

Editorial

This is the last *JACT Review* for which the current JACT Features Editor has assumed responsibility. Since Autumn 1988 three broad themes have been explored: suggestions for teaching in the classroom, classics in Europe, and topics of general, scholarly interest. Recently emphasis has been given to the use of museum collections; and in this issue an article on the potential of video and television for classics suggests a new thread of enquiry. The Features Editor is as always very grateful to all his authors and should, in particular like to thank the three professional colleagues whose contributions appear this issue. The close links and shared interests among classicists from primary schools to universities is one of the great strengths of our subject, and is something that the *JACT Review* aims to reflect.

The JACT Features Editor should like to thank his fellow editors, his editorial advisors, fellow officers of JACT, CUPPS, and his valued readers for their support and encouragement over the past five years.

Letter

To the Editors of *JACT Review*

Sirs,

It was an excellent idea to commission an article about modern literary theory (Simon Goldhill, 'Who's Afraid of Literary Theory?', *JACT Review* Autumn 1991). I am sure that Dr Goldhill's explanations of structuralism and related matters will have been found useful by many readers; it is refreshing to find an adept in literary theory who is so ready to share his enthusiasm with a wider audience, and to explain it in intelligible terms. Nonetheless, Dr Goldhill writes very much from the adept's point of view, and I think it is important to try to make clear that his is not the only possible approach to these matters.

Dr Goldhill offers us a stark choice between commitment to Theory and 'just doing what we do' as classicists. This is said to be a confrontation in which only one side (the former) is 'intellectually tenable'; those classicists who do not adopt a modern theoretical attitude are stigmatised as 'unreflective' and as having their 'heads in the sand'. This confrontational model is a caricature. It is utterly unfair to a large number of my (and his) classicist colleagues, of whom it is certainly not true to say that they just churn out their scholarly work without thinking what they are doing. One can hardly be a classical scholar nowadays – at least not in Newcastle – without constantly asking questions about method, distinguishing good from bad arguments, and trying to decide what questions can and cannot be answered on the basis of the evidence we have. This is all necessary in pursuit of the aim which Dr Goldhill claims to share – that of understanding the ancient world.

There appears to be no room in Dr Goldhill's scheme of things for the impartial investigator, who has examined structuralism or other modern theories and found them lacking in logical coherence or usefulness. He explains to us what structuralism is, but he offers no real clue as to why he thinks it works; the most that one can glean from his article is that he regards some of its conclusions as intuitively satisfying. They do not, however, necessarily satisfy everyone. Theories like structuralism do not mysteriously validate themselves; their validity and usefulness have to be independently tested. It is clear enough that if you look at things in a structuralist way, you will get certain sorts of answers; but that is rather like being told that if you look at things through green spectacles, they will look green. What is needed is an account of why these answers are valid, or why they are better than those arrived at by other methods.

The situation is much worse when we turn to poststructuralism – a topic which Dr Goldhill hardly addresses, though it clearly underlies much of what he says. To try to apply ordinary logical criteria to the assessment of poststructuralism or deconstruction carries a large danger of missing the point, since a follower of poststructuralism (I presume) would deny the validity of any logical criteria

one might produce for that purpose. Poststructuralists argue that concepts such as meaning and value are mere transitory products of ideology; language is for them not a means of communication but a morass in which anything can more or less mean anything else. Having removed all conventional criteria of validity in interpretation, the poststructuralist critic is then free to interpret texts in any way whatsoever. Chance phonetic similarities between words play a large part in this game, which any reasonably ingenious academic can keep up indefinitely. If a more orthodox critic tries to establish some interpretations as valid in preference to others, he is accused of 'privileging' one interpretation over another for ideological reasons.

Why should such an apparently negative and empty theoretical position appeal so much to some contemporary scholars? Partly, no doubt, because of fashion; some people like above all to feel that they are in the intellectual swim. Partly, perhaps, because it embodies real feelings of alienation from traditional Western concepts of culture; the classics have to be looked at in a new theoretical light because our society is now supposedly so different from the society that produced them. Yet it is the theorists themselves who are so keen on establishing an impassable divide between the modern reader and the texts he studies, to be bridged (apparently) only by Theory. There is no reason why we should automatically accept their assumptions. There is still room for a scholarship which relies on criteria of historical plausibility and linguistic usage to establish the probable meanings of texts. This is not entrenched unreflective traditionalism. It is a recognition that our culture is a continuation of that of the ancient world; that in studying the classics we are studying our own past; and that even if this were not the case, our shared humanity would take us a good way towards understanding what the ancient writers had to say.

I have no space to consider properly the question of the jargon of literary theory. I say merely that it is not the innocent technical vocabulary that Dr Goldhill claims it to be, but a vocabulary of power which not only confuses the uninitiated but is also designed to help in the attempt to impose particular ways of thinking. The use of this terminology makes it very difficult even to formulate any alternative philosophical position, and the fact that poststructuralists in particular insist on speaking a different language from the rest of us makes it almost impossible to argue directly with them.

Hostility to structuralism, poststructuralism and the rest is often represented as hostility to theoretical enquiry in general; the partisans of these theories have virtually hijacked the word Theory to mean their own type of theory. Even Dr Goldhill is not free of this tendency. However, reasoned objections to these types of modernist literary theory have begun to appear in print, some quite powerfully argued. These have as much claim to be called works of literary theory as the objects of their attack. I do not believe that Classics is doomed if it does not hitch itself to one particular theoretical bandwagon. If Classics survives, it will be because of its intrinsic merits as a subject worth studying, irrespective of the various theoretical approaches that may be applied to it. It is ultimately up to the individual to decide what approaches he finds most useful; and it seems to me to be no more than arrogance on Dr Goldhill's part to imply that those who do not happen to do it his way are unworthy of consideration from an intellectual point of view.

Yours faithfully

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Historical Technology

Margaret Thorpe

'I teach Latin and Technology' often provokes incredulity and always demands an explanation. With the demise of Classical Studies to GCSE level, due to the pressures of the NC, in the 11-16 comprehensive school of about six hundred pupils where I teach, I was unexpectedly offered the chance to teach the Historical Technology module of a GCSE Technology course to the whole of year 10 on a carousel basis. This was an exciting opportunity and one I could hardly refuse, given the advice of Bob Young HMI in the *JACT Review* of Autumn 1991, who urged all

classicists 'to make the most of NC attainment targets and programmes of study, especially those for history'. So I found myself a member of the technology department posed to contribute to Key Stage 4.

Shropshire has devised a scheme entitled *Technology for All*, which is intended to make technology accessible to all pupils 'regardless of gender, race or ability'. It is a mode 3 GCSE first examined by the Midland Examining Group in 1990. The aim of such a course is to enable pupils to develop a practical way of thinking right across the curri-

culum. To achieve this they can choose one module per term for the first five terms in Years 10 and 11, and identify, plan and evaluate a solution to a relevant technological problem for each module.

At the Priory School modules currently on offer are Information Technology, Historical Technology and Environmental Technology in Year 10 and Photography, Desktop Publishing and Fabric Printing in Year 11. Pupils study one of these for a whole term and, as there are six groups in each year, I teach the Historical Technology module to two groups each term. Initially the time allocation was one double period a week for each group, but next year this is being extended to three.

At the end of each term pupils produce an illustrated A4 folder on their chosen topic, but they are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding of the problem solving process through different media such as a slide presentation and talk to the group, model, wall display or film on video. The increased time allocation next year will make the practical part of the course much easier to cope with. At the moment it is only attempted by a few students.

Course Content

My module *Roman Building and Engineering* was chosen because I thought it would appeal to a mixed ability group of both sexes. I was not wrong as it has proved equally popular with Special Needs pupils and with the high-flyers, as these comments from their own Records of Achievement show. One Special Needs boy wrote simply 'The best lesson in the school'. Another comment which appeared often was 'I enjoyed learning about something new. I have found the investigation and research on our chosen topic interesting and I am pleased with the finished result'.

The organisation of a totally new course needed careful planning and I only had a couple of months' notice, but I was fortunate in being able to use much of the material which I already had in the classics department. I worked closely with one of our Deputy Heads, a geographer, who had already taught the Environmental Technology module for one year and together we devised a common approach. For the first three double lessons we would outline the subject material using the overhead projector and slides to stimulate class discussion on the issues involved. This seemed particularly important in my case because few pupils had much knowledge or experience of the classical world, apart from what they had gleaned from projects on the Romans at primary school or their history lessons during the first year at secondary school.

In these introductory lessons I aim to provide the groups with a core of material which they can all use if they wish in their individual studies. First I look at the role of the architect or engineer in the Roman world and contrast it with today's role. We read, in English, one of Pliny's requests for an engineer¹ and this leads on to a discussion about the building activities of the Roman army and, more generally, how Rome's power and wealth were acquired and to what uses they were put.

The second week includes a review of some of the inventions already known to the Romans through the

work of the Alexandrians, inventions such as the screw, lever, pulley, cog and siphon. This last can be easily demonstrated in an ordinary classroom with two buckets and piece of plastic tubing, on loan from the science department, and there is never a shortage of volunteers to do the experiment for me! After this, I generally talk about the range of metals (for tools) and building materials available to the Romans and discuss sources of power in both the ancient and modern world.

In the third double lesson I show how the development of the arch led to the construction of tunnel vaults, cross vaults and finally the dome, and thus enabled the Romans to solve two major problems, how to roof a large space and how to bridge a gap. I have demonstrated the tunnel vault using a series of human arches and the cross vault, constructed in Blue Peter style of strong paper, can be made to support a book if required. Finally, I take the group through a selection of Roman buildings and structures from which they choose one topic they would like to study in depth. They work in pairs, or individually if they prefer, and they have to identify a problem and show how the Romans solved it with the technology available to them, how successful they were and how modern methods might differ. Some sample problems are circulated to stimulate ideas and discussion. We have also been fortunate in being able to call on the expert knowledge of Dr Roger White, the post excavation analyst at Wroxeter, who offered to come in to school to give an illustrated talk on water engineering at Wroxeter, our nearest Roman site.

The number of topics is almost limitless and shows that classicists have a unique opportunity to contribute to cross-curricular work. Pupils find that an event in another discipline, or a school or holiday visit may suggest a subject for technological exploration. Two girls following the Cambridge Latin Course decided to investigate the technology needed by the Romans to storm the fortress of Masada, and three pupils have just returned from a six-day camping and cycling holiday in Northumberland, the purpose of which was to collect information and photographs for an illustrated talk on the construction of Hadrian's Wall. Theatres, amphitheatres, aqueducts, baths, bridges and roads can be treated generally, but the most successful projects have been those relating to one particular building or structure, such as the series of waterwheels at Barbégall in Southern France. Here, according to Professor Trevor Hodge of Carleton University, Ottawa, 'is a well-preserved example of something that, according to the text-books, never existed at all – an ancient Roman power-driven mass-production assembly line factory'.² After examining the solution to the problem of how to grind enough flour to feed a city the size of Arles, with a population of about 12,500 in the fourth century AD, through the utilization of an old clogged aqueduct, pupils can compare the alternative methods employed at Pompeii, where no such power source was available. Before embarking on a topic pupils first discuss their choice with me so that they make an appropriate one. They must be able to succeed and feel a sense of achievement at the end. The less able might tackle the problems of road construction or the operation of Haterius' crane, while the most

able can take on a more complex issue such as the problems involved in delivering water to a city of a million inhabitants, such as Rome.

Resources

Obviously the whole exercise, where twenty-four pupils are working on up to fifteen projects, which may all be on different topics, requires good classroom management and very thorough resourcing. As a basis for the pupils' own research I have on extended loan from Shropshire libraries a topic collection of slides³ and books which I selected myself from the shelves. We also have a school library and resource centre where we are just beginning to build up folders of articles from newspapers and journals, which can all be located on a computer. I also keep some of these folders in the classroom. Pupils can go to the library to collect information or use the photocopier during the lesson and they can also, subject to the availability of word processors, go into the IT room to type up their research. Additional marks can be awarded for the ability to communicate the problem-solving process using appropriate media including computer supported editing techniques.

My technology lessons take place in the classroom which has been used as the classics base for a number of years and where I have therefore been able to build up a small resource of my own. There is an overhead projector which is essential for showing maps, plans and diagrams. In fact I often wonder how I ever managed to teach anything at all without one of these! Students can make use of all the slides and background material from the CLC. The slides and filmstrips produced by R. L. Ddalliday and those of Visual Publications are also excellent for this course.⁴ The wall display is another important resource and I prepare most of the material myself, mounting postcards and photographs on selected themes such as markets, latrines and bridges. Two posters on *Travel by Land* published by Oliver and Boyd as part of the *Ecce Romani* Latin Course have been very useful and so have *Patterns in Architecture* and *Bridges* issued by Pictorial Charts Educational Trust.

Problems and Pitfalls

As I approach my sixth term and eleventh and twelfth groups respectively, I feel that I am in a position to evaluate my own methods and consider some of the main problems and pitfalls in teaching this module. Firstly it is not enough simply to write a description of a set of Roman baths and list the different processes and amenities. Pupils also have to be dissuaded from copying or paraphrasing uncritically large chunks from the secondary sources. The accent has to be on problem solving. So how do you start? The initial class discussion should have paved the way. Pupils can investigate how the Romans actually got the water into the baths (this is easy, if it is from a hot spring as at Aquae Sulis!) via an aqueduct (using gravity or a siphon, or both?), water tower or settling tank, and the possible methods of heating the different rooms as well as the water. If they include the public latrines they will see one of the earliest uses of recycling water. Alternatively, it is possible to concentrate on the architectural problems

posed by the need to roof a large complex of buildings. A modern leisure centre provides an interesting comparison.

Another difficulty for the students is the scarcity of material and the need to collect it from a variety of sources if they choose a topic like latrines or markets. The site guide books to Pompeii and Ostia⁵ and the British Museum series *Exploring the Roman World*⁶ give a good range of examples. Also useful is the excellent series of French archaeological magazines *Les Dossiers D'Archéologie* with past issues available on *Les aqueducs romains*, *Les théâtres de la Gaule romaine*, *Ostie port de Rome* and several other titles. If pupils can't understand the text, the plans and illustrations are superb and with help they can at least read the captions. This brings me to the question of finding suitable material for the whole ability range. It isn't easy, but I have written some of my own information sheets, using simpler language, which can be used by the less-able, who can otherwise become frustrated at a perceived lack of progress.

Assessment

Each pupil has a logbook which he or she must complete to ensure that the assessment objectives are fulfilled. Marks are allocated equally under seven specific headings:

1. the identification of a technological need or problems.
2. The analysis of the problem and planning of a solution.
3. The collection of information.
4. The evaluation of the solution.
5. Showing how the solution was implemented.
6. Communication of the analysis to the reader or audience.
7. The way the pupil applies the knowledge acquired to extend his own understanding.

It will be noted that only one seventh of the marks are given for collecting factual information. At the moment a grade in GCSE Technology can be obtained by submitting five modules for assessment and by reaching the required standard. The final grade will be based on the best three scores for each of the seven sections listed above.

Conclusion

As this article goes to press our first candidates have already been entered for GCSE Technology. It has been an enormous challenge for myself and rewarding for the students. This week a student wrote 'I have enjoyed doing this project as each section has brought along a fresh challenge. I had very little, if any, foreknowledge of Roman amphitheatres and it has provided me with an opportunity to learn a little about the Roman way of life'. But both the general restrictions imposed upon coursework by the government and the specific requirements of NC Technology mean that this imaginative scheme has no future and my brief career as a technology teacher seems likely to end.

NOTES

- 1 Pliny's Letters to Trajan X. 37, 38. X 39, 40
X. 41, 42 X.61 X.90, 91 X 98, 99
- 2 Scientific American 263 No. 5. 106-111.

- 3 Colour slides with notes: *A Roman City : Streets and Monuments SI, Daily Life* S2. Audio-Visual Productions 1937.
- 4 R. L. Dalliday : Ministrips including *Aqueducts and Water Supply*. Harnser, Little Walden, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1XA. Visual Publications : The Green, Northleach, Cheltenham, Glos. GL54 3EX.
- 5 A. Maiuri, *Pompeii* and G. Calza – G. Becatti, *Ostia* (Istituto Poligrafico Dello Stato) Guide books to the Museums and Monuments of Italy.
- 6 T. W. Potter, *Roman Italy* (1987).
S. J. Keay, *Roman Spain* (1988).
Anthony King, *Roman Gaul and Germany* (1990).
Some useful books
K. D. White, *Greek and Roman Technology* (Thames and Hudson reprinted 1986).
Henry Hodges, *Technology in the Ancient World* (Pelican 1971, now

unfortunately out of print).

J. G. Landels, *Engineering in the Ancient World* (Chatto and Windus 1978).
L.A. and J.A. Hamey, *The Roman Engineers* (CUP 1981).
Miranda Green, *Roman Technology and Crafts* (Longman).
David Macaulay, *City* (Collins 1975).
Alan McWhirr *Roman Crafts and Industries* (Shire Publications 1982).
A. McKay *Vitruvius : Architect and Engineer* (Inside the Ancient World Series : MacMillan 1978).
Sir M. Wheeler : *Roman Art and Architecture* (Thames and Hudson pbk. 1964).

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Aristotle in Afghanistan

Jonathan Barnes

In 1964 the King of Afghanistan was motoring through the northern parts of his country. On the bank of the River Oxus, at a place called Ai Khanum, he noticed a promising mound which he encouraged the French Archaeological School to excavate. Over the next dozen years they gradually uncovered the remains of what had been a frontier fortress in ancient Bactria. It was a large and prosperous city: temples and grand private houses, a palace and a complex of administrative buildings, a gymnasium dedicated to Hermes and Hercules, a theatre capable of seating an audience of 5,000. In short, there were all the trappings of Greek culture and Greek civilization – and of great wealth.

The city was founded in about 325 BC, a colony established by veterans from the armies which Alexander the Great had led to India. It flourished – but for less than 200 years: the palace was sacked in about 145 BC, and the whole city was consumed by fire some 50 years later.

Why should a philosopher care about Ai Khanum? Well, the excavations threw up two brief texts of fascinating philosophical interest.

The first text is on stone. It is an epigram in two elegiac couplets:

These wise sayings of famous men of old are dedicated at holy Delphi. There Clearchus carefully wrote them down and set them up to shine afar in the shrine of Cineas.

The epigram was inscribed on the base of a tall monument, the face of which was covered with the 'wise sayings'. These sayings were the Delphic mottoes: Know

yourself, Nothing too much, Help your friends, Conquer anger . . . – in all, about 150 trenchant items of moral and practical advice. Similar lists were set up in other Greek cities.

Cineas, in whose shrine the inscription was placed, was no doubt the founder of Ai Khanum. But who was Clearchus? His inscription is dated to the early third century. From this period we know of one famous Clearchus – a man from Soli in Cyprus who was a Peripatetic philosopher and a pupil of Aristotle. We learn from other sources that this Clearchus had an interest in the Delphic maxims; and he also knew something about India. (He wrote a dialogue *On Sleep* in which he portrayed Aristotle talking to a Jewish visitor about Indian philosophers.) And so we may believe that one of Aristotle's pupils visited Delphi where he carefully transcribed the celebrated mottoes; and that he then made a journey of some 3,000 miles to the foothills of the Hindu-Kush, there to have the maxims inscribed on stone in a shrine at the heart of a new Greek city.

If we have sent Aristotle's pupil to Afghanistan, we have not yet found Aristotle himself there. For him, we must turn to the second text from Ai Khanum – a text which, I like to imagine, was carried to the city in the same knapsack which contained the Delphic maxims.

This text is a small fragment of papyrus – or, rather, it is the mirror-image of a fragment of papyrus. The papyrus itself was trodden into the clay floor of the palace library. In time it disintegrated – but not before the ink had been impressed, like a child's transfer, onto the clay. And two thousand years later the archaeologists found a small lump of earth covered in mirror-writing. Another similar

impression, even smaller and containing a few words of tragic verse, was found nearby. Otherwise, the entire contents of the library have perished.

The text contains parts of four columns of writing. The first has nothing legible on it and the fourth contains nothing consecutive. The middle columns are better preserved; but even they are fragmentary, and the broken and backward letters are difficult to make out. Deciphering the text is like solving a subtle crossword puzzle. Let us look, in a preliminary way, at one of the clues.

Three lines near the top of column II look roughly like this:

Y A C A E Δ	Λ	Λ	Λ	5
Λ	Λ	Λ	Λ	6
Λ	Λ	Λ	Λ	7

Note, first, the short horizontal mark between line 6 and line 7. This is what the ancients called a *paragraphos*, and it was used by scribes to indicate a change of speaker. Extra spacing between words also served the same function – and we can make out such spacing in the middle of lines 6 and 7. So it is clear that the text was a dialogue. This conclusion is confirmed by line 7: here we can make out the letters nu-epsilon-pi-iota-epsilon, which spell εἶπεν backwards – “he said”. The rest of the fragment contains other *paragraphoi*, so that there can be no doubt about the nature of the text before us.

Next, near the left-hand edge of line 5 we can read the four letters sigma-alpha-epsilon-delta, followed by what looks like the bottom bit of an iota. This spells ἰδέας backwards. The word is familiar to readers of Plato; for it is one of the terms which he uses in connection with his so-called Theory of Forms. The Forms are things like Beauty and Justice and Pallor. According to Plato, all beautiful things share something in common, namely Beauty. Beauty, unlike the beautiful Helen, is abstract and changeless and eternal; we cannot perceive it, but we can grasp it with our intellects; and if Plato is right, then it and its fellow Forms constitute a realm of pure being, superior to the ordinary items which we see and touch.

So it looks as though our text was a philosophical dialogue, and in particular a dialogue bearing on Plato's philosophy. This is confirmed by the rest of the fragment. Words for the Forms re-appear. And we also find the verb μετέχειν, “to share in”. According to Plato, Helen, and all other beautiful objects, ‘share in’ Beauty – that indeed is just what it is for them to be beautiful.

At the beginning of line 6 – or rather, at the *end* of line 6 when it is put the right way around – there come the letters gamma-epsilon-mu-alpha-phi. This is φαμέγ (i.e. φάμεν) backwards: “we say”. This one word, which is preceded by a gap, tells us quite a lot. A character in a dialogue of Plato's will often remark “We say” in order to agree with what his colleague has just said. Speaker A remarks: “We say that so-and-so, don't we?”. Speaker B replies: “We say”, i.e. “Yes, we do”. Now in our text, speaker A is saying something about the Forms; and speaker B is agreeing. So we may infer that the two speakers are

portrayed as Platonists: they both agree to something to do with the Forms.

Thus we find, at Ai Khanum, the remains of a dialogue about a central part of Plato's philosophy. The text is certainly not to be identified with any other surviving work. It was pretty clearly a technical work and not a literary exercise or a piece of popularisation: a cursory glance is enough to show that it was professional in tone and aspiration. Moreover, it was written from a Platonic standpoint.

The Theory of Forms seems strange to many modern readers. We know that it seemed puzzling to some of Plato's own pupils, Aristotle among them; and there was a lively debate about the Theory in the second half of the fourth century BC. Our text reflects this debate. Can we say anything more precise about its particular topic – and its author?

Look, next at a second clue to the crossword. One important word occurs a number of times: it is the word αἶτον, “cause” or “explanation”. In column III, at lines 6–7, the following letters are visible. (This time I set them down in their correct order, not in the mirrored form in which they appear on the lump of earth.)

T O T H E M . E X E Ω Σ A . . . O N

In the middle of this, the eye of faith will make out the word μεθέξεως, the genitive singular of the abstract noun μέθεξις, “sharing”, which is cognate with the verb μετέχειν. After this, the crossword expert will suggest ΑΙΤΙΟΝ, the word which occurs elsewhere in the fragment.

Thus III 6–7 offer us the phrase τὸ τῆς μεθέξεως αἰτίον, ‘the cause of the sharing’. And this phrase, unpromising as it appears at first glance, allows us to make a great leap forward. We know from Aristotle that one of the problems which most exercised Plato's pupils concerned the cause or explanation of ‘sharing’. Let us grant Plato that the beautiful Helen somehow ‘shares in’ the abstract entity Beauty. How, then, we might ask, can this sharing possibly come about? The Form of Beauty itself can hardly explain how Helen comes to share in Beauty. So it looks as though Plato must posit something else, over and above the Forms, which will act as the cause of Helen's coming to share in Beauty. But then whatever might this ‘something else’ be? The phrase at III 6–7 suggests that this very problem was the subject of the discussion in our text from Ai Khanum.

An obscure paragraph in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* takes us further. The world we live in is constantly changing in a vast number of ways; and according to Aristotle, these changes have been going on for ever and will go on for ever – for the world is eternal. It is relatively easy, Aristotle thinks, to explain some of the particular changes we see around us – but how are we going to find an appropriate explanation for the fact that these changes *go on for ever*? Aristotle complains that none of his predecessors

says why there will *always* be change or what the explanation for this eternal change is. Those thinkers

who posit two principles must say that there is another more authoritative principle – and so too must those who posit the Forms; for they must explain *why* things share in the Forms.

‘Those who posit the Forms’ are Plato and his followers. According to Aristotle, they are obliged to posit the existence of some ‘more authoritative principle’ which will explain why, in a world of eternal change, ordinary objects come to share in the Forms.

This text is intimately connected to our fragment. The final question, ‘*Why* do things share in the Forms?’, is the main question addressed in our fragment. The reference to ‘eternal change’, which somehow makes the main question more pressing, has a precise parallel in column III. The suggestion that proponents of the Forms must posit ‘another more authoritative principle’ is again echoed, in virtually the same words, in column III.

Thus the problem raised in the *Metaphysics* passage is the very problem discussed in our fragment. And it is raised and discussed in the very same terms. It is very tempting to conclude that Aristotle himself was the author of the Ai Khanum text. Among Aristotle’s many lost works there was a book called *On the Forms* which we know to have been a critical discussion of various problems raised by Plato’s Theory. Did Clearchus take a copy of *On the Forms* with him to Afghanistan? And did Aristotle, in his writings if not in person, travel all the way to Afghanistan?

There are many more detailed questions which we shall want to ask of the fragment, some of which can be given a plausible answer and others of which will remain vexingly

intractable. But it is plain enough, I hope, that the fragment is an enormously exciting little thing. Even if it was not in fact written by Aristotle himself, it certainly belongs to his period and his circle; and it sheds a little more light on one of the turning-points in the history of philosophy. For from the discussions, in themselves often arid and scholastic, which were generated by Plato’s Theory of Forms, there eventually emerged Aristotle’s own philosophical theory. And that theory, whether we are aware of it or not, so dominated the later history of Western philosophy that it became a part of our ordinary understanding of the world.

There is another point, too. Philosophy, we know, was an immensely popular subject among the Greeks. Anecdotes assure us that Theophrastus, Aristotle’s friend and successor, would attract as many as 2,000 people to his lectures; and that when Stilpo, a celebrated logician, was rumoured to have come to Athens, the shopkeepers shut down for the day in order to hear him. But it was not only in cosmopolitan Athens that philosophy was favoured. In other cities and other lands, philosophical argument thrilled. And we now know that in a remote garrison town, three thousand miles east of Greece on the banks of the Oxus, there was a library which contained not merely an introductory Teach Yourself Philosophy but a highly technical treatment of some central problems in Plato’s Theory of Forms. Those were the days.

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Andrew Parkin

The Greek Museum in Newcastle University’s Department of Classics is unique in more than one respect. First of all it has the distinction of being the only specialist Greek Museum in the country. Secondly it is essentially a creation of the last thirty five years. This collection began humbly in 1956 with the acquisition of three Mycenaean pots; it now numbers well over 800 objects and forms a departmental asset which, though small, has claims to international stature.

The scope of the Museum is surprisingly large for such a small collection and extends to items of Near Eastern and Celtic, as well as Roman manufacture. However its main

emphasis is on Greek and Etruscan artefacts. Ceramics are particularly well represented and include some fine pieces of Attic red-figure pottery; over a hundred Attic undecorated or ‘black-glaze’ pots; examples of Corinthian wares; Etruscan Bucchero pottery; and a series of architectural terracottas from Sicily and Magna Graecia. The Museum also has a significant collection of metalwork, possessing a good range of Greek arms and armour, fittings from metal vessels and bronze figurines.

A large proportion of the Museum’s holdings are housed in an attractive, purpose-built gallery within the Department of Classics, and this is open to the public.

Nevertheless, because of the constraints of space imposed on the Museum, many items are not on public display. A study collection exists, arranged separately in a nearby room. In addition there is a group of nearly thirty sculptures, on permanent loan from the Wellcome Institute, which are kept in another building altogether.

The Museum's primary role is as an educational resource. It forms an indispensable prop in the department's undergraduate courses in Greek art and archaeology, enabling students to confront examples of ancient craftsmanship at first hand. At a more advanced level, it provides rich opportunities for research scholars. The publication of material in the Museum was begun some twenty years ago and includes a booklet entitled *Greek Arms and Armour*, which is available to the public. Obviously the Museum also caters for students who are not at graduate level or above. But, while school parties have always been welcome, it is only recently that steps have been taken to develop the Museum's educational potential for schools. A major incentive for improving the Museum's resources was the introduction of a compulsory unit (Core Study Unit 5) on Ancient Greece as part of the National Curriculum.

For teachers interested in bringing school parties to the Museum a handout is now available, which includes some ideas of how the Museum can be used for educational purposes. It suggests various ways in which children might gain insights about the culture they are studying by coming into contact with some of its material remains. A visit to the Museum can be used to supplement of Ancient Greece, such as everyday life, religion or the arts, covered in the classroom. Apart from the specific study of Ancient Greece the handout outlines some of the more general areas of interest within the scope of the collection. For instance it can serve as an introduction to the use of archaeological evidence for understanding the past or as a starting point for the study of a key period in western art history. In addition to the handout there is a Museum glossary, providing an explanation for some of the more obscure aspects of the Museum's labelling. Finally there are also activity sheets intended for junior school children. These are designed to make the children look at items in the museum in an active rather than passive way and include drawing as well as written exercises.

The current resources available for school parties are at what may be termed the 'experimental' stage and therefore are subject to change. In fact once teachers and pupils let us know exactly how useful they are and how they can be improved it is likely that they will be altered. A more

ambitious expansion of the Museum's educational facilities is intended in the near future, thanks to the generosity of private benefactors. At the moment the Museum display is directed at an academic audience and assumes some understanding of the background to the exhibits. An attempt to place the objects in the collection within their historical, social and geographical contexts is therefore one of the main priorities for the Greek Museum. By using maps, diagrams and information-panels the Museum can become more accessible to a wider audience, including school children. Such a re-organization of the display would additionally allow for a better utilization of the available space. At the moment the Museum can only take a maximum of fifteen visitors; a wider display, including information set out in front of the Museum gallery, would make visits by larger groups easier. Other projects are also planned for the near future. These include the creation of activities centred around pot fragments from the reserve collection and replica Greek pots, both of which can be handled. Once again the intention is to involve children closely and actively with materials from the Ancient World.

Obviously most of the present schemes are aimed at pupils studying Core Study Unit 5, but in the long term it is hoped that the Museum will be able to cater for a wider range of age groups. The provision of slide packs and notes for schools, illustrating and describing some of the more interesting exhibits, is just one way in which the collection could prove of use to older pupils. Another possibility is the creation of materials for use by secondary school pupils and teachers visiting the Museum.

The Greek Museum is entering a period of considerable expansion in terms of its development as an educational resource for schools. It is also, hopefully, entering a period of closer co-operation with schools, in which teachers and pupils will be able, by their comments and ideas, to influence the provision of educational materials.

The Museum is open during the week, from 9.30 am – 4.30 pm (closed 1.00–2.00 pm) and entrance is free. School parties are welcome but should book in advance (maximum capacity in the Museum gallery is limited to 15 persons). For further details contact the Department of Classics, University of Newcastle upon Tyne (091) 2227966.

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The ART of television . . . and Homer

Tony Coe

The impetus behind this article is the recent work carried out by colleagues at the BBC Open University Production Centre and the Open University Classics Department preparing, shooting and editing video footage for a new Open University course called *Homer: Poetry, Archaeology and Society*. Our previous excursion, four years ago, into the field of distance teaching classical studies was a course on fifth century Athens. As well as written teaching material, set books and ten audiocassettes, we produced eight half hour broadcast television programmes. The subjects ranged from a specially commissioned version of Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, by the Irish poet Tom Paulin, to an exploration of the significance of landscape to fifth century religious traditions and practice. However, in order to make sensible decisions about where the relatively slender resources available to us to make the programmes would be best spent, we had to be very clear about what television could present to students, better than any other medium. Experience and discussion showed that television could take viewers to places that they probably would not get to themselves, (less well-known sites like Thorikos and Laurion, as well as the Athenian Acropolis, Sounion and Eleusis). We also knew that we could show them those places in ways even visitors to those sites could not see them (from the air by helicopter, from and perched on top of the Parthenon itself). We could also synthesise visual evidence from three different locations (the British Museum, the Louvre and the Parthenon) and electronically at least, rebuild the Parthenon in glorious technicolour. We could also present recorded examples of drama, in performance, both in complete versions and as extracts for comparative analysis.

Given the subject of the new course – Homer, Poetry and Society, we knew right from the start that video would have a vital role to play in presenting both literary and archaeological evidence. But how was that visual evidence to be presented and how were students to use it? One new element of the proposed course structure is that about two thirds of the way into the course students will be asked to prepare, in consultation with their tutor, an extended essay on a Homer-related subject of their own choice. Since we had already decided that visual evidence was important, we needed to find a way of giving students access to that evidence for use in their essays.

For that we needed to do more than simply broadcast programmes to them, (after all it's no good trying to quote a reference from a book that you've already had to take back to the library). The only way of providing that opportunity would be to send out the material on videocassette. But what exactly are the differences between videocassettes and tv programmes?

For a producer there are certain clear distinctions,

which can be illustrated from our experience over the past decade producing both *audio* cassettes and broadcast *radio* programmes. Material produced for radio is linear, it has a narrative structure that should take you from beginning to end, without any need to stop and go back, because, quite simply, you can't go back, at least not until after you've listened through once if you're recording, and not at all if you're not. Radio can present a cumulative argument very persuasively. Tone of voice, expression and so on play a large part in this. However, it is not a good way of conveying complicated information that you need to analyse and evaluate. The prime difference in using audio cassettes is that the listener can stop and start them at will. They can convey complex information, and they can be used to set up an interaction between the listener, the tape and some other source or activity – an exercise on reading an architectural or site plan for example, extracting information from paintings or sculptures, or from historical documents.

Perhaps the most exciting thing from a producer's point of view is that the stop/start/rewind facilities of an audio cassette can be used to interrogate the cassette material itself. For example, a taped interview can be listened to many times and analysed for the coherence and validity of the arguments expressed, as well as investigating the ways in which they're expressed. The drawback of the teaching audio cassette is its lack of appeal for a non-specialist audience, and its essential unbroadcastability – it's specifically designed *not* to be listened to in one sitting, or without the other supporting materials.

Clearly similar advantages and disadvantages ought to operate with regard to videocassettes and broadcast tv as well. However, while we had plenty of experience of tv production, putting the theoretical possibilities of video usage into practice was rather more of an unknown quantity, which brings me back to the title of this article.

Like the things we often see on television it is not quite what it seems. In this case ART is an acronym that has helped me to define, *after* the shooting but *before* the final editing, the functional roles that video will play in our investigations of 'Homer'. (Whether television is art in the other sense, is a fascinating but alas, separate issue.) So what are these roles?

A is Archive

With a video camera and videotape (or a film camera and filmstock) you can record and keep non-repeatable performances or processes. For the first part of this course, which deals with the Homeric epics as stories both in the written literary form we now have and their oral origins, we decided to re-present some different forms of story telling – from a group of children listening to the story of

Odysseus and the bag of winds, lying on their backs, looking at pictures of the Odyssey painted by William Kent on the ceiling of the King's Gallery in Kensington Palace – to an Indian story-teller singing and playing stories from the Ramayana, in a Hindu temple in southern India, as part of a religious ceremony.

The second part of the course, an investigation of the material evidence for both the poems and their author(s), involved recording on sites and in museums evidence of pots and artefacts: from vases in the British Museum to golden masks in the Athens National Archaeological Museum, pots at Chora Museum, and at the Canakkale and Izmir Museums in Turkey; from the citadel, grave circles, tholos tombs and houses of Mycenae to the archaeological/architectural remains at Pylos, Tiryns, Xeropolis at Lefkandi, Ithaki; and of course the many layers of Troy. Which is where, in the nicest possible way, we found we had been beaten to the draw as it were, by the current excavator, Professor Manfred Korfmann. For several years now, he and his team have been using video to record both the technological processes of excavation and the results.

Not wishing to anticipate the 1991 season's results, we did not record the current work, but we were given every assistance to record the rest of the site, both on the ground and from the air. We also obtained a dawn interview with Professor Korfmann, in which he explained the background to his work at Troy, information which will serve as a useful adjunct to written records of the Troy excavations. (Imagine if the video camera had been available to interview Blegen, or Dorpfeld or even Schliemann!) We interviewed the eminent Turkish archaeologist, Professor Ekrem Akurgal amidst the ongoing excavations of Alt Smyrna.

Inevitably, on location, much more is recorded on tape (it is much cheaper than film) than can ever be accommodated in the final programme or cassette. Increasingly we are holding on to all this material after the original cassette or programme is complete (though there is a major problem of storage of course), because of its potential usefulness to other interested parties. And because video tape editing does not involve physically cutting the tape, the originating material can be stored in full, which leads us to

R is Resource

Without archiving, there would be no source material, but the value of an archive is not realised until it is consulted, for consultation involves selection. For example, our video footage of Mycenae included shots of the Lion Gate, four separate tholos tombs (inside and out), grave circle A, the megaron, the fortifications (original and later), details of cyclopean masonry, construction techniques, post holes, the houses, Mycenae in the landscape (from the ground and from the air), and so on. To someone researching burial customs of the Bronze Age, the tholos tombs and grave circle A are of interest, the rest isn't. To someone else investigating the location of fortified sites in relation to the landscape, aerial footage of Mycenae (and Tiryns) is clearly useful.

So a video archive of this sort of material is like a library

of moving slides, available for specialist research and general enquiries alike. It can give students access to places, perspectives (eg from the air) and events that most of them won't ever have the time, money or opportunity to get to themselves. It can be used by individuals, or by groups with a lecturer. Modern video recorder/playback technology already allows the viewer(s) to control the available information – you can freeze frames, pause the tape, run back or forward and show sequences in slow motion, and all with pre-recorded or live commentary or even silently if you wish. And all the material can be identified second by second, because of what is called its timecode – essentially an electronic counter.

But once this resource video material has been consulted what do we get from it?

T is Text

This role for video produces something that most closely resembles a traditional tv programme. That's to say a linear narrative, that presents either a statement of, or an argument about a particular subject, deploying selected video footage as evidence of the point(s) of view being expressed. Like everything that is seen on tv, the finished work is a construction, and needs to be seen as such – the choice of shots, their juxtaposition through editing, choice of music, effects or quotations, as well as the more explicit evidence of the commentary or interviews used, all these interact to produce the final 'text'. And to understand what it might mean, this text must be viewed critically and the assumptions, viewpoints and prejudices of its constructors identified, as far as possible. (Of course the viewer's assumptions, expectations etc. may also be usefully thrown into relief by such analysis.)

The huge advantage of video for this kind of study is the capability of rewinding and reviewing the material, treating it just as one would a printed article. The further advantage, to those with access to the footage from which this text has been derived, is that the editing and selection choices made by the text's producers can be identified. You can see what's been left out, as well as what's been put in. That should lead to an awareness that the original footage was itself a selection. How often are we led into assigning an importance to ruins, sites or artifacts simply because they are the ones that have survived or because they are the most photogenic? If new relevant texts are to be produced, then the footage they are produced from will need updating too, as more finds are made, more performances are produced, and new ways of approaching and dealing with the issues are devised.

C is in Conclusion

As I hope has become clear, what is as important as the provision of visual source material are the processes involved in providing it – not the technical but the methodological – and the need to be as open as possible about the impact of those processes. Analysis involves not just the evidence but how and why that evidence was gathered and selected, and what was left out. Finally, there's an intriguing irony in that our investigations of the Homeric poems have led us to explore some of the

profound social and cultural changes that are thought to have occurred in and between an oral culture and a literate society. The irony is that these investigations are being carried out at another time of profound social and cultural change, characterised in part at least, by the move from a literate to a post-literate society. The power of literacy has not been transcended, but incorporated into the popular technology of the computer and the television.

Literacy is in no way a redundant skill, indeed I would argue that if we are ever to cope adequately with the volume and variety of information presented on television, we are going to need to extend the hard won skills of analysing and understanding the written word to what appears on the television set and the video screen. So we shouldn't see this kind of 'reading' as a threat, rather it's an opportunity to extend our understanding, and if, after taking the course on Homer, students were aware of some of the ways in which our views of the world and our place

within it are shaped and constructed, then I would consider the course had achieved at least one of its aims.

In 1990 Tony Coe (producer) and Dr Colin Cunningham (presenter), won the British Archaeological Society's Channel 4 award for *Acropolis Now . . . the public face of the State*, named as the best television programme on an archaeological subject produced in 1989-90. This was the fifth of eight programmes produced for the Open University course, *Fifth Century Athens: democracy and city state*.

Homer: Poetry and Society a new Open University course will be presented for the first time in February 1993.

TONY COE

Senior Producer, Arts

BBC Open University Production Centre

Classics Teaching in Russia

Alexei Muraviev

Russia provides a fruitful soil for the teaching of Classics because of the great influence exercised on it by the Byzantine παιδεία. The first steps in the teaching of Classics in Russia were made by the Greek enlighteners, the Lichoudes, who organised the teaching of Greek and Latin in the famous Academy of Slavonic, Greek and Latin Studies.^{1a} Since that time much has changed: at the end of the 19th century after the School Reform¹ many classical gymnasia and lycées on the German model were established. Then after 1917 the teaching of Classics was suppressed as a subject of no practical use for workers and peasants. In 1934 the Stalinist authorities began to elaborate a new programme of teaching Classics in schools. This experiment lasted several years then it came to a halt, but they began again to teach Classics in the universities or other tertiary educational institutions after a long interval (1917-1934). Only in 1986 (with the beginning of perestroika) some schools began a campaign to reinstate Latin and Ancient History in the school curriculum and a few to reinstate Greek too. Apropos of the present situation one can cite Heraclitus' words Πάντα ῥεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει. There are now many lycées and gymnasia, some run by public institutions, others private, where Latin and occasionally Greek too are taught, but there is no overall system, no curriculum and worst of all there are no textbooks. Enthusiasts elaborate their own programmes, write their own courses and supply their pupils with photocopies.

In the field of higher education Latin is taught in nearly all institutes of Law, History, Philology, and Medicine. However, the Latin courses followed by Law and Medical students are very general and basic. Some students of Law and Medicine for instance believe that there are only two cases in Latin. Special courses of Latin for students of History are taught only in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The situation is of course better in theological institutes. In Moscow and St. Petersburg Theological Academies and Seminaries Latin or Greek is compulsory, but preference is usually given to Greek being the language of the New Testament and Church Fathers.

Only two universities in Russia, Moscow and St. Petersburg, have departments of Classics. In Moscow students in the Classics Department study Classical Philology and also Modern Greek. In St. Petersburg students of Classics study Classical Philology and Russian Philology. This differs from the system which existed before the Revolution. At that time in the universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg there was a joint faculty of History and Philology where students studied Classical Philology and either Comparative Linguistics or Russian Philology.

In order to enter the Classical Department of Moscow university now one has to pass entrance examinations in Russian Literature and Language, Russian History and one foreign language. As there is no Classics programme in schools there is no entrance examination in either Greek or Latin. Students enter the University and study for 5

years. The first two years are usually devoted to grammar and primary skills. In the 3rd, 4th and 5th years students follow courses in Greek and Latin authors (read in the original), The History of Greek, Roman and Later Ancient Literature, and the historical grammar of Greek and Latin. They also study Modern Greek and Modern Greek Literature. All courses are compulsory: to gain a degree one must pass 4 exams and 5 interviews² in Greek and Latin, 2 exams and 3 interviews in Modern Greek, 1 exam and 1 interview in the history of Greek, Latin, and late antique literature, 1 exam in the History of Greek and 1 in the History of Latin. There are also compulsory courses in Latin and Greek Epigraphy, Greek Art, Greek Palaeography, Ancient History, Ancient Philosophy and Pedagogics.

From the second year onwards students have to write a paper each year on a subject of their own choice, but concerning Ancient Literature, Linguistics, or, more rarely, Epigraphy or Palaeography. Every student must work in collaboration with his academic supervisor, who marks these papers. Sometimes students choose an external supervisor from one of the 'Academical' Institutes³ or, in a few cases, from a Theological academy. Supervisors have duties similar to those of tutors at Oxford University: they advise students and give them bibliographies. The university course also includes excursions to Moscow and St. Petersburg museums with lectures on Greek and Roman art, and lectures in archaeology in the museum of Chersonesos in Sebastopol. Now in Moscow there are about 60 students and as many in St. Petersburg.

Now various textbooks for high school in Latin and Greek are available. Unfortunately these are for the most part outdated.

Surprising as it may seem, Russia does not publish a single classical periodical. Both Moscow University Press and St. Petersburg University Press publish collections of articles from time to time on the subject of Classical Philology. In Moscow for instance such collections bear a series title *Voprosy Klassicheskoi Filologii* (Quaestiones Philologiae Classicae).

One interesting feature of the current state of Classics teaching in Russia, which indicates a growth of popular interest in Classics, is the appearance of private teaching institutions running parallel to the state system, such as the Moscow Free University of Cultural History and the Museum Graeco-Latinum. These try to give students some knowledge of Greek and Latin but do not entitle them to a degree. Some university professors also give courses in the private sector because the salary there is much higher. The Museum was founded on the initiative of academician J. Shichalin, former assistant-professor of the Chair of Classical Philology. As well as being a teaching institute it is responsible for publishing works related to Classical Philology and Ancient History and also for editing a journal devoted to Classics teaching in Russia.⁴

While it is certainly the case that the old educational establishments are reluctant to break with traditional educational structures, the rapid growth of the private sector is a case for optimism. It is of course impossible to foresee exactly the course this will take, but it is at least a promising beginning.

NOTES

- 1a The Academy was founded about 1685. There was a Greek and Latin class and also a scriptory for copying greek MSS. Sophronios and Ioannikios Lichoudes were not, as a matter of fact, the first teachers of Greek and Latin in Russia by that time, although the Academy was the first government educational institute.
- 1 The reform of the whole educational system undertaken by the Russian government in 1804 as a part of the vast programme of reforming social and political life in Russia.
- 2 An unmarked oral examination (sometimes even containing a written part) the only result of which is the 'passed/not passed' remark in the livret. It is usually translated into French as 'epreuve' as opposed to 'examen'.
- 3 The word 'academical' when applied to an institute signifies a research centre in the network of the Academy of Sciences of Russia.
- 4 The first issue is to come out in April. This journal bears the title 'MUSEUM GRAECO-LATINUM'.

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Truth in the Greek and Roman Historians

John Percival

At the end of St. John's Gospel (21.24), after a story about the disciple himself, there is a sort of statement of authenticity which seems to be intended to cover, not only this particular story, but the Gospel as a whole:

This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

The statement recalls an earlier one, inserted into John's account of the Crucifixion:

And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true. (19.35)

In both cases what is being claimed is factual accuracy: the record is 'true' in the sense that the events recorded really did happen, and the appeal to the evidence of an eye-witness ('he that saw it') recalls the similar appeal of Thucydides in his first book ('either I was present myself at the events which I have described, or else I heard them from eye-witnesses'). (1.22)

To assume, though, that factual accuracy is all that is at stake here would be to take too simple a view, and even a cursory glance through the rest of the Gospel will show that its concept of truth is much deeper and more complex than this. The words 'my record is true' are used in Chapter 8 (v.14) by Jesus himself in an encounter with the Pharisees, who take exception to his claims about himself and question his right to make them. Having made the claim, he goes on to explain that he is not dealing in truth as they understand it, the truth (for example) established in a court of law. His truth does not need to be established, but merely proclaimed; it is not a quality of what he says, but of what he is, and they are asked to believe it on this basis and not on the basis of its factual accuracy.

A passage in which this is made even more explicit is the one in Chapter 18 where Jesus appears before Pilate, and is asked to say (yes or no) whether he is a king. His reply is equivocal, because (as he explains) he and Pilate are talking on two different levels, and he ends with the following statement:

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. (18.37)

The word 'witness', and indeed the word 'truth' itself are appropriate in the sense that we are here in a judicial situation, if not in an actual court of law. But the truth and the witness are something far different from what a lawyer would understand. Pilate's aim is to establish the facts, and to get at the truth in this sense; and he expects his witness to assist him in this aim. But what he is offered is

not facts but an idea embodied in a person, and it is at this point that he gives up. Once again he asks a question – 'What is truth?' – but in Bacon's words he does not 'stay for an answer'.

My purpose here is not to offer any new thoughts about Biblical criticism, but simply to provide an introduction to some thoughts about the Greek and Roman writers of history. I want to look at the attitude of those writers to truth, and one of the points I want to make is the rather obvious one that the concept of truth is a very broad one and one which has to be re-defined in different contexts and for different people. The point of starting with the Gospel is that here the concept is stretched just about to its limit, partly in that the writer (to use Livy's expression) 'is mixing the human with the divine', and partly in that the writer's subject (and perhaps even the writer himself) is claiming, not merely to speak, but to embody the truth in his own being. This goes a good deal further than any of the Greek and Roman writers are prepared to go, but it does, I think, put them into perspective, and it may perhaps discourage us from adopting too narrow an approach towards them.

The quote from Livy about 'mixing the human with the divine' occurs, of course, in the middle of his *Preface*, where he is facing up to the point that the traditional material available for the earliest period of Rome's history is more a matter of attractive but fanciful stories than of sound historical record (*poeticis magis decora fabulis quam incorruptis rerum gestarum monumentis*). For him this is not a problem; it is something to which he attaches no great importance (*haud in magno equidem ponam discrimine*), and he does not see it as his task to assess such material and either accept or reject it. It adds a certain grandeur to these early times, he says, and he then continues:

If it should be allowed to any people to consecrate their origins and attribute them to divine agencies, then such is the glory in war of the Roman people that when they claim Mars as the parent of themselves and their founder all nations of the world should accept this as readily as they accept their rule. (*Praefatio*, 6)

To say that people should accept the claim is to say that, in some sense, the claim is true, and this is precisely what Livy is saying. He clearly doesn't believe in its literal truth, because when he comes, in his main narrative, to the birth of Romulus and Remus he makes it plain that in his view this was yet another case of a girl trying to talk herself out of trouble:

Either because she believed it, or because a god was a more honourable agent of her disgrace, she named Mars as the father of her dubious offspring. (1.4)

In other words, he goes rather beyond his stated intention of neither accepting nor rejecting such stories and actually rejects it, at least on this level. On another level, however, he wants to keep it, because it says something that he wants to say, and in this sense has a truth that is worth holding on to. It is true that the Romans are the sons of Mars: one has only to look at their record in war to accept this. If a poet were to use the phrase we would know what he meant, and would not say that he was telling lies or that he was being inaccurate or misleading. And Livy, here as elsewhere in his work, is speaking as a poet.

The point I am making here is that Livy's concept of historical truth is rather wider than mere factual accuracy, not because he has no regard for factual accuracy, but, to put it crudely, because he has regard for other things as well. In this, of course, he is not alone: indeed, it would be hard to think of any historical writer in antiquity who does not, either explicitly or implicitly, allow himself to go beyond the established facts of a situation and indulge in imaginative reconstruction of one kind or another. Where Livy is unusual is in his refusal to make any claim to the contrary, and whereas most other writers either parade their concern for accuracy or (more commonly) berate their predecessors for their lack of it, he alone of the major historians refrains from such pretensions and makes it fairly clear that it is not his primary concern. It could be said, of course (and indeed has been said by many of his critics), that this is painfully obvious at various points in his work, where he shows what by modern standards is a very careless attitude towards details which he could easily have checked and put right. Against this, and in his favour, it can at least be said that although he is not always very good on facts he does not claim to be so, and perhaps also that he is well aware of the deficiency, and therefore not particularly concerned to remedy it.

The question this leaves us with, as far as the other writers are concerned, is why, since all of them to a greater or lesser extent fail to live up to it, do they generally set up accuracy as an ideal? Why does Tacitus make his famous claim at the beginning of the *Annals* that he will write without taking sides and without becoming emotionally involved (if that is what *sine ira et studio* means), when it is patently obvious that hardly a paragraph in his work is wholly dispassionate or objective? Why is Polybius so scathing about the carelessness and gullibility of earlier writers, when so often, simply within his own text and without any outside help, we can show him to have been guilty of the same failings? Why does Thucydides make such a fuss in I.22 about eye witness accounts which he has checked and counter-checked, when there are whole sections of his narrative for which he has done nothing of the kind? Are these writers unaware of their inconsistency, are they paying lip service to an ideal that they know they cannot attain, or are they simply being dishonest?

It could, of course, be that the fault is with us, and that we have failed to understand what they are saying and (more importantly) what they are trying to do. Livy again can perhaps provide a way in. Consider, for example, the passage in 22.7, in which he describes the way in which the news of the defeat at Lake Trasimene was brought to

Rome. It has to be said, I think, that when we read this passage (and many others like it) our instinctive response to it is a literary one and not an historical one in our sense of the word. What I mean is that we don't concern ourselves with the details of the event: we don't, that is, start noting down the facts, as we might (for example) when reading an account of a battle or the progress of a siege. We are struck, rather, by the power of the writing: we are impressed by the way in which the atmosphere, the 'feel' of the situation, is conveyed, and if we make notes of anything it is of the many little narrative and stylistic touches which help to create the effect. We notice, perhaps, the way in which the news comes in bit by bit; the bald *nuntium cladis* at the beginning, then the question and the rising panic eliciting the equally bald official statement (*pugna magna victi sumus*), the rumours and eventually the arrival of people with odd items of detail and the gradual piecing together of the story. The tension is built up by the people's insistent questioning, first of each other and then of the new arrivals, and the restless wandering through the streets. The poignancy is emphasised by Livy's concentration on the women, those who wait helplessly and whose greatest suffering is yet to come. The vividness of the scene is heightened by the changes of focus: first the crowd scene, then the more specific groups of women, and finally the individual cases, as though the camera were zooming in for a close-up. Now and then, almost as though he can't help himself, the narrator speaks in the present tense, and in the one word *cerneres*, 'you could have seen', he pulls the reader almost literally into what is happening.

The passage is a literary one, and we respond to it, as I said, on a literary level. We think, perhaps, of the passage in *Aeneid* 9. 473-502, in which the news of the death of Euryalus reaches the beleaguered Trojans, and more particularly Euryalus' mother. The drama of the episode, and the dramatic form of its description, may set us thinking of tragedy, with the women as a kind of tragic chorus reacting, if not to a messenger speech, to something not dissimilar. Livy's account is presumably wholly imaginary, but this hardly seems to matter; to say that it is inaccurate, or unsubstantiated, is to miss the point, and to say that it is untrue is simply wrong. Its truth lies, not in its corresponding to 'what actually happened', but in the fact that it convinces on the level of art, and thereby elevates the episode from the particular to the universal. Here, as in Vergil, we are not simply looking at one community, one set of grieving mothers, but at human society and at war in general. We don't just read and make notes: we identify. And we would not do so if the passage were not true.

Passages such as this occur throughout the Greek and Roman historical writers. One such is Thucydides 7. 69, in which we read of the thoughts and actions of the Athenian general Nicias on the eve of the great disaster in Sicily. Again, we are dealing with a piece of imaginative writing: it is highly unlikely that Thucydides had any reliable record of what was done on this occasion, let alone what was going on in the mind of Nicias himself. More probably, in writing it, he was drawing on his own

experience – in Thrace, perhaps, at the time of the capture of Amphipolis by Brasidas and his own failure to prevent it. He, like Nicias, had known the loneliness of high command, the feeling of abandonment by the politicians at home, and the helplessness in the face of an impossible situation. It is this that gives the passage its strength; like Thucydides himself, we identify with Nicias in his predicament, and what we respond to in the passage is its truth.

A similar passage, with a similar sense of foreboding, occurs in Tacitus' account in *Annals* I.65–66 of the campaigns of Caecina against Arminius and his Germans. Again, it is a 'night before' scene; there is going to be a battle the next day, and the Romans, in contrast to the Germans, are tense and frightened. Now, it may well be that the account here is based on stories and memories from survivors, and we should not assume that Tacitus has not checked them in order to arrive at an accurate record of what happened (though equally, one has to say, it would be rash to assume that he has). However that may be, the point is that, as in Thucydides' passage about Nicias and Livy's about Trasimene, what we respond to here is not the details of the episode as 'facts', but the overall 'feel' of the passage and the astonishing way in which Tacitus conveys the atmosphere of the occasion. Night scenes, as we know, are part of his repertoire, and he is a master of the use of dreams and at expressing the irrational fears that come in the small hours. Impressive, too, is the way in which he makes not just the enemy, but the whole landscape, the woods and the swamps, seem hostile. And he is brilliant at exploiting the sights and sounds: the contrast between the noisy celebrations of the Germans and the subdued state of the Romans, with their desultory conversation and their guttering campfires. The use of the word *invalidi* for 'guttering', transferred to the fires from the troops themselves, is particularly striking, as is the symbolism of the fires themselves. A loose horse, crashing into the middle of a situation fraught with tension, comes as an almost unbearable climax and destroys what little morale there is. In the next paragraph Tacitus gives Caecina a speech: *unam in armis salutem . . . victoribus decus gloriam. Quae domi cara, quae in castris honesta, memorat . . .* Like Nicias in Thucydides 7, he is going through the motions; and Tacitus, like Thucydides, is providing us with a convincing account because from his own experience he can identify totally with what is happening.

What we are talking about, in these and countless other passages, is (on one level) literary or artistic truth. The accounts may not be historically true in our sense of the word – that is, they may not be an accurate account of what actually happened – but that is not the point; what matters is that they *ring* true, they *feel* right, they are convincing. On this level, perhaps, it is enough simply to emphasise once again the literary nature of Greek and Roman historical writing, the fact that historiography in antiquity is a literary genre, differing from other genres (though not all) in that it concerns itself with 'real' people and events rather than imaginary or legendary ones, but literary nevertheless and judged by literary criteria. In the words of Aristotle, history deals with what happened, whereas tragedy deals with what might have happened; the impli-

cation may be that tragedy is on a higher plane than history, but the two are not seen as being different kinds of activity. Literary truth, then, for history as well as tragedy, is a valid and entirely respectable aim.

The willingness of the Greek and Roman writers of history to settle for this kind of truth has occasionally led to the suggestion that they have something in common with, and can therefore be understood by reference to, what we would call the historical novel. One's immediate reaction is to dismiss the idea, and I think the reaction is right: it cannot be true (can it?) that Mary Renault, say, or Robert Graves are doing the same thing as Thucydides or Tacitus. But even if we ultimately reject the idea there is something to be said for staying with it for a moment or two, if only to be sure that we are rejecting it for the right reasons. To take a rather off-beat example, there was a film during the 1960's called *Spartacus*, in which the hero of the great slave revolt of 73 B.C. was played by Kirk Douglas. Students flocked to see it, and its influence on essays was quite marked, either for the good, in their increased attention to detail or in their overall enthusiasm for the subject, or for the bad, in their adoption of fictional or actually mistaken items. One of the most worrying of these was a conviction that a major part in the suppression of the revolt, through diplomacy rather than military action, was played by the aged and venerable Tiberius Gracchus. Whether the film actually contained this piece of misinformation, or whether the students had drawn the wrong conclusion from the appearance of another man with the same name, I never discovered; but it illustrates my point. There is, as far as the historical novel (or film) is concerned, no necessary conflict between (on the one hand) a desire for factual accuracy and (on the other) a striving after literary truth through imaginative writing. Factual accuracy is important, in the sense that we criticise a novel for lacking it and also in the sense that it contributes to the truth of the novel as a work of art. On the other hand, a historical novel which consisted solely of accurate historical facts would be not a novel at all but an antiquarian exercise, and tedious in the extreme. On some people's reckoning, perhaps, it might qualify as history, but one would hope that history is less antiquarian and less tedious than this.

Ultimately, it could be argued, it depends on what history is for: the truth to which the historian will aspire will be not absolute, but relative to whether his aim is to inform, to entertain, to improve, to inspire or whatever. Livy's refusal to restrict himself to factual accuracy is a direct result of his wish to do more than simply inform; so far we have interpreted this as an acceptance of literary truth, but it is clearly other things as well. If we read on in his *Preface* from the point where he says that the reliability or otherwise of the early legends is not of great importance, we find the following:

These and similar matters, whatever views and attitudes people may have to them, I do not myself regard as being of any great importance. Rather, I would like each person to give careful attention to the way of life, the values, the men, and the civil and military skills

whereby this empire was acquired and extended. (*Praefatio*, 7)

In other words, what is important for Livy, as he goes on to develop in the rest of the *Preface*, is the moral and political function of history, in his case the task of reminding the Romans of their past greatness, in the hope of reversing their decline into greed and immorality and inspiring them with a new and greater pride in themselves. In order to have any hope of succeeding in such an aim his work will need, of course, to ring true, but again it is not mere factual truth that he will be seeking but something more and something different.

We can see him, if we like, as preaching a sermon. He does, after all, quite explicitly use the past as a source of models on which to base one's behaviour, either by imitating the good or avoiding the bad. Horatius at the bridge, Lucretia, Mucius Scaevola are for him what Abraham, Solomon, Job are for the preacher at Matins or Evensong; and what is important is not primarily the historicity of the individuals or their actions but the moral lessons to be derived from the stories about them. As I said earlier, it is not that Livy, any more than the preacher, is being irresponsible about truth or accuracy in the historical sense, but simply that another kind of truth, for the moment at least, is more important. Of course we want sermons to avoid factual mistakes, and we criticise them if they contain such mistakes, or if the preacher misunderstands or misinterprets a key passage of scripture. Presumably, in theological colleges, as part of the training for sermons, advice is given to be factually accurate, and to make sure that if you give, for example, a translation of a Greek word, or if you quote from T. S. Eliot, you get it right. But congregations generally will not judge a sermon on this basis, but rather on the message it contains or (in some cases, perhaps) on the manner in which it is delivered. And if Greeks and Romans judged their writers of history on a similar basis, as I think they frequently (if not regularly) did, we need to recognise this.

It is, after all, a much more widespread approach than we are sometimes prepared to admit, and certainly applies in secular as well as in religious contexts, in our own culture as well as in earlier ones. Until perhaps thirty years ago our first history lessons at school consisted, as often as not, of stories with moral lessons attached to them: King Alfred and the cakes, Robert the Bruce and the spider, and the little Dutch boy who put his finger in the dyke. This was not in itself a bad thing, and if (as I assume) it has now stopped, it is not necessarily an improvement. The fact is that any country, indeed any organisation, takes pains to teach its own history and traditions to its young or to its new recruits, and tends to do so, to a greater or lesser extent, in a moral or political way in order to instil an understanding of, and loyalty to, its own values. What we

need to remind ourselves is that History, though for us may be primarily an academic subject and therefore to be judged by academic rules and standards, is for most normal people (and has been for as long as historians have existed) something very different. I am not talking here of a distinction between professionals and amateurs, or between sophisticated and less sophisticated people: the difference is not, for example, like that between people who appreciate Schoenberg and those who prefer Vaughan Williams. The fact is that History, for most people in most periods, has a social rather than an intellectual function. It is the means (or one of the means) whereby individuals identify with the group or groups to which they belong, whether those groups be nations, regimental schools or sports clubs, and thereby establish and become aware of their own identity. This is an important function, and if academic history has lost it then something important has been lost.

What I am not saying is that the kind of history written by the Greek and Roman historians is consciously or unconsciously biased, still less that its authors would, if they had been aware of what they were doing and able to change it, have wanted to do it differently. Both of these assumptions are regularly made, and both of them, I think, are mistaken. They lead, in fact, to a third assumption: that if these writers were aware of what they were doing and made no effort to change it, then they must somehow have been reprehensible. In what I happen to think is one of the very best books on ancient historiography, Peter Walsh's *Livy: his Historical Aims and Methods*, there is a passage in which the decline in the standards of historical writing after Thucydides is noted and deplored. It concludes with these words:

This is not the place to discuss detailed reasons for such a retrogression, but they are undoubtedly connected with the growth of the schools of rhetoric which followed upon the activities of the sophists. From these developed theories of 'rhetorical' history aiming at effects not always compatible with truth.

This, it seems to me, is too narrow an approach. It evaluates the ancient historical writers by reference to the standards of modern academic history, and judges them far more harshly than one would (for example) the writers in another literary tradition such as lyric poetry or satire. In so far as it sees them through ancient eyes, it does so through the distorting medium of the Socratic prejudice against rhetoric, which is uncritically accepted as being 'incompatible' with truth. The important question, here (as with Pilate) left unanswered, is 'What is truth?'

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