on its part, without actually doing so; I was still asked to propose CUCD as a fresh nomination. In general, HEFCE's clerical procedures do not inspire much confidence: even after nearly two years, John Richardson is still having to forward HEFCE documents from Edinburgh to Durham.)

So much for RAE 2/98. As for 1/98 ('RAE 2001: key decisions and issues for further consultation'), Standing Committee will formulate a - no doubt prudently conservative - response to the seven questions in the 'Summary of issues for consultation' (§ 62-8 on p.14) at its meeting on 10 October 1998. Standing Committee's response to RAE 2/97, on behalf of Council, was as follows (6.3.98):

'Dear Mr Pilsbury,

Research Assessment: Consultation

I list some responses to the HEFCE consultation paper, on behalf of the Council of University of Classical Departments. The figures '1', '2', etc, refer to the question numbers in the paper.

1. Funding bodies should continue to use a form of research assessment similar to previous exercises for allocating research funding. Such assessment should continue to be carried out quite separately from any other forms of assessment of quality in higher education.
2. Research assessment must be concerned only with the question of research quality.
3. Research assessment should cover all academic research, and adopt as broad and inclusive a definition of research as possible.
4. There should be a single UK-wide exercise.
5. The method of assessment should continue to be based primarily (and, where there are no easily identifiable 'users', in industry or elsewhere, exclusively: see 29) on peer review.
6. The exercise should continue to be based only on single-discipline UOAs [Units of Assessment] (where 'single-discipline' is to be interpreted with appropriate flexibility, e.g. in multi-disciplinary areas).
7. All submissions *must* conform to a common framework and common data definitions; but such definitions must not be so restrictive as to prevent panels from using their discretion in cases where hard and fast distinctions are impossible (see e.g. under 11. below).

   (8), 9, 10. RAEs should measure research performance, not attempt to direct research; any overtly 'developmental' aspect is likely to be inconsistent with the principle stated under 2. above.

8. The line between 'research' and 'other' activities is often hard to draw; panels must be allowed a degree of discretion - and be encouraged to be reasonably flexible - in deciding whether or not a particular activity contributes to a unit's overall research profile.
9. The intervals between exercises should be long enough to allow the maturation of projects which will often by their very nature be long-term. Extending the census date

backwards offers partial compensation, but is inconsistent with the prospective element of the exercise.

10. Assessing only some subjects in any one year would threaten institutional autonomy in planning and the distribution of resources.
11. Under no circumstances should an interim, 'opt-in' exercise be considered.
12. There might conceivably be situations in which the Dearing Committee's proposal for incentives not to participate in the RAE would be appropriate; such a situation does not currently exist in any Classics or Classics-related department. The perceived costs of non-participation, even if such a course might benefit the teaching and learning experience of students, are likely currently to appear to any HEI to be prohibitive.
13. Peer review should emphatically *not* be supplemented by quantitative methods, which appear to us always likely to prove more misleading than helpful.
14. No element of self-assessment should be introduced beyond the sort already implicit in past exercises.
15. ('Would an element of visiting improve the RAE?') No.

22, 23. So far as Classics and Ancient History are concerned, the present division of panels seems to work well.

25, 26. Common criteria and working methods for panels seem appropriate; however we should wish to resist any significant modification to the broad pattern of working established by Panel 57 in the 1996 exercise. Unless any formal mechanisms to ensure greater comparability allowed the continuation of what we consider good practice, we should be against them. On the other hand anecdotal reports of the operation of other panels do suggest that some greater control, and guidance, may be necessary (see e.g. 38 below).

16. 32. Panels and panel chairs should continue to be selected as at present. We see no useful purpose in international 'moderation' for a subject which is already thoroughly 'international', and considerable practical obstacles to such a proposal.
17. Provided that 'sub-areas' may include the work of a small group or even of a single individual, reference to sub-areas of research activity seems to us unobjectionable (cf. 38).
18. HEIs should still be able to identify sub-areas.
19. If there is a minimum number of staff required for the highest quality of research in any particular area or sub-area, this should surely be brought to the notice of HEIs immediately, and not left to be identified by the RAE (cf. 39: the views of subject communities will presumably be pivotal here). However in humanities research, quality will often or even normally bear no relation whatever to the size of the unit (even if the statistical outcomes of RAEs may sometimes suggest otherwise).
20. It is essential that the RAE process should so far as possible reflect the civilized values that underpin research - at least in the humanities - itself, and not become an exercise in mere bureaucratic box-ticking. In this connection, it must be a matter of concern that the consultation paper fails significantly to address the 'negative effects' referred to in §12 (p.2), despite the statement that '[w]e discuss these further below'.
21. Given that some form of assessment of research is inevitable, and that the RAE process as so far established is probably in most respects the least bad option, it is essential that there should be both a sense of continuity, and actual continuity, between exercises. Continuity in the chairing and membership of panels is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of this. Continuing consultation of the research

community itself, on what must remain either primarily or (in many cases: see 5 above) exclusively a matter of peer review, is indispensable; but if the present system is 'robust, effective and acceptable' (Question 1), such consultation should be about the fine tuning of present practice, and not go on throwing up suggestions for wholesale reform.

Yours sincerely,

[C.J.R., Chairman, CUCD]'.

Next (3) [see above], and our response (also 6.3.98) to the HRB consultation paper:

'Dear Dr Jubb,

Postgraduate Awards in Library and Information Science; Art and Design; and Certain Other Vocational Subjects

I respond briefly to the HRB's consultation paper on the above subject, as Chairman of the Council of University Classical Departments.

Most of the specific questions are clearly properly addressed to those working in the relevant areas. However there is one general question that arises, in the light especially of the statement in §5 that 'change is needed, in order to ensure that awards are allocated to students, courses and departments of the highest quality ...', and of the suggestion in §16-19 that the allocation of Bursary and Taught Studentship awards ought to be on a competitive basis. The overall implication of the consultation paper is that the allocation of awards in 'Arts' subjects should move in the direction of the model of allocation of postgraduate awards in the Humanities. This has prompted some members of the Standing Committee of CUCD to reflect on that model itself, and to ask whether there might not be some aspects of practice in the allocation of awards in Arts subjects which could with advantage be transferred to Humanities allocations. This question arises particularly in relation to the statement in §5, and to the reference to 'the need to ensure that awards are allocated to ... *departments* of the highest quality'. It may well be that the emphasis here is on the need to avoid allocating awards to departments which fail to meet the highest standards. However it seems likely to be wasteful not at the same time to take some positive account of the presence of quality in departments, and to try to ensure that the resource represented by good researchers and teachers and their expertise is not underused as a consequence of other factors (especially geographical location). The only available means of doing this is presumably a system of quotas awarded to specific departments. No doubt a system of allocation that relies on quotas rather than on quality is unacceptable; but that is not an argument for resisting quotas as such, only for ensuring that quotas themselves follow quality.

This suggests to some of us both that the allocation of awards in Arts should not wholly relinquish the principle of quotas, and that consideration should (again) be given to the introduction of at least a minimal quota system in the allocation of awards in Humanities. It may be, of course, that present practice with Humanities subjects in fact results in a distribution of awards which is at least not wildly out of line with the distribution of quality as measured by successive Research Assessment Exercises (the only measure currently available). Clearly, if that were the case, the present system would be justified, and there would be no need to address the considerable, and admitted, problems of operating any kind

of quota system. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that at least in the area of Classics and related subjects there is a lack of fit between the distribution of awards and the distribution of quality between departments across the country, and were that anecdotal evidence to be confirmed, we think that it should be a matter of continuing concern to the HRB.

On the other hand, I must emphasize that this by no means a unanimous view of the Standing Committee of CUCD: some members spoke in favour of quotas, others against (particularly in the light of the practical problems).

Yours sincerely,

[C.J.R., Chairman, CUCD]'.

Also in relation to the funding of research, I wrote the following letter (dated 10.12.97) on behalf of CUCD supporting the creation of a Humanities and Arts Research Council:

'Dear Baroness Blackstone,

Proposed Humanities Research Council

I write to you as Chairman of the Council of University Classical Departments in the UK to add our very strong support for the creation of a Humanities Research Council - or rather a Humanities and Arts Research Council - along the lines proposed in the Dearing Report.

The basic arguments for an HARC, to match the existing Research Councils, is made in the Report (and in the Appendix to the Report by the Chairman of the Humanities Research Board of the British Academy). That we think there is a powerful case for increased funding goes without saying; we believe that the Humanities - and still more the Arts - have consistently been underfunded, in proportion to the quality of work that has been and is being done. Without greater resources, and with the ever-greater pressures on direct university funding, we fear that our ability to maintain this country's leading position in Humanities research, which is everywhere recognized, is under serious threat.

The present situation, which - as I understand it - forces us to make a separate bid each year outside the Research Council mechanisms, and often to rely on opportunistic appeals to Ministers, is plainly unsatisfactory. I myself believe that the British Academy is in principle right to tie in the proposal for an HARC with the demand for additional resources; nevertheless the primary requirement appears to me to be for the regular place that an HARC would provide for the Humanities and the Arts within those structures that determine the overall levels of research funding in the UK.

Your government is committed to the principles of greater explicitness and transparency. It appears to us that the creation of a (properly resourced) HARC would be entirely consistent with those principles, and we hope that you will move towards it at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

[C.J.R., Chairman, CUCD]'.

[Copies to: The Rt Hon Mr David Blunkett, PC, MP; Dr Kim Howells, MP]

The view might be taken that Standing Committee ought to refer the large questions involved here and in the formal consultation processes to the wider membership. The Committee, however, takes the view (a) that it is in place to act for CUCD, (b) that its membership is sufficiently large and varied broadly to reflect the range of opinion that might be discovered among the membership (as is perhaps illustrated in the response to the HRB paper), and (c) that its resources, secretarial and otherwise, are in any case still not yet adequate to allow for the quantity of correspondence which would be involved. Response to the present Chairman's Report will no doubt indicate whether (b) is true. But I may add that the GSP pilot project itself (as described under (1) above) allowed a fairly widespread consultation on many of the central issues.

The most pressing of these is probably still that of the application of the concept of 'levels' within a subject area which includes a wide range of different disciplines and attracts students with widely different backgrounds, especially in terms of linguistic skills (and where the possibility of maintaining the diversity of options currently available will frequently depend on teaching different years together). In order to promote discussion of this issue, and keep it in members' minds, Standing Committee agreed to circulate a document, drafted by Peter Jones, and at his suggestion, at the beginning of the summer. This document, 'CLASSICS AND THE QAAHE', dated 27.7.98, was sent out to members on 7.8.98, with a request for comments to be sent to Peter Jones in Newcastle. I quote the preamble, which offers a convenient summary the problem:

'CUCD has been alerted by several of its constituent members to the possible dangers of the [QAA's] use of a simple, single-subject area as a template in planning its new Quality Assurance regime. In such areas, it is possible to envisage straightforward progress between 'levels' (of which eight are proposed, with university work beginning at 'level' 4). If such a model were transferred to Classics, it would have fatal consequences for most degrees in Classical subjects, especially in relation to beginners' language courses, which might well be assumed to occupy lower levels. Students would then be debarred from taking such courses in any year other than the first, or perhaps even at all. (One set of university administrators has already tried to intervene in course-planning in anticipation of such a move, though there are hopes that they may be headed off.) There is no sign yet that QAAHE will propose such a course, but CUCD thinks it appropriate to alert departments to the issue ...' [One may add there are also likely to be related problems at Master's level.]

Apart from these special items [(1)-(3) above], CUCD has continued with its normal business of monitoring developments, both in the UK (e.g. in the wake of the 1996 RAE), and abroad, with limited attempts at intervention where these seemed likely to be helpful. There have been major retrenchments in the provision of Classical subjects at universities especially in Australia, South Africa, and Canada. Geoff Eatough's statistics (up until 1997: figures for the present year were not available at the time of writing of this Report) show no sign of contraction of student demand for Classical subjects in the UK. But clearly there is no room for complacency; to the pressures on us from regulatory bodies (which also in some cases offer a positive opportunity for further articulation of what we do, and want to do) may be added the problems of the continuing reorganization, and contraction, of school examination syllabuses. Here it will be useful for CUCD to increase its level of communication with other

Classical organizations, like JACT and the CA, who are themselves taking steps to work more closely together.

Christopher Rowe
University of Durham
October 1998

Postscript:

I. I have now (12.10.98) received notification from the QAA of a further Subject Association Conference, to be held on 8.12.98 in Manchester. We are assured that '[the] subject-focused approach to the Agency's quality agenda' is to continue; the conference 'will focus on the Agency's new approach to quality and standards and its impact at subject/discipline level, and on the new model which has resulted from the consultation, aspects of which will be trialled this academic year. Information will be provided on the development work that has taken place since the results of the consultation were analysed in the early summer, and the conference aims to provide a forum for feedback and discussion' (Fiona Crozier, Development Officer, Development Directorate, QAA, 7.10.98). I shall unfortunately not be able to attend this meeting myself, but shall look for another member of Standing Committee to attend in my place.

II. The Standing Committee at its meeting on 10.10.98 duly formulated a response to RAE 1/98 (see above), which I expressed in a letter to HEFCE, dated 13.10.98, as follows:

RAE 1/98

The Standing Committee of the Council of University Classical Departments wishes to respond, on behalf of Council, to the questions raised in §§25/62 and 56/68 of RAE 1/98 ('RAE 2001: key decisions and issues for further consultation').

1. Publication of Material on the Internet

Our response is mixed, but on balance negative. While (a) it might be useful for the purposes of planning to have more detailed and systematic knowledge of the basis on which the ratings were assigned, (b) the (necessary?) exclusion of RA5 would mean that HEIs remained ignorant of what will apparently continue to be one of the main factors contributing to any given rating; (c) publication would be likely to increase the competitive aspect of the whole process, so also increasing the danger e.g. of the poaching of productive researchers, and of the unhelpful mimicking of successful submissions which might not provide the best models for other institutions or units.

2. Should a minimum proportion of staff be returned for the achievement of the highest ratings?

If there is a case for proposing a minimum proportion for the achievement of the highest ratings (presumably 5 and 5*?), our view is that the same argument also applies in the case of other ratings. If it matters that 'a unit should not be able to present itself as a 5 or a 5* unit when only a relatively small proportion of staff had been assessed as such' (§54), it is not clear why it should not also matter that a unit

should be able to present itself as a 4, 3a, 3b or 2 unit under the same circumstances. Thus we return a negative response to the question as it stands, that is, if the question relates exclusively to 'the highest ratings'.

III. HEFCE has now sent out a further consultation paper, in the shape of 'Circular letter number 36/98', on 'subject centres to support learning and teaching in higher education' (letter dated 5.10.98, and as usual addressed to and forwarded by John Richardson). 'Consultation seminars' will be held 'across the UK [in Edinburgh, London and Cardiff]' in November 'for representatives of HE institutions and other interested bodies', to 'stimulate debate, facilitate the exchange of views and to inform formal responses'; such responses are invited by Monday 7 December 1998. The consultation paper 'seeks the views of higher education institutions and interested bodies on proposals to establish Subject Centres for learning and teaching, a Generic Technology Centre and a Central Management Unit, in line with the recommendations of the report of the Review of the Computers in Teaching Initiative (CTI) and the Teaching and Learning Technology Support Network (TLTSN). The report is available at http://www.niss.ac.uk/ education/hefce/pub98/98_47.html or from HEFCE on 0117 931 7339.' Standing Committee will welcome suggestions from members about the shape any response from CUCD should take; it would be useful to hear especially from anyone who may be attending one of the 'consultation seminars', or who knows anyone who will be attending.

CLASSICS AT BRITISH UNIVERSITIES, 1997-98: STATISTICS

Geoffrey Eatough

This year it is a pleasure to welcome the Open University on board the statistical train, destination unclear. Twenty years ago I became OU tutor for the whole of Wales, outside the south eastern counties, for both the Greek and Roman Civilisation units. It was a heavy burden to add to the enormous teaching and administrative loads that I already had in my own college, but the decision to take on this task was one of the most important that I ever made. I learned that there were different ways of teaching Classics and that there was a body of potential classics students other than those that could be found in dwindling numbers in the schools, that nearly all of these OU students were eager to learn, and many of them outstandingly good. Having lived through a decade and a half of crisis since graduating, I found it good for my morale to be involved with this new kind of student. Some of the lessons that I learned with the OU I took back to my college which in turn benefitted. I do not pretend to know what is happening in the OU at the moment. I do know that the permanent staff within what we might think of as the Classics department has expanded enormously, and that their research output is receiving proper recognition. They are a university department just like those with which we are familiar, and yet, happily, of course, they are not.

My intention was to make this year a new start, to merge the OU statistics into those of the other universities, and to accept that from now onwards the figures would be a little different, obviously larger, but there would be a discernible continuity. However the OU figures are of what we might call a different order, as is clear from Table A where I have in the end been

forced to give the figures excluding OU, and then including OU. I say 'forced' because one has to look at the origin and reasons for the collecting of these statistics. This goes back to the crisis of the 1960s and the collapse of traditional classics when CUCD needed to know what was going on in the various institutions, and also to be able to generate its own statistics, which would give a more correct picture than the cruder figures emanating from official agencies. Of particular concern was the survival of Latin and Greek, and therefore the work which now had to be done in universities to teach Latin and Greek *ab initio* ; hence correspondents even now are requested to submit separate entries for Beginners Latin and Greek. There was the sense that Classics departments were under fire and that they needed ammunition to be able to defend themselves. This is unfortunately still the case, and it may also be the case in the OU. My guess is however that the OU and the traditional universities will be looked at in different ways by officialdom, and that when the questions are asked about the state of Classics in the country, i.e. how many people are studying the subject, the enquirers will not be thinking of the OU when they put in their question. I have therefore given the two sets of figures in Table A.

The OU does not submit figures under Honours students, merely under 'Other', which then turn up in the column 'All students in Classics departments'. The OU figures can be appreciated in Table C, and I say 'appreciated' rather than 'detected' since institutions are entitled to confidentiality. However the sheer size of the OU figures blows their cover. Even the most innumerate might demand explanation of the large increase in CS (Classical Studies) in the 'Other' table for 1997 as well as for Beginners Greek and NC (so-called Non-Classical, i.e. Classics taught to non-Classicists). I find the Greek particularly interesting, since the OU is apparently teaching more that twice the number of Beginners Greek students than the rest of the Classics departments in the country put together. This raises some astonishing questions if the figures from the other universities are reliable. The world may be standing on its head and we do not realise it. It should also make those who try and envisage how Classical subjects may be taught in ten years time think, since traditional universities too are becoming involved in teaching at a distance.

I shall now look at the figures excluding OU. The position remains healthy though we should bear in mind that there may be large changes in next year's statistics because of the introduction of tuition fees, or the year afterwards when potential students have had time to think of the enormity of tuition fees. The number of 'All Honours students' has risen by 115 and more importantly the FTE (Full-time equivalent) has risen by 194.1. The number of first year honours students has declined by a trivial amount, but the FTE has gone up by a significant amount. The overall staff/student ratio has risen considerably from 14.0 to 14.9 which makes last year's figure look like a statistical aberration, not my statistics of course, but their statistics, that is my correspondents'. If 1993 is also an aberration, a pattern can be detected of the kind one should expect. One has to say once again that there are vastly different staff/student ratios among the various departments to the extent that one could ask whether the term 'university teacher' is a meaningful lable.

In Table B one can see that there are 78 more students returned as Single Honours Classics Greek and Latin than in 1996, but 36 fewer students in the Joint Honours category. If one adds the FTE figures in both categories together for each year there is seemingly a rise of 48.5. The significant gains are once more however in Single Honours Classical Studies, Ancient History and Archaeology, despite the fact that the returns for Archaeology continue to collapse. Table C shows that the upward trend in SH Classical Studies and SH Ancient History is relentless, though in JH Classical Studies there has been a falling back. The figures

in Other must be viewed with suspicion. I think some correspondents have great difficulty in locating students in these categories, even supposing that they know the nature of the question being asked. One correspondent simply forgot to fill in this section. Since the section that had been filled was six months overdue, and this was the third or fourth time of asking, I had to move on without the figures. I think in other words that there is an underestimate in this area, but not serious since FTEs here are tiny.

I find it much more interesting to compare the 1997 figures with those of 1988 and ask whether we are not living in a post-Barron era. I have no wish to turn up old documents having reached the stage of life when only the future is interesting, but I was there, and some memories linger. It was believed that there were too many departments for the students who would be coming through, who were envisaged as students coming from schools. There was a need for departments to be of a critical size so that they could teach the correct span of subjects and generate research by scholar speaking to scholar within his locality. Classics departments would be best positioned if they could be in large universities which would have the resources to support them, since we were about to enter a bleak economic age when money would be in short supply. There would be also be economies of scale with larger departments.

The rise in the staff/student ratio (Table A) shows the economies of scale, though the economies have been harsher in some institutions than others. The SH Classics, Greek and Latin figures, Table B, show through their stability the limited market for student in this traditional area. A glance however at the figures for All Honours students in Classics departments show that the future did not behave as expected. There has been a growth of about 80% in the FTE figure. The cause of this has been the phenomenal expansion in Classical Studies and Ancient History which in JH have more than doubled and in SH have apparently nearly tripled and no doubt have tripled but this is masked by the inconsistencies in Archaeological returns. It would be valuable to know how many of these students came straight out of the schools, how many came out of the schools with a grade in a Classical subject, or how many were mature students. All three firsts in my own department this year were mature students, something we have come almost to expect, one of them a young woman who took three years off from a career nursing to take an almost flawless first in Ancient History.

Last year I mentioned that three departments which had managed to keep giving us statistics had finally gone out of business. I should mention this year that three departments which in 1988 were expected to go out of business survived by different strategems. I have a vivid memory of the head of one of those departments pleading to be given breathing space so that he could save his department. He did and it flourishes, although it can be classified among the smaller departments. Another which was reduced to one teacher, and now doubt they thought they were doing well, when the department had two, which is where even the knowledgable think it still rests, has in fact 3.5 staff and can continue to rise. The third is assuming large proportions and it seems to me is destined to become a major player, to borrow jargon from another field.

We have become acutely aware that there is a scattering of people teaching some Classics in a number of institutions from which we do not take statistics. We have decided to track them down; we have their addresses or hope to acquire them, and perhaps you can help, if you think there could be someone lurking unnoticed. Sometime in the early '80s while still tutoring with the OU I was asked to give a very brief talk in Cardiff to a gathering of

academics and technical experts from BT on my experiences of long distance teaching by telephone, using equipment by which one could conduct a seminar with groups in various centres in Wales at the same time. At this meeting we were introduced to video-conferencing equipment which had just been developed and has become commonplace. At the time Classics departments were being relocated, not always with happy consequences, the Internet was being developed which in theory at least has made a nonsense of some assumptions about a critical scholarly mass in a particular locality. One can have more to say, because of shared interests, to someone in Puget Sound than to someone on your own corridor, and now you can write to them and read the instant reply.

It seems that the number of Postgraduates, presumably those doing research degrees has dropped by 71, and the number of those doing Taught Masters has risen by 33. This is an area which some expect to be badly affected by the introduction of tuition fees at undergraduate level, since students will be so heavily in debt that they will not be able to contemplate self-financed masters. We shall have to wait three years to see if this is true. There is also an assumption, almost a desire in some parts of the press, that fees will mean students opt for vocational degrees. Casual conversations with American academics suggest that there might be some truth in this. The introduction of fees could mean that more students will choose to study at a local university, in which case there might be some redistribution of power, that is student numbers, among existing Classics departments. Competition among departments will lead to innovation and in some cases co-operation with adjacent departments leading to untraditional degrees. But the future must belong to some committee; my concern with statistics, an historical activity.

Geoffrey Eatough
University of Wales, Lampeter

TABLE A

	All Hons students in Classics depts.	**All students in Classics depts.**	**UGC figure for Hons. students in Class.**	**Staff in Classics depts.**	**Overall Staff/ Student**	**1st yr. Hons. students**	**UCAS total admissions in Class.**
1986	3032	6415	1671*	354.6	9.3	1059	567
	(2153.2)	(3291.3)				(684.2)	
1987	3287	6284	1699*	334.3	9.9	1276	557
	(2258.4)	(3301.9)				(753)	
1988	3117	6142	1157	326.5	10.0	1052	591
	(2232.4)	(3276.6)	1680*			(700.5)	

1989	3740	7396	1240	353.5	10.6	1419	698
	(2534)	(3750.3)	1782*			(865.1)	
1990	3935	7378	1329	355.7	11.4	1443	737
	(2744.1)	(4049.1)	1869*			(911.9)	
1991	3998	8206	1466	348.3	12.4	1437	813
	(2970.6)	(4306.1)	2006*			(1011.5)	
1992	4649	8911	1638	347.4	14.2	1692	
	(3445.6)	(4924.7)	2178*			(1194.7)	
1993	5214	9549	1790	351.8	15.1	1939	659
	(3848.3)	(5316.1)				(1338.5)	
1994	5731	9731	2310§	378.6	14.4	2168	669
	(4010.8)	(5445.4)				(1340.2)	
1995	5606	9356	2420§	361.2	14.7	2152	643
	(3804.3)	(5317.1)				(1287.9)	
1996	5647	9269	2552§	364.5	14.0	2122	
	(3812.3)	(5095)				(1271.7)	
1997	5762	9219	2596§	356	14.9	2109	999
	(4006.4)	(5288.6)				(1350.6)	

	[including	16616		363			
	OU figures]	(6252.1)					
1998	5610	9878	2678§	350.7	14.7	2071	1012
	(3898.3)	(5148)				(1290.6)	
	[including	16610					
	OU figures]	(6118.6)					
1999	5869	8882		342.7	15.3	2275	1012
	(4120.9)	(5233.4)				(1405.4)	
	[including	18922					
	OU figures]	(6961.4)					
2000	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

	Classics, Greek, Latin	**Classics, Greek, Latin**	**Class. Stds., Anc. Hist., Archaeology**	**Class. Stds., Anc. Hist., Archaeology**
	SH	**JH**	**SH**	**JH**

1986	1187	276	819	750
	(1045.6)	(138.1)	(623.4)	(346.1)
1987	1327	211	1030	717
	(1136.8)	(101.9)	(684.9)	(334.8)
1988	1231	224	779	883
	(1069.7)	(107.3)	(647.5)	(398.9)
1989	1253	251	1057	1179
	(1101.1)	(124.7)	(799.9)	(508.4)
1990	1256	290	1148	1241
	(1175)	(139.2)	(926.4)	(503.5)
1991	1278	288	1416	1016
	(1199.8)	(135.3)	(1162.9)	(472.6)
1992	1294	328	1648	1379
	(1210.1)	(153.7)	(1472.6)	(609.2)
1993	1345	269	1813	1787
	(1263.6)	(139.2)	(1629.7)	(815.8)
1994	1335	307	2370	1719

	(1197.9)	(148)	(1888.5)	(776.4)
1995	1234	323	2099	1950
	(1162.2)	(139)	(1661.1)	(842)
1996	1165	299	2011	2172
	(1098.1)	(129.7)	(1703.9)	(880.6)
1997	1243	263	2207	2049
	(1158.5)	(117.8)	(1822.3)	(907.8)
1998	1241	333	2001	2035
	(1181.4)	(155)	(1710.6)	(851.3)
1999	1178	298	2375	2018
	(1073.7)	(119.5)	(2036.2)	(891.5)
2000	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**
1992	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)

1993	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)
1994	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)
1995	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)
1996	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)
1997	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)
1998	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)
1999	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)
2000	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)

	OTHER										
	C	**G**	**L**	**CS**	**AH**	**ARC**	**BG**	**BL**	**NC**	**PG**	**TM**
1992	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)
1993	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)
1994	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)
1995	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)
1996	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)
1997	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)
1998	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)
1999	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)
2000	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.

"Graduateness"

CUCD Conference Panel at the Classical Association, Lampeter 1998

I. The Dearing Quality Agenda - Robin Jackson, QAA
II. The Role of the Ancient Languages - Charlotte Rouché, KCL
III. Discussion

For its annual panel at the Classical Association Conference, CUCD sought to bring together, under the heading of an interesting neologism born out of QAA's canvassing of national views on the nature of "graduate outcomes", a number of issues arising out of CUCD's recent QAA-funded survey of current practice in UK classical degree programmes. Dr Robin Jackson of the QAA spoke on "The Dearing Quality Agenda"; Christopher Rowe explained the background to the survey, its general findings, and some possible next stages (now subsumed and updated in the Chairman's Report earlier in this issue); and Charlotte Roueché discussed "The Role of the Ancient Languages", developing ideas aired in her 1997 article on this subject in *Dialogos*. Since the original article may not be readily accessible to all readers of the *Bulletin* - arguably the constituency to whom it is of greatest pertinence and interest - it is reprinted separately in this issue, by kind permission of the author and editors.

Thanks to Ed Bispham, Gillian Clark, John Davies, Lynn Fotheringham, Christopher Gill, Doug Lee, Stan Ireland, Alison Sharrock, and all whose contributions have eluded report.

I. The Dearing Quality Agenda

Robin Jackson, QAA

QAA was formed in 1997 to bring together the different QA bodies of the Universities and funding bodies. RJ is now moving to CVCP, "from the regulatory side to the lobbying side". There has been a shift in the wake of Dearing from quality to standards as the focus - away from the old TQA-style forms of evaluation, concerned with institutions' and departments' delivery of their own aims and claims, to a new emphasis on student experience and outcomes. Although students have benefited from the effects of the old mechanisms, those mechanisms have been cumbersome and expensive, involving much duplication of effort, and badly need streamlining. What Dearing did was to shift the focus unexpectedly strongly on to academic standards, suggesting a streamlined, lighter-touch assurance process if institutions could be clearer about what they offered.

In the light of this new approach, the Agency has recently published its own statement of what it proposes. The elements are three: specification of what we offer; new mechanisms of

review; and public information. The first proposes a national framework of levels for programmes and awards at a qualifications level; at a subject level, groups will be set up in each subject to set up "subject benchmark information", 40-50 in total, generating national material about what's agreed about expectations of degrees in the subject. 3 pilot groups are under way, with a second wave imminent. There are also programme specifications proposed within that framework, so each degree would explain how its individual programme fits within the national framework. And there will be nationally-published codes of practice as well as qualifications, subjects, programmes.The Agency is working to a timetable of 2000-1, and it is not yet clear what happens to the tail end of TQA; Classics may yet escape TQA entirely, if we go straight into the new model. A periodic institutional review is still envisaged (every 5 years or so), but there will also be subject-based reviews of the health of the discipline by CUCD-like groups.

To this end, three pilot reviews (History, Chemistry, Law) are under way; Classics might be invited into the second wave around Christmas. Classics is the smallest of the 41 subject area groups proposed - all of Engineering, for example, being subsumed in a single group. The information produced is going to be at a fairly high level of generality: about standards, "graduateness", at the *lowest* level - the expectations for a 3rd class degree. The reason for the focus on this lower threshold is that the Agency wants to avoid normalisation of standards, but does want to assure that nobody falls below an acceptable minimum. The HEQC found the whole notion of thresholds problematic, and RJ's own view is that it will be quite hard for subject groups to define threshold standards; it may turn out that they propose "modal" rather than "threshold" standards (II.2 kinds of expectations). The focus is on the single-honours degree rather than modular, highly-flexibility programmes, despite the fact that the former are in decline against the latter.

On the vexed issue of external examiners, Dearing's proposal of a professional cadre was coldly received; the Agency has tried to adapt this sensibly, and proposes that the system continues as now, but with one examiner reporting to the Agency. There are problems perceived with even this watered-down version: conflict of interests (externals report to QAA, while at the same time being responsible for the subject and standards); codes of practice, institutional reviews and so on may deal with this, but the Agency consultation document itself proposes a different model, involving a new body. This is, however, a genuine consultation; there is a real opportunity to influence the Agency's thinking.

II. The Role of the Ancient Languages

Charlotte Rouché (King's College London)

Our experience of teaching language is changing: we are teaching larger groups, and the students' own school experience of language is different. They no longer "stay their eye" on the mechanism through which they're communicating; modern immersive language teaching no longer asks students to do that. For students to understand a language like English, we have to load them up with metalanguage; Thomas Arnold himself made the point that it is impossible to teach people philology through their own spoken language.

The designers of the courses are people who learned their classical languages at school. In mountaineering terms, the course designers are on Mt Olympus already, far remote from the

actual beginners' language experience of the students themselves - most of whom realise in their second week that they will never get out of the foothills. We must believe there's a profound intrinsic value in the study of language; we are offering languages that are exceptionally clear in showing them the structure of how language works. Language has become much more important in the last 15 years, especially with the emergence of language as the model we use to understand the computer. What we now need is a very intelligent modern textbook with linguistic input that will enable students to emerge with a thorough grasp of the nature of an inflected language. Yet it is important that this should not take the form of a course where students simply write a general essay at the end of the year on what a verb is; the outcome must be that students should be able to *use* the language.

III. Discussion

Two particular features of Classics make the defining of thresholds and standards especially difficult in our case. The first is our high level of modularity. No UK Department has a complete "cafeteria" modularisation, but many offer a very wide, and potentially incoherent, plurality of disciplines which the student is empowered to combine very freely. (Some Departments insist on study across a certain number of disciplines, a model with much to be said for it.) The second feature is our use of multiple levels in language teaching, where Classics is unusual in offering many different language-attainment entrance levels and different outcome points for each.

Here a main thread in the discussion was the need to find an acceptable academic justification of the widespread pattern of a single year's classical language, which is then dropped. We need to be able to define an outcome in terms of key skills within our Classical degree programmes, for which a defence in terms of linguistic skills alone cannot suffice. It has to relate to other elements of the degree programme, such as elementary tasks in ancient-history source-handling. The strongest argument may be the one which stresses that what students will be doing in their second and third years will involve useful language.

We are not being asked to move to a single level; rather, what we need to do is to justify the present diversity of levels in a coherent framework. Beginners' language need not be confined to a single year, but institutions do need to legitimate diversity publicly and nationally. Schools, after all, have long been engaged in such a process of justification, and have much experience we can usefully share.

Greek after Pentecost: The Arguments for Ancient Language[1]

Charlotte Roueché

The writer of the Acts of the Apostles has a heavy responsibility to bear. At the beginning of his account of the spread of Christianity, a religion equally accessible and appropriate to all from wherever they came, the events of the day of Pentecost are very powerfully presented. The mark of the arrival of the Holy Spirit is the collapse of the linguistic confusion which had been established in the world at the time that the Tower of Babel was destroyed. 'We all hear

them tell, in our own tongue, the wonderful works of God'.[2] This is a truth which can break through every barrier set up by language. There is to be no 'sacred tongue' - although at various times in their history the Christian churches have been tempted to attribute that status to various languages: Greek, Latin or seventeenth-century English.

The story makes a very powerful point; but it has perhaps left in its wake a dangerous aftermath: a subconscious feeling that the acquisition of another language requires (divine) inspiration. The corollary, of course, is that the uninspired cannot hope to learn: 'I can't learn languages' is the semantically empty statement of many desperate students. The implication is that the only means by which language can be acquired will be the 'inspiration' provided by the tutor, who must somehow transfer his knowledge into the brain of the student.

The first response to this can always be that the student's ability to make this statement indicates that he has learnt at least one language. In the 1990s, to mention issues of English language-teaching and usage in almost any company is to open the floodgates for laments about falling standards and pervasive inarticulateness. However the case may be, it is certainly true that the decision not to teach formal English grammar means that many young English-speaking people do not realize the nature of their achievement in mastering their own language, and often feel extremely unconfident about their ability to develop it. This is further extended by the use of 'immersion' methods to teach modern languages. Such an approach has opened up communication for untold numbers of students, by urging the importance of fluency: launching into the air, rather than clinging with desperate claws to the nest of accuracy. However, a by-product can sometimes be that the student who has learnt to communicate in a foreign language cannot perceive the mechanisms which he has mastered, any more than the bird understands the aerodynamics of its flight. 'Before she knew it, she was speaking French' can dangerously reinforce a subconscious belief that the essential requirement is either predisposition - like a bird, you have to be born to it - or inspiration, 'the gift of speaking in tongues'.

The decision to withdraw from teaching grammar was not an irrational one. There was, of course, a real concern to avoid imposing a rigid 'correct' form of language on people from varying backgrounds. While this can be - and often is - decried as social engineering or weak-willed pandering to political correctness, the history of, for example, Modern Greek provides a good example of the pitfalls involved in trying to establish a 'pure' form of language. But perhaps the real impetus came from the difficulty of the enterprise. The lack of inflection in English means that grammatical distinctions always have to be presented as an add-on: the word 'work' can only be identified as a verb or a noun by tacking on a statement to that effect. The consequence is that grammatical analysis can appear to be an unnecessary extra, as conjured up in the delightful scene in chapter 24 of *Middlemarch* , where Mrs. Garth is testing her children on Lindley Murray's *English Grammar* (1795), an exercise which seems to require learning complex definitions by heart.

This little vignette is a significant contribution to the picture of the Garths - excellent and intelligent people, but not gentry. The gentry - at least the men - learnt their English grammar by learning Latin, a language where the need to explain is imposed by the constant inflections. It is infinitely simpler to understand why you need to distinguish between nominative and accusative in mastering such a language, and the lessons can then be imported back to the opacity of English. Thomas Arnold commented on the didactic value of 'the Greek and Latin languages, in themselves so perfect, and at the same time freed from the

insuperable difficulty which must attend any attempt to teach boys philology through the medium of their own spoken language'.[3]

So by learning Latin and Greek a student could, it was felt, become more agile in handling his own tongue, broaden his English vocabulary and, incidentally, obtain access to a vast and distinguished literature. The longevity of this system of education is explained in part by the wealth and range of the literatures available in Latin and Greek: over the centuries since the Renaissance, the central texts of the curriculum have constantly shifted. Moreover, the history of the reading of classical texts is the history of finding what the reader is seeking. There has been much study of this in recent years, both academic surveys such as Christopher Robinson's study of the uses of Lucian or fragments drawn from personal experience, such as Eduard Fraenkel's reminiscence of Horace's *Integer vitae* (Ode I, 22) set to music and sung at German schools in the nineteenth century on the occasion of funerals. The creative potential of such work is exemplified in George Steiner's masterful *Antigones*, which leaves the reader convinced that the classical tradition is ineradicably entwined in our thought.[4]

But while the uses of Latin and Greek literature in western education have been well documented, it is easy for classicists, interested in the tradition of the authors they study, to forget that one of the fundamental reasons for choosing to study these languages, and the cultures to which they gave access, was that these were the sacred languages of Christianity. Greek gave access to the New Testament, and sometimes also the Old: at Arnold's Rugby boys read the Old Testament in the Septuagint. Latin has a less direct claim, but was the language of Jerome and Augustine, as well as - for millions - the language of the liturgy and the Vulgate. Lurking in the subconscious was the medieval concept of trilinguism: the three languages used by Pilate on the cross of Christ were the languages of sacred truth, and so rightly used in the formation of an educated clergy.[5] Although, Since the reformation, critics had regularly observed that the teaching of the language and culture of pagan societies was not appropriate for the clergy, this criticism was never effective; instead, many children in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries studied their classical authors with a learned local vicar.[7]

This aspect of a 'classical' education comes out very clearly again in *Middlemarch* (chapter 7) where the most learned of all vicars, the symbolically named Mr. Casaubon, embodies such learning and so wins the affections of Dorothea:

It was not entirely out of devotion to her future husband that she wished to know Latin and Greek. Those provinces of masculine knowledge seemed to her a standing-ground from which all truth could be seen more truly. As it was, she constantly doubted her own conclusions, because she felt her own ignorance: how could she be confident that one-roomed cottages were not for the glory of God, when men who knew the classics appeared to conciliate indifference to the cottages with zeal for the glory. Perhaps even Hebrew might be necessary - at least the alphabet and a few roots - in order to arrive at the core of things, and judge soundly on the social duties of the Christian.

The link between a classical education and a Christian understanding is here explicit.

The ironies of Middlemarch, and the final end of Mr. Casaubon and his polyglot *Key to all Mythologies* are of course an indication of the collapse of one approach to teaching the Classics. Two years later (1873) John Stuart Mill's *Autobiography* appeared, charting the education of a young prodigy who, despite starting Greek at three and Latin at eight, had an

education from his radical father untainted by the superstitions of religion. Mill learned the ancient languages solely to read the ancient authors (with a strong preference for prose). For once the goal of access to the sacred texts was removed, the rationale for teaching the ancient languages was presented purely in terms of the value of studying ancient literature and society; that culture therefore had to be presented as intrinsically more worthy of study than others. This idea was already under attack in the nineteenth century; Mill refers to 'educational reformers' who 'entertain the ill-judged proposal of discarding those languages altogether from general education'. He dismisses 'the modicum of Latin and Greek commonly taught to schoolboys'. His response is to suggest that boys should be taught the languages earlier and more rapidly, holding his own education up as a - not entirely convincing - model.

The debate (discussed by Christopher Stray, with reference to the Cambridge Tripos, in the same issue of *Dialogos*) was about to be thrown into further confusion. In the same year that Mill's *Autobiography* appeared, Heinrich Schliemann uncovered the walls of Troy. Classical studies were about to enter a new era: the ancient languages now gave access to the study of a culture which was to be enriched each year by more and more discoveries. The classical past was not a fixed landscape, but a lively and dynamic group of societies inhabited by real people who were becoming more and more accessible. In 1869 Thomas Cook had conducted his first tour up the Nile; from now on increasing numbers of people were to have first-hand access to the monuments of the ancient cultures of the Mediterranean.

All this has immeasurably enriched classical studies. But it is important to remember the extent to which they have had an alienating effect. We see, ever more clearly, the societies of ancient Greece and Rome in their own right, free-standing and different. We can no longer appropriate them as easily as our ancestors did. For John Stuart Mill, even without the 'sacred texts', the literature of the ancient world, taught to him so young, was the medium through which his thought had been born. He was still within the tradition of those fathers of the American Revolution who not only found it natural to write to the press as 'Caesar', 'Cato', 'Brutus' or 'Publius', but could seriously propose the adoption of Greek as the national language of the new republic - one of the great lost opportunities of history.[7]

Instead, modern developments have turned Latin and Greek into languages to be learned solely in order to reach, and study, a distant civilization; and the study of that culture must compete with all the other delights on offer in the school curriculum. In England, as well as finding ways to entice students, the campaign goes on to persuade the government - and the voters - that Classics should be taught. Traditionally in England the debate has always had a strong utilitarian dimension. In the mid-nineteenth century there was already considerable pressure from parents for more relevant subjects: Andew Amos lectured in 1846 to the boys of the City of London School 'On the Advantages of a Classical Education as an auxiliary to a Commercial Education'.[8] The unchanging nature of English attitudes is perhaps indicated by the fact that one booklet produced in the more recent debates is called *Classics in the Market-Place*.[9] From the other end of the spectrum, generations of schoolboys trained in the 'dead languages', in their most hidebound form, came as adults to attack the 'Casaubon' tradition. Perhaps the most eloquent of all critics of the nineteenth-century world, Lytton Strachey, chose Thomas Arnold as one of the four figures to be clinically and brilliantly analysed in *Eminent Victorians* (first published in 1918). He criticises Arnold for the prominence given in the curriculum at Rugby to 'the dead languages of Greece and Rome'; interestingly, he quotes with disapprobation a comment of Arnold's that, as time went on, he became 'increasingly convinced that it is not knowledge, but the means of gaining knowledge, which I have to teach.'

The attack on Classics as an education has been going on for so long that the defenders have had plenty of time to prepare their responses and their counter-attacks. The subject has been defended with exemplary energy and imagination in the English-speaking world: new teaching materials abound. The Perseus project, based at Tufts University, is a model project, using modern technology to present the ancient world - both artefacts, places and texts - in a stimulating and integrated form. In particular, there has been a continuing revolution in the teaching of language - especially, in England, since the early 1960s, when Oxford and Cambridge dropped the compulsory requirement for Latin. It is not surprising that a language which is taught as a necessary requirement - Ancient Greek in Greece, Irish in Ireland, Latin in Italy - tends to be taught by old-fashioned methods. In England the 1960s saw new attempts to lure students, such as the Nuffield Latin project, which produced the Cambridge Latin Course, still widely used and very accessible. A few years later the Joint Association of Classical Teachers sponsored the production of *Reading Greek*. Text-books have become more inviting, filled with photographs of the Parthenon, or vase-paintings of women weaving, to remind the student of the goal which lies ahead. New courses continue to be written; and it is unsurprising that the techniques of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) should be being used as well. A useful overview of such programs has recently appeared in what is itself an exemplary undertaking, the excellent electronic journal *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*,[10] and I have been looking closely at one such product, Donald J. Mastronarde's, *Introduction to Attic Greek: An Electronic Workbook*.[11]

In the introduction to *Reading Greek* the moving spirit behind the project, Kenneth Dover, wrote:

There is one criterion, and one only, by which a course for the learners of a language no longer spoken should be judged: the efficiency and speed with which it brings them to the stage of reading texts in the original language with precision, understanding and enjoyment.[12]

When I first started to teach Greek to first-year undergraduates I think that I would have taken that sentence to be self-evident; and for several years I used *Reading Greek* with great profit. But times change, and teaching teaches. More recently, I have been teaching larger groups of students, who have not learned an ancient language before; for practical reasons, *Reading Greek*, which teaches through the presentation of long passages, became unwieldy. Moreover, teaching a large group of students of varying abilities, who are taking a compulsory language unit to fulfil a degree requirement, requires to be undertaken in a different spirit. Whatever system is used, some of the people seated in that room will probably never 'read texts in the original language with precision, understanding and enjoyment' - not because they lack divine inspiration, but because, following on Mill's point, they have started too late; many of them will not have time to reach that point before they are catapulted into the world of earning their living, although they may obtain the 'modicum of Latin and Greek' to which Mill referred. What use is all of this to them?

If they are presented with the study of these languages as a journey up a mountain, undertaken solely for the view from the top, there is a moment on the journey when they rightly become dispirited. There are some achievable viewpoints on the way up the slope. There is the stop - quite early on - when they see obscure vocabulary in their own language explained; there is another when they find themselves understanding some of the terminology of ancient institutions; but both of these could be reached by simpler routes. If we accept,

therefore, that these languages are being learnt solely in order to reach the glories of classical culture in their fullness, then perhaps we should restrict teaching to a small and dedicated group of enthusiasts.

But it may be that the arguments for teaching these languages should be re-assessed; perhaps we should look again at the traditional description of language-learning as a training for the mind. Most university teachers currently in post were taught the ancient languages at school, and their experience has been overlaid by the deployment of those languages; they are likely to overlook the educational importance of the process itself. Every lesson in a foreign language should be an exercise in expanding the sensibilities and exercising the energies of the brain. The child who learns to call a dog a dog is always congratulated by those around him; but he has carried out a standard human function. There is a law of diminishing returns; we exclaim with delight at the first words, but offer very few prizes to young people as they proceed up the ladder of their own language, and try to use it for more and more complex meanings. It is easier to assess and reward the step into foreign languages, whether to *chien* or to *canis*. Then comes the move from *canis* to *canem*. This is not of value just because in future you will know what 'canine' means, nor solely because you can translate *cave canem* under the picture in your Latin book, or on your holiday visit to Pompeii. It is also, and perhaps principally, of value because you have been forced to think about how words perform, the machinery of meaning, in a way that was never necessary when you learnt 'dog'.

The easiest way to expose that machinery to people is by teaching them a language other than their own (as Arnold observed); and an inflected language exposes the working parts of language with particular clarity. But the learning must involve both memorizing and rigorous practice. Rather than awaiting the descent of the holy spirit of language, the student must grasp and wrestle with it if he or she is to master it - Jacob's fight and his dream would here be a better image than that of Pentecost. This is a form of mental gymnastics which (it might be argued) is also provided by mathematics; but learning a precise and inflected language both limbers up the muscles of the mind and at the same time reinforces and builds the linguistic and communicative power of the student. Furthermore, it is rendered infinitely more fulfilling than mathematics because language incorporates both precision and ambiguity. Dog, *chien* and *canis* do not mean the same thing; each of them comes with its own cultural baggage, determined by the society from which it has come. Learning a language which requires great accuracy in its internal structures, while never offering absolute equivalents, is a most exacting and mind-expanding occupation. Moreover, Greek in particular has a whole further dimension to offer, in that the student of Greek is in theory able to look at the development of a language, both its mechanisms and its meanings, over three thousand years - a challenge and an opportunity to consider the very nature of language which are usually ignored.

Such an approach might have seemed old-fashioned twenty years ago; but we have come recently to see that we are beset by languages on every side. One of the most exciting of all sciences which has developed in the last half-century is that of linguistics - using the study of language to understand human construction of meaning - and it is to be regretted that it is so often allowed to remain in its own compartment, rather than being used to enrich more general language-teaching. Science and the new technologies - whether computing or genetics - are all languages. The content may change; the transferable skill which the modern graduate increasingly needs is the proven ability to master a complex language. It is noticeable that, as far back as 1990, when *Classics in the Market-Place* was commissioned, the employers questioned regularly singled out computing and information technology as an

area where Classics graduates proved particularly well-prepared. You cannot learn computing languages by the 'immersion method'; you have to understand the precisions by which all languages are governed. At a basic level, you need to know whether 'Abracadabra' or 'Open Sesame' is the correct command; however attractive the graphics, your computer will behave like the most old-fashioned and meticulous classics teacher if you make an error. Moreover, if you move to the next stage, and plan to make computers work for you, it is by the manipulation of language that you will do so - something akin to Greek prose composition. There is therefore a double suitability about using the computer to reinforce language teaching. It is also probably easier to accept the computer's rebuke when you make a mistake; it is not adversarial, simply sure. (This quiet confidence which is such a characteristic of computers means, incidentally, that it is particularly important to avoid errors: *strategos* does *not* mean goddess, as in Mastronarde's Pronunciation Guide, unit six).

So a computer-based workbook for Ancient Greek is very welcome. The first great asset which Mastronarde's program has is consistency. The first two modules are a Pronunciation Guide, with some good supplementary material which can be ignored or summoned up, and Pronunciation Practice. This is certainly better than anything a human teacher can offer, since it is remorselessly consistent; and any human teacher over a certain age, or reasonably travelled, has been exposed to so many pronunciations of Greek that consistency becomes less and less easy. This is one of the many points, too, where the computer allows the student to get over the hurdle of embarrassment; he or she can mutter away to the screen in private. The next module, on accents, is very helpfully presented, with an intelligent explanation of their origin, supported by pictorial examples of their development. The pitch of accents is well observed in the presentation of pronunciation, and it would be hard to present the material so consistently and comprehensibly in class. All this would have been welcome to Dorothea, since 'the answers she got to some timid questions about the value of the Greek accents gave her a painful suspicion that here indeed there might be secrets not capable of explanation to a woman's reason'.

The next stage, however, comes as rather a shock. The modules are: Verb Forms, Noun Forms, Vocabulary and Principal Parts. It is only at this point that the user grasps fully that this material is presented as a supplement to the author's hard copy book, *Introduction to Attic Greek*.[13] As the description on the cover says, the program can be customized to go with other text books; but it is slightly disappointing, after the full presentation of pronunciation and accents, to be confronted with nouns and verbs with no explanations - beyond paradigms - available from within the program. The cost, therefore, is not limited to the £21.95 which the electronic workbook itself costs.

The issue of cost would certainly, therefore, influence any decision as to whether to use this as a course-book. At Berkeley, where Mastronarde and his workbook originate, such a program can presumably be made available to all students; it will be several years before we will be able to assume that every student in a British classroom has unhindered access to a computer, and can be sent off to do his homework on it. But philosophically there is much to be said for such a division. It represents, in a way, the division discussed above - between the eventual goal, of unravelling the texts, which will probably continue to be read in books, and the parallel activity, of manipulating and mastering language. This approach separates out the two: the book presents the texts, while the computer program aims to support the student in memorizing and analysing language. There are long drills of parsing, of a kind which it would be tedious to present in class or on paper; on the computer they become a reasonably

attractive pastime, without the embarrassment of exposing your failures to anyone but yourself.

This is only a beginning. There are no syntactical tests here, and these would be the obvious next step; beyond those lie the possibilities offered within the Perseus programme, where you can proceed from a Greek text straight to the analysis and explanation of different words. It would of course be possible to wander back off down the 'ancient culture' path: vocabulary could be illustrated by appropriate pictures. But the great strength of this program is that it elevates elements of language learning that have recently tended to be obscured - the remorseless precision of a computer is properly used to reinforce the remorseless precision of the paradigm of *histemi*. There are strong arguments for promoting, rather than veiling, the analytical exercise which is learning and mastering ancient Latin or Greek. Those of us who stand inside the citadel will be inspired by George Steiner's argument that the thought and mythology of Ancient Greece are 'indwelling in our semantics, in the fundamental grammar of our perceptions and enunciations';[14] but the young, who stand outside, often deliberately denied access to their own past by their education, will not necessarily see the exploration of that culture as a route to clearer understanding of themselves. Instead, perhaps we should reverse the argument, and follow in the footsteps of a great educator, Thomas Arnold. 'The study of language', he said 'seems to me as if it was given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth; and the Greek and Latin languages seem the very instruments by which this is to be effected'.[15] Lytton Strachey cited this passage too with disdain; but, without having to return to nineteenth century teaching methods, we are now better placed to appreciate the essence of Arnold's observation. The great achievements of the classical cultures remain essential objects of study, constantly enriched by new discoveries; but in teaching the languages of those cultures we can offer the young, not a mindless mechanism by which to reach a distant goal, but nothing less than language itself. Instead of the culture's validating the language, the language-learning process itself should be the lure - and what better lure than the bland shining screen of the computer? It is to be hoped that this computer-based initiative may stimulate a more robust defence of the desirability of learning the ancient languages in order to approach the multi-faceted *logos* which is, 'in the beginning', the essence of language.

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References

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[4] Robinson, *Lucian and his influence in Europe* (London 1979); E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford 1957), 184; G. Steiner, *Antigones* (Oxford 1984).

[5] See the very full study by Francis J. Thomson, 'Saints Cyril and Methodius and a Mythical Western Heresy: Trilinguism. A Contribution to the Study of Patristic and Mediaeval Theories of Sacred Languages', *Analecta Bollandiana* 110 (1992) 67-122.
[6] L. Clarke, *Classical Education in Britain, 1500-1900* (Cambridge 1959), 43-4, 82-4)
[7] Mumford Jones, *O Strange New World* (New York 1964), 331.
[8] Clarke, (above, n.5), 86-7, 170.
[9] Commissioned by the Council of University Classical Departments and published by them in May 1990.
[10] *BMCR* 95.2.11: Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) in the Learning of Greek and Latin (Reviews of CAI software, by divers hands), with an Introduction by William A. Johnson).
[11] University of California Press, 1995: 4 HD disks, for use on a Macintosh. Minimum requirements: 030 processor; 4MB RAM; Mac OS 6.0.4 (System 7 recommended).
[12] Joint Association of Classical Teachers, *Reading Greek* (Cambridge 1978), vii.
[13] University of California Press, 1993, currently selling for £14.95.
[14] Steiner, *Antigones*, 138
[15] Stanley, Life and Correspondence I, 138.
